

Child Protection and Safeguarding during the COVID-19 measures

Brockington College Annex to Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy – version 1.0

1. Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. Most children are no longer in a school setting and staff numbers have been affected by the outbreak.

Schools have been asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This Annex to our Child Protection policy 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.

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2. Version control and dissemination

This is version 1.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by our DSL, or a deputy DSL, on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or

guidance. It is available on the school website <https://www.brockington.leics.sch.uk/> and has been issued to staff by email.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff (and volunteers) in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff and volunteers can contact them.

3. Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times, the safeguarding of all the young people 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 young people continue to come first
- if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- we will continue to adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 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

4. Current school position

In line with the government advice, Brockington College is able to offer an operational onsite provision for children who are vulnerable (currently defined as those who have a social worker and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan) and for children whose parents are keyworkers and critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. This is operating with a skeleton staff.

All staff and volunteers will continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for the young people still attending school and those at home. Any staff (and volunteers) attending on site from outside our school will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding risks and know how to act if they have concerns.

5. Safeguarding partners' advice

We will continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners, and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting 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. Roles and responsibilities

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

If possible, a DSL will be available on site during the school day. All staff will be informed by email who the available DSL/DDSL is for each day and how they can be contacted.

Where this is not possible, we will:

- have a deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video; or
- ensure we have access to a trained DSL, or deputy DSL, from another school or college by phone and/or online video.

Where our DSL, or a deputy DSL, cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will ensure a senior leader from the school takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection is

Sue Lawrence Contact details: email: sll@brockington.leics.sch.uk Tel: 07881342998

The deputy designated lead(s) are:

Jon Barton Contact details: email: jcb@brockington.leics.sch.uk Tel: 07827488927

Sadie Batstone Contact details: email: seb@brockington.leics.sch.uk Tel: 01162863722

Victoria Carr Contact details: email: vcc@brockington.leics.sch.uk Tel: 01162863722

Rakesh Patel Contact details: email: rnp@brockington.leics.sch.uk Tel: 01162863722

Sarah Heggs (to 23rd April 2020) Contact details: email: sjh@brockington.leics.sch.uk Tel:

7. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with 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 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, consultation with carers or support workers who provide any essential services. Many of our children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

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

Where pupils are vulnerable, and they are at home, we will conduct a risk assessment and establish a contact plan to ensure we maintain contact with pupils and parents on a regular basis.

Senior leaders in our school, especially the DSL and deputies, 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, should it be deemed necessary.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and local authority virtual school heads (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Our contact plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- How staff will make contact –i.e. by phone, email, Skype, conference calls etc.
- Anything else that may be deemed necessary to meet individual circumstances
- where relevant, we will agree these plans with social workers or other agencies working with our vulnerable young people

8. 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. DSLs and Deputy DSLs will be able to offer support and will make use of white 'Services Directory' to signpost parents who are struggling with specific issues.

9. Attendance

During this time, we will complete the DFE daily attendance register.

Where a child is expected, but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed. Attempts to contact the parents will be made through various methods, including by telephone, email or by contacting a relative, or notified additional contact, in the first instance.

If contact cannot be made, or if the DSL, or a deputy DSL, deems it necessary, we will ask an appropriate agency to make a home visit. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure no one is put at risk.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place in the school provision, we will notify their social worker or appropriate agency.

10. 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 as stated in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and they will advise the DSL or a DDSL of any concerns they have about any young person, 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 young people 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 Child Protection Policy.

11. 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
- and the individual remains suitable to work with children.

12. 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 and young people.

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.

13. Peer on peer abuse

We recognise that young people can abuse their peers. 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 young people 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 processes set out in our Child Protection Policy.

14. Online safety

It is likely that young people 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 our young people.

Where staff are interacting with young people online, they will continue to follow our Acceptable Use policy.

Staff who interact with young people online will continue to look out for signs someone 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.

We will make sure our young people know how to report any concerns, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to young people online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what we are asking students 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 provided
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

15. 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 key information that, where appropriate, may include a 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 DSL level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators / named individuals with oversight of SEND provision for children with EHC plans. 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 need to know the information.

16. Supporting children not in school

Where the DSL has identified a young person to be on the edge of social care support, or a child would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, where appropriate they will ensure that a risk assessment is conducted and a contact plan is in place to support that young person.

This annex will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during the COVID-19 measures.

Further Information: **Please ALSO note the following update to our main Child Protection Policy 2019-20**

- 1. LADO / Allegations Manager** Changed contacts: now Kim Taylor / Lovona Brown
0116 305 7597
2. The Peer on peer abuse section has been updated to read:

Peer on Peer Abuse - This school recognises that young people sometimes display abusive behaviour themselves and that such incidents or allegations must be referred for appropriate support and intervention. Such abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. This abuse could for example include sexual violence and sexual harassment, “upskirting”, initiation/hazing type violence, all forms of bullying, aggravated sexting and physical violence experienced by both boys and girls. However, peer on peer abuse is more likely to be perpetrated by boys on girls.

There are guidance’s and policies to address these concerns including the college Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, E-safety Policy, “Guidance for schools working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour” (Leicestershire LA Guidance) and DfE guidance “Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges. Where specific risks are identified, a formal risk assessment will be undertaken in order to minimise the risk of abuse and to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils. Appropriate support will be offered to both victims and perpetrators.