

COVID 19 Safeguarding Policy Addendum – Spring 2021

Date: January 2021

Review date: As required in line with government guidelines

Introduction

Broadmeadow Special School has created this safeguarding Covid-19 addendum to support our safeguarding and child protection policy and to address ongoing issues as a result of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. The following safeguarding information, intentions and commitments can be applied to all eventualities where appropriate to include the following scenarios full re-opening, partial re-opening, phased return of pupils and full closure of schools.

All staff will continue to act in the best interests of all children, if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern about any child they will act immediately and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in person by phone, e-mail, skype/facetime/MS Teams or other appropriate channels of communication.

Our school will continue to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education - statutory Guidance, in particular, part 1, part 3 - safer recruitment, part 4- management of allegations and part 5 -dealing with peer on peer abuse, child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, online safety and other forms of peer on peer abuse and the safeguarding and welfare sections of the EYFS Foundation Framework.

All staff understand the continued importance of acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns, including new concerns where children are returning to school or working at home. Our school is aware that some families may have experienced and continue to experience challenging circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic, we will continue to support families and children making appropriate referrals through the well-established referral systems in place. Our school will make every effort to encourage parents and carers to advise us of any changes regarding academic progress, welfare, health and wellbeing that they are aware of as their child/ren work/s at home or return/s to school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure all relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children remains accurate and up to date.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads, deputies or senior leaders will continue to follow all local procedures, we will continue to refer all concerns through the well-established channels e.g. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the Channel Panel etc.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will continue to work closely with and inform the Virtual School Headteacher if we have

any concerns regarding our children and young people in care and children and young people who were previously in care.

When appropriate and we are able to do so, our school will continue to remain open and provide places for all vulnerable children and children of critical workers if it is safe to do so. Dependent on the circumstances it may be that children will be offered reduced time in school using a rota system.

In circumstances where a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to school, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and school will explore the reasons for this, directly with the parent, and help to resolve any concerns or difficulties wherever possible. Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting the virus, our school or social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Role of the Designated, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and Senior Leaders

Head teachers; Lisa Walker and Karen Warrington

Assistant Head teacher; Dawn Beamer

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Jackie Proffitt. 01902 558330/07564044248**

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Lisa Walker and Karen Warrington**

01902 558330

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Multi Agency Trust Safeguarding manager: **Ann Brown**

ann.brown@clpt.co.uk

Keeping children Safe in Education states: During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) is expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to define what “available” means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

The optimal scenario for our school providing care for children is to have a trained DSL or deputy available on site. This may not always be possible, and where this is

the case there are 2 options we will ensure the school DSL/DDSLs will be available to contact via phone or online video.

If our DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, our school will require a senior leader to take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at our school.

Our school will seek guidance from the MAT should a DSL/DDSLs not be available on site for a prolonged period, for example illness.

Attendance

Our school will continue to record and report attendance in accordance with any directives from the government and our local authority. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows our school to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the local authority and the DfE on attendance and the number of children taking up places if required.

Our school has processes in place (e.g. phone calls, e-mails, text messaging, virtual meetings, etc.) to check on the welfare and attendance of any vulnerable child. We keep a record of all calls and contact with families and colleagues.

The Wolverhampton MASH is fully operational and continues to accept all levels of referral. If we are experiencing any issues in getting in touch with Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) our school will contact Helen Patten - helen.patten@wolverhampton.gov.uk

The safeguarding service are also continuing to hold initial and review child protection conferences; however, these will be done virtually or by submission of a report, our school will continue to contribute to these meetings. If we have any issues, our school will contact Nicola Hale - nicola.hale@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Health and safety risk assessment

Here at Broadmeadow we have completed an in-depth risk assessment in our response to Covid-19. This document is constantly under review and will change in accordance with government changes and updates. Further information is available on our website.

Training

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Partners continue to provide DSL training virtually but spaces may be limited. Should the school DSL/DDSLs be unable to access refresher training due to limited availability, they will remain as a DSL/DDSL until training is available. Currently our school DSL and DDSLS training requirements are up to date.

All existing school staff already have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of KCSIE and our school's safeguarding policy. This appendix will be made available to all existing staff, governors and volunteers to ensure they are aware of the current arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

If new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter our school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. An up to date safeguarding/child protection policy (described above) will support this process as will part 1 of KCSIE. Here at Broadmeadow we have a comprehensive induction process in place, and the majority of this can continue using online or remote learning. Rigorous monitoring ensures we will complete a three month follow up session to discuss safeguarding practice. This is an opportunity to assess knowledge, and provide any further training if needed.

Our school will continue to seek advice from the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together training co-ordinator and use the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together website to keep up to date with any local training offer and information.
<https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

Here at Broadmeadow we understand it is essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. If our school must recruit new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE. In response to COVID-19, we will consider and implement safe and appropriate processes to reduce the need face-to-face contact if required.

During this current period if our school uses volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in KCSIE. Under no circumstances would we allow a volunteer who has not been checked to be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Our school will continue to follow our legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found in KCSIE.

Our school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as outlined in KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral. During the COVID-19 period all referrals will be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk. All referrals received by the TRA will continue to be considered. Where referrals on serious safeguarding matters are received and it is deemed that there is a public interest in doing so consideration will be given as to whether an interim prohibition order (IPO) should be put in place. The TRA will continue to progress all cases but will not schedule any hearings at the current time.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that our school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried

out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, our school must continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in KCSIE. The SCR can, if a school chooses, provide the means to log everyone that will be working or volunteering in our school on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other settings. The SCR can also, if a school or college chooses, be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

Mental health and well-being

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Our school is aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Whilst we are providing for all children and children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, our school will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Our school will have regard to the DfE guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools which sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem. Our support for pupils in the current circumstances may include using our in-house specialist knowledge and capacity to put support in place, together with regular contact with parents. We are also able to seek advice from specialist agencies, and would not hesitate to do so as and when required. All staff are trained in the use of PROACT SCIPr-UK® positive behaviour support and crisis intervention. Please see our behaviour policy for further information.

Helpful guidance and links

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools__.pdf

<https://www.minded.org.uk/> <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>
<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/mental-wellbeing/overview>
<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>
<http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/covid-19.aspx>
<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/c19> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/>

Online safety in our school and remote learning

E-safety IT lead: Noosha Doley

Here at Broadmeadow Special School we understand that it is more important than ever that our school provides a safe environment, including online. Our school will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online on our school IT systems or recommended resources. Our school will consider who within the Multi Agency Trust has the technical knowledge to maintain safe IT arrangements, review our e-safety policy, acceptable use of technology and computing policy if required and to communicate

any amendments. Our school has published our remote learning offer and this is available to view on our website. We will also consider what our contingency arrangements are if our E-safety staff become unavailable and will seek advice from MAT. The UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online. The UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face. We will also contact our MAT for assistance if required.

Children and online safety away from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

Here at Broadmeadow we will only be providing or recommending ICT links that have been vetted by staff. Whilst we recognise virtual teaching can be used, this will not be our only form of remote learning due to the age and development of the children. Specialist resources made available during the pandemic by Oak National Academy will be considered, providing they are relevant and appropriate to the child's learning.

Broadmeadow Special School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by the MAT to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Please see our e-safety policy for further information.

When our school has contact with parents/carers (E.g. via phone calls, e-mails, text messaging, website etc.) we can reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We feel it is especially important for parents/carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from our school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

This policy is an addendum to our Safeguarding and child protection policy.