

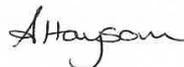
Annex 1



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection at
Backwell School**

Policy Approved by the Board of Trustees

Signed: 

Date: 3 April 2020

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Chair of Board of Trustees

Authorised for Issue

Signed: 

Date: 3 April 2020

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School Name: Backwell School

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Date: 3rd April 2020

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1. Context

From 20th March 2020 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-19 response - who absolutely need to attend – and for children deemed vulnerable.

This addendum of the Backwell School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements which have been adapted to address the circumstances of the school's partial closure during the crisis.

2. Defining 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, health and 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 (DfE guidance does not extend to Previously Looked After Children, although leaders may use discretion to include such children in the scope of this category as described below). 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

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 or college 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.

3. Working with vulnerable children with social workers

Backwell School 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.

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 the school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the school or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

The school will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school. Where this is not possible, we will check in regularly to encourage their engagement with home learning.

4. Attendance monitoring for all children including those who are vulnerable

Although DfE Guidance (27 March 2020) makes it clear that during the closure period Local Authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance, the following practices will apply:

- The school and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether vulnerable children should be attending school – the school will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.
- The school will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.
- To support the above, the school will, when communicating with parents and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.
- In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL, who are named in the key contacts list at the front of this policy.

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home. This may include the DSL or Deputy DSL from another school in the Trust.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and 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 the school or college.

It is important that all school staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, including PEP meetings for LAC, which can be done remotely.

6. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email both the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher, or DSL/other Senior staff if the headteacher is not available. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

7. Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. DSLs have had an offer of online training made available by the LAs and Safeguarding Boards, which they should access if necessary.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited or new volunteers accepted, they will continue to be undertake Level 1 Safeguarding Training and receive school specific safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Trust Head of HR that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

8. 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, the school will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

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.

Where the school is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The school will continue to follow the 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 at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

The school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period, all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, the school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

9. Online safety in schools and colleges

The school will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

10. Children and online safety away from school and college

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 Lighthouse Schools Partnership code of conduct.

The 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 learning using online resources:

- Webcams and streaming of live teaching should not take place without the written permission of the headteacher. The Trust has an assumption that such provision is not offered for reasons of safeguarding.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by the school or Trust to communicate with pupils. Examples include the VLEs in place in secondary schools.
- Communication by emails should be from staff school email addresses to pupils' school email addresses (if such exist) or from staff school email addresses to parents' private email addresses. Staff should never enter into any correspondence sent from a child's private email account.
- Staff must not use personal social media for e-learning purposes or communication with pupils although schools may wish to publish learning materials from school accounts on open social media such as Twitter.

11. Supporting children not in school

This school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact that has been made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

The school and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

The school recognises that school attendance is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

12. Supporting children in school

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

The school will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The school will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

The school will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where the school has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – Senior Leaders will discuss them immediately with a view to resolving as soon as possible. Where a solution is not found, the LSP Central Team will be informed for a decision to be made.

13. Peer on Peer Abuse

Backwell School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

14. Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership Central Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.