



The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

CORONAVIRUS: WHAT TO MONITOR WHILE THE SCHOOL IS CLOSED

This guidance is taken from the Key for School Governors and will support the school and its governors during the partial closure.

School closure due to coronavirus means you need to take a different approach to monitoring your school.

Keep monitoring to a minimum

These are really exceptional circumstances for your school, and most normal school operations will have ceased.

That doesn't mean that your role in monitoring the school has disappeared completely – it just means that your monitoring priorities (and how you actually carry out the monitoring) will change quite a bit.

While schools are partially closed, you'll want to monitor:

- Safeguarding
- Health and safety
- Headteacher and staff wellbeing

To a lesser extent, you'll also want to monitor how your school is continuing to provide an education for pupils.

The Headteacher has support on how to manage the school during closure from the Department for Education (DfE) and the local authority (LA). Your governing Body will probably take a bit of a back seat, and that's as it should be.

You don't need the same level of detail about your provision (even the parts of it you're still monitoring) as you'd expect to get in normal circumstances. You should, however, talk to the Headteacher regularly about the areas listed above, as well as more general developments.

You should expect to discuss the full implications of school closure once things have returned to normal.

What will monitoring look like?

In line with the government's guidance on social distancing and self-isolation, **don't** monitor your school in person, or arrange in-person meetings with staff, unless it is absolutely necessary.

In reality, you're not likely to do any monitoring that can't be carried out remotely.

How to monitor safeguarding

Who should do it?

The Chair of Governors, or the link governor for safeguarding, SEND or the Pupil Premium.

How to do it

Arrange a call with the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDCo).

Talk about:

- How the school is making sure vulnerable pupils are kept safe (including those who are at home, rather than in school), and whether these plans are working well
- How the school is working with the LA to safeguard vulnerable pupils
- How the school is checking in on all pupils who are staying at home
- How pupils, especially vulnerable pupils, who are still coming in to school are coping
- Whether staff have concerns about any pupils who aren't technically categorised as 'vulnerable' by the DfE, and what the school is doing for these pupils
- How the school is supporting pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals, and whether pupils are accessing this provision
- If your school is delivering remote lessons, what safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe
- Any plans the LA may have to create 'hub' schools, and what impact that might have on safeguarding arrangements
- Any support that staff need from the governing body

Key things to consider

Vulnerable children means children who are supported by social care and those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including:

- Pupils with child in need plans
- Pupils on child protection plans
- Looked after children
- Young carers
- Disabled children
- Pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans

The Headteacher and/or DSL will work closely with social workers and parents/carers to decide on arrangements for specific pupils.

Hub Schools

How to monitor health and safety

Who should do it?

The chair, or your health and safety link governor (if you have one).

How to do it

Arrange a call with the Headteacher

Talk about:

- The arrangements the school has in place to maintain social distancing for staff and pupils on site
- Wider health and safety arrangements (such as having a first aider on site, an increased cleaning rota or locking down certain parts of the school building)
- The continued safety of the school building, including any previously raised premises issues
- Any support that staff need from you

How to monitor Headteacher and staff wellbeing

Who should do it?

The Chair of Governors.

How to do it

Talk to the Headteacher about:

- Any support they, or their staff, need
- How staff are adapting to working remotely, or working on skeleton staff
- Whether all staff have the resources they need to work from home
- Any illness among staff

Key things to consider

In these exceptional circumstances, your Headteacher will be on the receiving end of a lot of information and demands (from the LA, the DfE, unions and anxious parents – to name a few!). The most important thing is to be their ally.

Staff who are working remotely, especially if they have their own children at home, are probably going to take some time to adjust. It's important that the school doesn't overburden remote staff with a heavy workload in an effort to compensate for not being in school.

How to monitor continuing education

Who should do it?

The Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. Even if you have link governors who are responsible for certain areas of the curriculum, it's important for the governing Body to limit the number of governors the Headteacher needs to keep in touch with.

How to do it

Talk to your Headteacher about:

- The school's approach to remote learning, for instance:
 - Is the school sending resource packs home? Are teachers recording video lessons?
 - How much work do they expect pupils to do?
- Any guidance or support the school has given to parents about supporting their child's learning at home
- The balance of learning activities for pupils who are still coming in to school

Key things to consider

School leaders will need to navigate a lot of challenges around remote learning, including:

- Access to technology at home
- The fact that pupils may not be in a very effective learning environment (for instance, if they're sharing small spaces with siblings, or have parents balancing childcare with working from home)
- How capable parents are of supporting their child's learning (many school leaders are emphasising embedding existing learning, because teaching pupils new things remotely can be difficult)
- How equipped the school is to take on more tech-led types of remote teaching

The DfE doesn't have any expectations about what your school's approach to remote teaching should look like.

Even if pupils are still coming in to school, the DfE doesn't expect them to receive a full curriculum. That's because pupils who are eligible to come in to school aren't required to do so, or to do so every day. All the DfE wants is for schools to plan engaging activities that encourage children to attend.

Share your findings with the whole governing Body

Chairs, or whoever carries out the monitoring activities above, should report back to the Full Governing Body regularly. This can be done via email.

This will make sure all governors are up-to-date, or can step in to help monitor the school or support the Headteacher if the chair or vice-chair isn't available.

Regular updates will also help the Governing Body start to think about the impact of the closure on issues related to their link role or committee.