

Safeguarding Updates for all staff

Version 2 updated June 2020

This addendum applies during the period of phased return following school closure due to COVID-19

Please read this document carefully as it outlines the statutory safeguarding principles we must all adopt now that we do not have face to face contact with all pupils daily. The first part of the document outlines the core principles that must be adhered to. The second part of the document is the addendum to our current school safeguarding policy.

Core safeguarding principles remain the same. These are:

- The best interests of the child must always come first
- **If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act immediately on that concern.** You should send an email to Anna Collins and Mel Braye as soon as possible. They will always be available and will check emails daily to enable you to report concerns you have about a child.
- It's essential that unsuitable people aren't allowed to enter the workforce or gain access to children (all staff on site need a DBS Check)
- **Children should continue to be protected when they're online.** Please ensure that you watch any video clips/links before posting them on line for pupils. Only contact pupils via your school email account or the VLE. If you are teaching or contacting pupils using zoom, ensure that you have the permission of the parent, if you are meeting a pupil on their own (usually ensuring that there are two members of staff on the call, the exception to this being the school counsellor) or that you meet with a group of pupils. Ensure you are in a neutral place in your home with a plain background. Your bedroom is not appropriate.
- If you need to contact a pupil by phone **you must** ensure that your home phone number is not identifiable. On a landline, dial 141 first. This works for most mobiles but it is your responsibility to check with your provider. You can also adjust the settings on your mobile phone to withhold your number: Find the "Settings" or "Phone Options" menu. Look for a setting called "Show or Hide" or "Restrict My Identity" or something similar. Depending on the make and model of your phone, the exact wording may be different.
- Please continue to report any bullying and peer-on-peer abuse to Heads of House.
- Form tutors should make contact with their form weekly, via email or the VLE. Please be alert to signs of tension in the family home, money difficulties or other safeguarding concerns.
- Heads of House will continue to make additional contact with our more vulnerable pupils on a weekly basis. Please let them know any concerns you have.

- **For our most vulnerable pupils a schedule of check-ins will be agreed.**
- For pupils on an EHCP, zoom contact takes place at least twice weekly. Teaching assistants working with the pupils will do this.
- Vulnerable pupils are still able to access pastoral support and school counselling.
- Children with a social worker are expected to attend school, unless we, the child's social worker and family have agreed this isn't in the best interests of the child.
- We can offer a pupil a place in school if we feel that this is in the best interest of the child and they are not safe at home. (Remaining at home must always be the first option)
- Non-attendance in school of those pupils expected and those who are not accessing the VLE **must** be followed up. This means staff must contact **tutors and heads of house** of pupils they are concerned about.

Support children's mental health

The current situation may affect both pupils' and parents' mental health. Teachers will need to bear this in mind when setting expectations for the work pupils do at home.

Pupils will be able to access support via the VLE and by contacting pastoral staff by email. Parents can access support through the school too.

POLICY

Child protection during the COVID-19 measures

[Annex to Child Protection policy](#) – version 2.0

Version control and dissemination

This is version 2.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance from our 3 safeguarding local partners. It is available on the school website here www.bsg.bournemouth.sch.uk and is made available to staff by email.

Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children at our school – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first
- if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current school position

BSG is now open for pupils whose parents are key workers and cannot arrange care for their children at home, vulnerable pupils, Year 10 and Year 12 pupils. Under the current social distancing rules, there will be no more than 25% of the school population in at any one time. Pupils will work in groups of no more than 15 in Year 10 and in larger spaces if groups are larger in Year 12. All desks will be placed two metres apart. Hand sanitisers are available at all entrances to the school; handwashing is actively encouraged and corridors have been made one way systems. Social distancing is encouraged at all times. Further information is available in the full school Risk Assessment that has been ratified by the governing body. (This is also available on the school website and has been shared with all staff and parents)

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Child Protection Policy.

The DSL, Anna Collins, and deputy DSL, Mel Braye, will be available during the school day.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education or health care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could

include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

Heads of House, pastoral staff and safeguarding leads know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and the local authority.

Increased vulnerability or risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of children and their parents and carers and will contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

Attendance

Where a child is expected but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family.

The following procedure will apply only in exceptional circumstances: If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed. The DSL or a deputy will attempt to contact the parents or by contact a relative in the first instance. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL or a deputy DSL deems it necessary, we will undertake a home visit or ask an appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure staff the family are not put at risk.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place, we will notify their social worker.

Attendance will be reported to the local authority weekly and the DfE daily. Attendance coding will now include shielding, clinically vulnerable and parental choice not to return their child to school (Year 10 and Y12).

Reporting concerns about children or staff

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Allegations Policy.

Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before the child returns.

The DSL and deputy will work with pastoral staff to support pupils as they return to school. Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are not yet returning to school. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Supporting children not in school

Where the DSL or deputy has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, they will ensure that a communication plan is in place to support that child. Details of that plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file for that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise that children can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse and will follow the process set out in our Child Protection Policy.

Online safety

It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and

our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Child Protection Policy.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL.

New children at the school

Children may join our school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between the special educational needs co-ordinator. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff needs to know the information.

Staff training and induction

For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our DSL and deputy DSLs are unlikely to receive their refresher training. In line with government guidance, our trained DSLs and deputy DSLs will be classed as trained even if they cannot receive this training.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any caused for concern
- there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual
- the individual remains suitable to work with children.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy. In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.