

Addendum

COVID-19
Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures for
The Blandford School
during the closure (Spring 2020)

Purpose

As of 20th March 2020, the government asked parents 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.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are key workers in the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of The Blandford School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy therefore outlines changes and updates to our Child Protection Policy during the closure.

Safeguarding personnel

Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead and Lead for Prevent	Penny White	01258 451121	pwhite@blandfordschool.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Duncan Smith Vicky Moore Sally Wilson Liz Bishopp	01258 451121 01258 451121 01258 451121 01258 451121	dsmith@blandfordschool.org.uk vmoore@blandfordschool.org.uk swilson@blandfordschool.org.uk lbishopp@blandfordschool.org.uk
Headteacher	Sally Wilson	01258 451121	swilson@blandfordschool.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Mario Roncaglia		
Safeguarding Governor	Jill Stevens		

Vulnerable children

The government has defined vulnerable children as including 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, those who are subject to a Child in Need Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they otherwise meet

the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Eligibility for free school meals should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Students with an EHC plan will be assessed on a case by case basis, in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue attend school, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This might involve if required, for example, other agencies visiting the home, or providing input remotely. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

The Blandford School will continue to work with and support children's social workers and with the Dorset Virtual School (for Children in Care/previously in Care) to help protect vulnerable 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 increased 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 Blandford School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to access education including remotely if needed.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. The Blandford School will report daily to Dorset Council on the attendance of those students who are attending the school during the closure and weekly on the attendance, or otherwise, of those who are entitled to a place.

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

The Blandford School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – The Blandford School will follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The Blandford 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.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, their social worker will be notified.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Blandford School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, during this period of closure, four Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Penny White

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Duncan Smith, Vicky Moore, Sally Wilson and Liz Bishopp.

Whenever practically possible, we will have a trained DSL or Deputy DSL available on site. On the rare occasions when this is not possible, a trained DSL or Deputy will be available to be contacted via phone or video conference and will attend the school if required.

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 and liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It may require them to meet with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school. The senior leader would take advice in these cases from the school's designated safeguarding personnel. On each day, there is a senior leader on site who will fulfil this role.

The Blandford School staff and volunteers must have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, provide information and reports and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via Myconcern, which can be done remotely. Reports must be made without delay.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access Myconcern from home, they should email or telephone the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In this case, they must ensure that their concern has been received.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally by phone and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors who is Mario Roncaglia.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training has been postponed during the COVID 19 closures. For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL or Deputy DSL who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL 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 volunteers engaged, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

When recruiting new staff, The Blandford School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, 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.

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

In the case of volunteers, The Blandford School 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 with students.

The Blandford 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 Blandford 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, The Blandford School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

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

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

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, meetings and discussions should follow the same principles as set out in the Staff Code of Conduct.

The Blandford School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Live online learning

The Blandford School has taken the decision not to deliver live lessons, meetings or discussions by video-links, in order to protect its staff and students.

Supporting children not in school

The Blandford School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Regular contact will be made with any student deemed vulnerable and this contact recorded on the appropriate tracker for that year group.

Communication and contact may include remote contact (e.g. email), phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and always recorded in a timely and transparent manner.

The Blandford School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communications.

Communications must be reviewed regularly (at least once a week) 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 Blandford School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

The Blandford School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to student ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The Blandford 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 Blandford 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 Blandford School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the chair of governors.

Peer on Peer Abuse

The Blandford 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 of the 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 Myconcern and appropriate referrals made.