



BRENTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

LEARNING AND ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Child Protection Policy

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| Ratified by Governors | March 2022 |
| Review date | March 2023 |
| SLT responsible | SGn |

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Policy Statement and Principles

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio and has been updated in light of the DfE guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" and "Keeping Children Safe in Education Summary September 2021". The school's core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance safer children make more successful learners
- representatives of the whole-school community of students, parents, staff and governors will be involved in policy development and review
- policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

Safeguarding Statement

Brentside High School recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and takes seriously its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the students in its care. The school believes that all children and young people have the right to grow up in a safe and caring environment, which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse and the right to effective support, protection and justice.

The students in the school's care have the right to expect adults in positions of responsibility to do everything possible to foster these rights. They have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their:

- race, religion, first language or ethnicity
- gender or sexuality
- age
- health or disability
- political or immigration status.

All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the local safeguarding children board (LSCB).

Policy Aims

- to provide all staff and governors with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- to ensure consistent good practice
- to demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to students, parents and other partners
- to contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Context

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students at the school.

There is strong evidence to show that more than 10 per cent of children are likely to suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with students, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns

Roles and responsibilities

Designated Senior Persons (also referred to as DSL Designated Senior Lead)

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements. The local authority maintains a list of all designated senior persons (DSPs) for child protection. There must be a deputy DSP to act in his/her absence.

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| Designated Senior Person | Irenie Mertzelos |
| Deputy Designated Senior Person | Andrea Lane |

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| Deputy Designated Senior Person | Sarah Gent |
| Deputy Designated Senior Person | Charlotte Hames |

The DSPs:

- are appropriately trained
- act as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- have an understanding of LSCB procedures
- keep written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the student's general file
- refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensure that when a student with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the student's social worker is informed
- attend and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinate the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensure that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood part one of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (appendix 10); the school's child protection policy

and the school's Code Ethical of Practice (appendix 6)

- ensure that the child protection policy is updated annually
- liaise with the nominated governor and Headteacher as appropriate
- keep a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- make the child protection policy available to parents.

The deputy designated persons are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated persons, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSPs, the deputies will assume all of the functions above.

The governing body ensures that the school has:

- a DSP for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- a child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request
- procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Headteacher
- safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks
- a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Headteacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSP should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.

The governing body should also ensure that sufficient of its members have been adequately trained in safe recruiting to enable adequate governor involvement in recruiting senior staff.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher.

The Headteacher:

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSPs and deputies to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures
- ensures that students' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain the school's responsibilities towards students, standards of good practice need to be established and maintained

Good practice includes:

- maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- treating all students with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving students in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among students
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in students' behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse

- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information-sharing
- asking the student's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse.

Abuse of trust

All school staff should be aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a student under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent.

The school's Code of Ethical Practice sets out the school's expectations of staff (see Appendix 6).

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language.

Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support students and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact.
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest

- responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in the school's whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.

Complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Headteacher and governors. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

If you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code (Appendix 9) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended in the best interest of all parties.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Headteacher. Allegations against the Headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

Local Authority procedures on managing allegations of abuse by member of staff are detailed in Appendix 7.

Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and governors will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the Headteacher and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSPs (and deputies) will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's Visiting Staff Information Booklet which contains summary information about child protection (see Appendix 2).

Safer recruitment

Brentside High School endeavours to ensure that 'safe' staff are employed by following the guidance in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* together with the local authority and the school's individual procedures. Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including their current employer and at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity, qualifications and right to work in the UK
- complete a DBS check
- be interviewed

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, the school's own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on the school site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When Brentside students attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect students we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on the school website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the student's first name with an image
- ensure students are appropriately dressed
- encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

e-Safety

Most students will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep students safe in school. Cyber-bullying by students, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through the school's anti-bullying procedures.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and students are not allowed to access these sites in school. Some students will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home. A short factsheet to help parents and students understand the possible risks can be found at Appendix 4.

The school will follow the local authority's guidelines set out in Appendix 5 following an e-safety incident.

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Indicators of abuse and neglect (the following text has been abstracted from Keeping Children Safe in Education)

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- upskirting
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;

- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

Serious violence

Staff should also be aware of the indicators that children may be at risk from, or are involved in, serious violent crime. These may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Changing friendships, or forming friendships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or assault, or unexplained injuries
- Significant change in wellbeing
- Unexplained gifts or possessions

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Indicators of abuse – what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work

- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

Impact of Abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking Action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- report your concern to the DSP by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- record your concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.
- If the emergency services are required, call Patrol and request immediate help

Appendix 1 provides the procedure for reporting a concern.

If you suspect a student is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a student may be at risk, but you have no ‘real’ evidence. The student’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or you may have noticed physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the student the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine to ask the student if they are alright or if you can help in any way. If the student does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section ‘If a student discloses to you’.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

If a student discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a student talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the student may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the student may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the student:

- allow them to speak freely

- remain calm and do not over react – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the student
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the student’s mother think about all this
- at an appropriate time tell the student that in order to help them you must pass the information on
- do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong
- tell the student what will happen next. The student may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day
- report verbally to the designated person
- write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person
- seek support if you feel distressed.

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSP will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children’s services.

Referral to Children’s Services

The DSP will make a referral to Children’s Services if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school’s anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a student’s behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the student and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person, Headteacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the Headteacher.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and students on request.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, Police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, the deputy DSPs, the Headteacher and chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

Related safeguarding portfolio policies/procedures

- Physical Intervention policy
- Praise and Complaints Procedure
- Anti-bullying
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEN Policy
- Missing Children Procedure
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Staff Discipline
- Grievance and Disciplinary

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Important contacts

| ROLE | NAME | CONTACT DETAILS |
|---|------------------|--|
| Designated safeguarding person (DSP) | Irenie Mertzelos | safeguarding@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk |
| Deputy DSP | Sarah Gent | safeguarding@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk |
| Deputy DSP | Andrea Lane | safeguarding@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk |
| Headteacher | Charlotte Hames | info@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) | Paul Andrews | asv@ealing.gov.uk |
| Chair of governors | Catherine Smith | info@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk |

1. Scope and definitions

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

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 definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Are assessed as being in need, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - With a child in need plan
 - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:
 - On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
 - Adopted
 - At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - Living in temporary accommodation
 - Young carers
 - Considered vulnerable at the provider and LA's discretion

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

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
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not 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, both for children continuing to attend or returning to school and those at home.

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.

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

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

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 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

We will monitor our attendance register daily. We will also continue to submit the Department for Education's daily online attendance form, until no longer asked to do so.

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers (SAWO/SAFE worker)
- Notify their social worker, where they have one (SAWO/SAFE worker)

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 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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

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

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

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 for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Contact with vulnerable students

During school closure, a named keyworker (usually the SAFE worker) has at least weekly telephone contact with children who have a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

If we can't make contact, we will contact the social worker or the safer school's officer

10. 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 students' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately by contacting the DSL or safeguarding@brentsidehigh.ealing.sch.uk

10.1 Children returning to school

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

If this is the case the DSL (and deputy) or key worker will be given more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate)

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see students in person.

10.2 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. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary, they will use personal phones, but they will withhold their personal number.

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

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing code of ethical practice and IT acceptable use policy.

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.

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 if appropriate.

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

Information will be available on the school website.

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers 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

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 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.

Similarly, temporary measures allow right to work checks to be carried out by verifying scanned documents on a video call. If we need to take this approach, we will follow [Home Office and Immigration Enforcement guidance](#).

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 do not have any at present and have no intention to have any. Should the need arise, 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.

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

14. Safeguarding induction and training

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

14.1 New and 'on loan' staff induction

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

14.2 DSL training

The DSL (and deputy) may not be able to take part in training during this period. If this is the case, the DSL (and deputy) will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

The DSL (and deputy) will do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups. Ms Gent and Ms Mertzelos have attended regular DSL meetings organised by the local authority during lockdown which has enabled them to keep up to date with the local and national developments.

15. Keeping records of who's on site

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

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

We use the single central record to log:

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

16. Children attending other settings

We do not have any students attending other settings and we have no intention for them to do so. Should the need arise, 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

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

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the DSL regularly and updated as necessary.

18. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of ethical practice
- Online safety policy
- Praise and Complaints Procedure
- Anti-bullying
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEN Policy
- Missing Children Procedure
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Staff Discipline
- Grievance and Disciplinary