

Bideford College Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

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Approved by:

Date:

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Next review due by:

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Scope and definitions | 4 |
| 2. Core safeguarding principles | 4 |
| 3. Reporting concerns..... | 5 |
| 4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements | 5 |
| 5. Working with other agencies | 5 |
| 6. Monitoring attendance | 5 |
| 7. Peer-on-peer abuse..... | 6 |
| 8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer | 6 |
| 9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns | 6 |
| 10. Safeguarding for children not attending school | 7 |
| 11. Online safety | 7 |
| 12. Mental health | 8 |
| 13. Staff recruitment, training and induction | 8 |
| 14. Children attending other settings..... | 9 |
| 15. Monitoring arrangements..... | 9 |
| 16. Links with other policies..... | 10 |

Context

*This appendix has been developed in response to and aligned to DfE guidance [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools](#) updated 7th January 2021 and the **Schools Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children during Covid-19** updated by Devon LA 12th January 2021.*

From 6th January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers **critical to the COVID response** - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children –

- **children who are vulnerable** (see para 2), and
- children whose parents are critical to the COVID response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This appendix of the Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during this period of time and is likely to be reviewed at regular intervals particularly when new advice is released by the LA.

It remains the case that **safeguarding is everybody's responsibility**, therefore this additional information needs to be shared with all staff and volunteers who in turn must read, digest and seek support from their DSL team or school leaders if further clarification is required. All staff should continue to have access to the Child Protection policy, Code of Conduct and KCSiE 2020 where further details and information can be found.

The schools' safeguarding team (DSL, Safeguarding Governor etc) and their contact details can be found below. Any changes will be shared with all staff and volunteers of the school.

DfE Vulnerable children

As per Dec 31st 2020 - Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

School leaders must also consider the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and all other children attending the setting. If a child is unwell, or showing the symptoms of Coronavirus (as defined by current government guidelines) or the school has information that parents are not following current government guidelines they will expect the child to remain at home and offer provision and support remotely informing relevant partner agencies. This will include establishing regular contact with the family until such time as they have adhered to guidelines enabling the now well or symptom free child to return to school. Leaders will use their professional discretion, working with any partner agencies and LA officers should other exceptional circumstances exist whereby a child compromises the health, wellbeing or safety of staff or other children.

Bideford College will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. If current plans and support packages exist for these pupils the school will continue to provide for these as best as possible in conjunction with the relevant agencies. The lead person for this will be: Averill Jewell

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting CORONAVIRUS, Bideford College or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

Important contacts

| ROLE | NAME | CONTACT DETAILS |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) | Averill Jewell | ajewell@bidefordcollege.org |
| Deputy DSLs | Rachel Vowles | rvowles@bidefordcollege.org |
| | Kaye French | kfrench@bidefordcollege.org |
| Headteacher | Claire Ankers | cankers@bidefordcollege.org |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) | Devon LADO | 01392 384964 |
| Chair of governors | David Humphries | dhumphries@bidefordcollege.org |

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners and local authority (LA).

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - Assessed as being in need
 - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first

- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this.

If you have a Safeguarding concern regarding a student at Bideford College please use the College CPOMS system as per the normal College system. This is accessed via the College portal and can be accessed remotely.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by the email addresses above

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email as to school opening plans and the staff on-site each day. The Safeguarding team listed above will continue to be the Safeguarding team whether in College or not.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- › Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by key Pastoral staff making phone calls home to make contact and conversation
- › Notify their social worker, where they have one

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

If a member of staff has a Pastoral concern about a student please email directly the Head of House.

| HOUSE | NAME | CONTACT DETAILS |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Arthur | Mr Steve Skinner | sskinner@bidefordcollege.org |
| Brunel | Mrs Caroline Luke | cluke@bidefordcollege.org |
| Coleridge | Mr Rod Cope | rcope@bidefordcollege.org |
| Farwell | Mr Warrick Gibbins | wgibbins@bidefordcollege.org |
| Hepworth | Mr Dan Munro | dmunro@bidefordcollege.org |

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

10.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children we have determined would benefit from additional pastoral support and not only ones with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about.

For all these students who are not attending College we are following this system –

Current child protection concerns and children in Care: Karla Giles to make phone contact for those not in College

- Weekly Phone contact
- Liaising with all necessary professionals as usual
- Attending any planned review meetings, including PEPs unless advised otherwise
- Use of school management information system to record and report contact

For all students

- Phone contact once every 3 weeks by tutor or assigned key worker
- Use of school management information system to record and report
- 6th form student will be monitored by KLF, NBA and KG
- RKV and the SEN team will continue to support children with EHCPs with weekly phone calls.
- Lead LSA's will support students on the SEN register with K with weekly phone calls.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them with our regular contact with these agencies.

If we can't make contact, we will escalate through the College Pastoral system and the safeguarding team will determine next course of action e.g. contacting children's social care or the police.

10.2 Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact a member of the Academy Leadership team who will advise and guide where necessary.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing code of conduct.

We are continuing to refine our understanding on keeping ourselves safe whilst conducting remote learning and all guidance regarding this will come from Bruce Butt or Averill Jewell

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

11.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online for example the use of the NSPCC website or contacting Devon Children's services through the MASH or the Early Help Hub (please see main policy)

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Our Inclusion lead worker is in contact with students and families to promote this and is working with the wider Pastoral team in how to support students.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

13. Staff recruitment, training and induction

13.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. These risk assessments would be completed by the CEO of the MAT.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

13.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

13.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

14. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 6 weeks by Averill Jewell and Claire Ankers. At every review, it will be approved by the governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy