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The following information is from The Key For School Leaders and is to be used in conjunction with the British Section's remote learning policy.

Remote learning: safeguarding pupils and staff

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School types: All · School phases: All

Take these steps to build safeguarding into your remote learning set-up over digital education platforms and when using the phone to check in with pupils.

1. Use school channels to communicate
2. What to do in different scenarios
3. If teachers are uploading resources to an *open* Google Drive
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5. If you're using Google Chat and Google Meet
6. If you're using Google Meet for live streams
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9. If teachers are recording videos to share through YouTube
10. If teachers are phoning pupils

Use school channels to communicate

As always, staff shouldn't communicate with parents or pupils outside school channels (e.g., they shouldn't talk to parents using their personal Facebook accounts, or contact pupils using their personal email addresses or phone numbers).

If you have expectations with parents already about contacting staff and when they'll get replies, remind them about these. Similarly, remind staff about any expectations you've already set in your code of conduct for communicating with pupils and parents, and staff-pupil relationships.

What to do in different scenarios

We've based these scenarios on using open Google Drives, the features of G Suite for Education (e.g. Google Classroom and Google Meet), the features of Office 365 Education (e.g. Microsoft Teams) and YouTube, as these are among the most commonly-used platforms at the moment.

If teachers are uploading resources to an *open* Google Drive

Make sure there's nothing that can identify pupils in the resources, like their names or comments addressed specifically to them, as anyone with the link can view what's in an open Drive.

Note: if you're using a Google Drive as part of G Suite for Education, you don't need to worry about this. By default, your school's Google Drive will only be visible to users in your school.

If you're using Google Classroom to set work and communicate

Decide:

- Whether you'll allow pupils to post and comment in the communication 'Stream', or disable this function for them (see below)
- What they can talk about in posts and comments, if allowed to

(If you disable pupil comments in the 'Stream', pupils will still be able to respond to feedback from their teacher on work they've handed in – they just won't be able to post on the 'Stream' page.)

To disable pupil comments in the 'Stream':

1. Open your class in Google Classroom
2. Click 'Settings' (the cog icon)
3. Scroll down to 'General'
4. Click the drop-down option to the right of 'Stream' and select 'Only teachers can post or comment'
5. Click 'Save'

If you allow pupils to comment, tell them they should only talk about school work in the 'Stream' and that you may 'mute' them, i.e. stop them from posting or commenting (see below), if they post anything that's inappropriate or bullying in nature.

Give parents the chance to opt out of their child posting in the 'Stream' too. If they opt their child out, mute them.

To 'mute' a pupil:

1. Click on a class in Google Classroom
2. Click 'People'
3. Next to the pupil you want to mute, check the box
4. Click 'Actions' > 'Mute'
5. Click 'Mute' again to confirm

To delete inappropriate or bullying posts or comments (you'll still be able to view them if you need to use them as evidence – see below):

1. Go to the class
2. Find the post or comment you want to delete
3. Click 'More' (the 3 dots) > 'Delete'
4. Click 'Delete' again to confirm

To view deleted posts and comments:

1. Go to the class
2. Click 'Settings' (the cog icon)
3. Next to 'Show deleted items', click 'Show' to toggle on
4. Hide the deleted items again by clicking 'Hide' to toggle off
5. Click 'Save' to save your changes and return to the 'Stream' page

If you're using Google Chat and Google Meet

Decide whether you'll let pupils communicate in Google Chat (previously called Google Hangouts). Like any chat function, it could lead to bullying, or be a distraction from learning.

To [turn off Google Chat](#), you need to be an administrator. From the Admin Console Homepage, go to:

1. Apps > G Suite > Hangouts Chat
2. Click 'Service status'
3. To turn chat off for everyone, click 'Off for everyone'
4. Click 'Save'

This will turn off the chat function for everyone – staff and pupils. If you just want to turn it off for pupils, follow the more intricate steps [here](#) (particularly step 5).

Tell teachers to:

- Sit against a neutral background
- Avoid recording in their bedroom where possible (if that's not possible, use a neutral background)
- Dress like they would for school – no pyjamas!
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language

Ask pupils to also be in a shared space in their house, rather than in their bedroom. No pyjamas for pupils either! Alternatively, you could ask them to turn their cameras off.

Ask parents who'll also be there to be mindful that other children might see or hear them and anything in the background.

Make a recording so there's something to go back to later on if you need to, and keep a log of who's doing video calls and when. Check that parents are happy with you making recordings first – tell them it's for school records only.

To [record](#) in Google Meet:

1. In the meeting, click 'More' (the 3 dots) > 'Record meeting'
2. Wait for the recording to start
3. When you finish, click 'More' > 'Stop recording'
4. Click 'Stop recording' again to confirm
5. Wait for the recording file to be generated and saved to the Meet Recordings folder. The meeting organiser and the person who started the recording will also get an email with the recording link

(You'll need to be using the computer version of Meet to record.)

If you're using Google Meet for live streams

Tell teachers to:

- Sit against a neutral background
- Avoid recording in their bedroom if they can (if that's not possible, use a neutral background)
- Dress like they would for school – no pyjamas!
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language

Record live streams so there's something to go back to later on if you need to, and keep a log of who's doing live streams and when.

In 'view-only' Google live streams, pupils will be [automatically muted and won't be visible](#), so you don't need to worry about what other adults in their homes might do that gets caught on camera.

If you [schedule meetings](#) in Google Calendar or Gmail, pupils won't be able to rejoin once the final attendee has left. This means pupils won't be able to rejoin for their own private calls.

You might still want to ask for pupils to be on mute with webcams off, to cut risks. Otherwise, no pyjamas for pupils either, and ask parents to be mindful of what they say and do in the background.

To [record](#) in Google Meet:

1. In the meeting, click 'More' (the 3 dots) > 'Record meeting'
2. Wait for the recording to start
3. When you finish, click 'More' > 'Stop recording'
4. Click 'Stop recording' again to confirm
5. Wait for the recording file to be generated and saved to the Meet Recordings folder. The meeting organiser and the person who started the recording will also get an email with the recording link

(You'll need to be using the computer version of Meet to record.)

If you're using Microsoft Teams

Decide whether you'll let pupils use chat in Microsoft Teams. Like any chat function, it could lead to bullying, or be a distraction from learning.

To disable chat for pupils, you need to create a '[messaging policy](#)' in Teams and then assign it to pupils.

First, create your new messaging policy:

1. Log in to the Microsoft Teams [admin centre](#)
2. Click 'Messaging policies' on the left-hand side
3. Click 'New policy' and give it a name (e.g. 'Disable chat')
4. Select the 'Chat' setting, and turn it off
5. Click 'Save'

Then, assign this policy to pupils:

1. Log in to the admin centre
2. Click 'Messaging policies' on the left-hand side
3. Click on the policy you've just made, then 'Manage users'
4. Search for the user you want to add, click on their name, and then click 'Add'
5. Repeat step 4 until you've added all of your pupils
6. Click 'Save'

Tell teachers to:

- Sit against a neutral background
- Avoid recording in their bedroom where possible (if that's not possible, use a neutral background)
- Dress like they would for school – no pyjamas!
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language

Ask pupils to also be in a shared space in their house, rather than in their bedroom. No pyjamas for pupils either! Alternatively, you could ask them to turn their cameras off.

Ask parents who'll also be there to be mindful that other children might see or hear them and anything in the background.

Make a recording so there's something to go back to later on if you need to, and keep a log of who's doing video calls and when. Check that parents are happy with you making recordings first – tell them it's for school records only.

To [record](#) in Microsoft Teams:

1. In the meeting, click 'More options' (the 3 dots) > 'Start recording'
2. Wait for the recording to start (you'll get a notification saying 'Recording has started')
3. When you finish, click 'More options' > 'Stop recording'
4. Wait for the recording to be saved in Microsoft Stream (whoever started the recording will get an email notification when it's ready to watch)

If you're using Microsoft Teams for live streams

Tell teachers to:

- Sit against a neutral background
- Avoid recording in their bedroom if they can (if that's not possible, use a neutral background)
- Dress like they would for school – no pyjamas!
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language

Record live streams, so there's something to go back to later on if you need to, and keep a log of who's doing live streams and when.

To [record](#) a live event in Teams, check the 'Recording available to producers and presenters' setting when you schedule your live stream. You can make the recording available for pupils too, by checking 'Recording available to attendees'. The recording will be available for 180 days after the event ends.

To disable chat for pupils, uncheck the 'Q&A' setting when you schedule your live stream.

If teachers are recording videos to share through YouTube

Tell them to:

- Record against a neutral background
- Avoid recording in their bedroom if they can (if that's not possible, use a neutral background)
- Dress like they would for school – no pyjamas!
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language

If teachers have a personal account where they've created playlists, ask them to set up a separate work account. See more on getting your staff set up with YouTube in [another of our articles](#), and share the guide in it with staff.

Ask teachers to:

- Set their videos to 'Unlisted' so that only people who have the link (e.g. parents who you've emailed) will be able to see the video
- Set the audience as 'Made for kids', so that adverts won't appear at the start of the video, and comments will be disabled

When uploading videos to YouTube:

1. Under 'Audience', click 'Yes, it's made for kids'
2. When they get to the 'Visibility' step, click 'Unlisted'

If teachers are phoning pupils

Tell them to:

- Do this through parents' phones only (unless this itself poses a safeguarding risk), particularly in primary school, and in all cases make sure parents are aware and agree
- Call in school hours as much as possible
- Make sure someone else at school is aware, and keep a record of the date and time of each call
- Have a parent there at the child's end, and have the phone on speaker phone
- Either use an app like [3CX](#) that will route calls through your school's number rather than their own, or block their number so parents don't see it. (Give parents a heads-up of what time you'll be calling if you're blocking numbers, so they're more likely to pick up.) Please note, the link to another product here isn't an endorsement from The Key
- If possible, have another member of staff on the call. If this isn't possible, record the call, with parents' permission. Explain you're recording for school records only

If teachers are using video calling, take the same steps as above.

Sources

- Thanks to Paul Beeton, KS2 phase lead at Hanover Primary School in Islington, for his tips on using Google Classroom
- Andrew Hall's advice on [safeguarding and coronavirus](#)
- Paul Osborne, chief technology officer at The Key, also helped us with this article
- NSPCC advice on [doing remote teaching safely](#)

LGfL also has advice on [safeguarding and coronavirus](#).

Next Review Date: September 2021