

Your school log

**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at   
Bishopton PRU**

Annex to Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy

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| **Date:** | January 2021 |
| **Date approved by Management Committee:** |  |
| **Signature of Chair of Management Committee:** | Sue Cain |
| **To be reviewed:** | Annually |

**Aim**

* The purpose of our Bishopton Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and protocols are to keep our learners and staff safe whilst acknowledging that many of our learners present major safeguarding anxieties by virtue of their home circumstances.
* The purpose of this Addendum is to ensure that those principals of keeping everyone safe are adhered to in the present situation taking account of the advice presented by HM Government.

**Context**

In response to the global COVID 19 pandemic, schools were advised to close on 20th March 2020. From 23rd March 2020, parents were asked by the government to keep their children at home wherever possible, and for schools to open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response – where no other childcare alternative was possible.

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 critical to the COVID-19 response and could not be safely cared for at home.

In response, this addendum to the Bishopton PRU Safeguarding and/or Child Protection Policy   
contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

*Contacts*

*Vulnerable children*

*Attendance monitoring*

*Designated Safeguarding Lead*

*Reporting a concern*

*Safeguarding Training and induction*

*Safer Recruitment, Volunteers and Movement of Staff*

*Safety in schools and colleges*

*Children and online safety away from school and college*

*Supporting children not in school*

*Supporting children in school*

*Peer on Peer Abuse*

*Support from the Local Authority*

***It remains the expectation that, with regards to safeguarding, the best interests of children and young people must always continue to come first. If anyone in school/college has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act and must act immediately in line with school policy and KCSIE 2019.***

**Key contacts**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name** | **Contact Number** | **E Mail** |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead | Emily Carr  Headteacher | 01642 - 566369 | btemilycarr@sbcschools.org.uk |
| Rachel Campbell  Co-Headteacher | 01642 - 566369 | btrcampbell@sbcschools.org.uk |
| LA Head of Education | Mr Eddie Huntington | 01642 526407 | Eddie.huntington@stockton.gov.uk |
| Chair of Governors  And Safeguarding Governor | Susan Cain | 01642 - 566369 |  |
| Safeguarding Officer | Jemma Cruces | 01642 - 566369 | btjcruces@sbcschools.org.uk |
| Attendance and Parent Support Officer | Lindsay Davies | 01642 - 566369 | btldavies@sbcschools.org.uk |
| Bishopton PRU | 01642 - 566369 | | |

**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 in the care of 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. School may also want to support other children who are vulnerable, where they are able to do so.

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.

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(s), 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.*

Bishopton PRU 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 headteachers (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Emily Carr/Rachel Campbell.

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 Bishopton PRU will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer.

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

Bishopton PRU will encourage all vulnerable children and young people to attend school, 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. Bishopton will complete the suggested DFE spreadsheet and upload as required, as well as report to the Local Authority.

PRU/social workers will agree with parents/carers which vulnerable children should be attending school. Bishopton PRU will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

Bishopton PRU will also follow up with any parent or carer whose work is critical to the COVID 19 response and has arranged care for their child(ren) if the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

**How Will This Look in Our School?**

To support the above, Bishopton PRU will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available. Any contacts will be recorded on CPOMs (or alternative).

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Bishopton PRU will notify their social worker.

Where parents no longer require a childcare place, school will remind them of their right to a place, should the need arise.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Bishopton PRU has Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead are Emily Carr and Rachel Campbell

Bishopton also have a Safeguarding Officer: Jemma Cruces, and a wider school Safeguarding Team.

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL available on site. Where this is unable to be the case (for example, when working from home) a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video.

Where a trained DSL is not on site, and is ill, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site, seeking guidance from the LA Chief Adviser where appropriate. This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system (CPOMS – or alternative) and liaising with the offsite DSL or deputy and/or, 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 Bishopton PRU staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

On each day, staff on site including any temporary staff or volunteers will be made aware of the identity of the DSL and how to communicate with them.

The nominated DSL(s) will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

**Reporting Any Concern**

Where staff have any concern about a child, either those attending school or those staying at home, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which includes making a report via online reporting e.g. CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access CPOMS (or alternative) from home, they should email and/or phone the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or 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 DSL or headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and immediately followed up with an email.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Susan Cain.

The LADO will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations against staff in line with the school policy. Phil Curtis the LADO and can be contacted on [phil.curtis@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:phil.curtis@hartlepool.gov.uk) or 07787 697635

**Safeguarding Training and induction**

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus. For the period that 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 and understood 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 enter Bishopton PRU, they will continue to be provided with a 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 LA, schools should seek assurance from the DSL of the host school/hub that members of staff have received appropriate and up to date 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.

**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 school staff, Bishopton PRU 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 Bishopton PRU 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.***

Bishopton PRU 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.

Bishopton PRU 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](mailto: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.

Bishopton PRU will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 155 inc. in KCSIE.

**Online Safety in Schools and Colleges**

Bishopton PRU will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online firewall and filtering system and agreed safer internet use protocols.

**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 that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with according to the Child Protection Policy and, where appropriate, referrals should be made to the DSL who will notify children’s social care and if required, the police.

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

Bishopton PRU will ensure that any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Parents/carers, children and young people will be given regular reminders about keeping safe online.

**Below are some things to consider if/when delivering virtual lessons, *especially where webcams are involved. All apps/platforms must be agreed by school leaders;***

* + - Tuition must be in groups only: no 1 to 1 conferencing;
    - Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the

household;

* + - Any computers used should be in family areas, for example, not in

bedrooms, and the background should be blurred.

* + - Any live classes should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, footage

can be reviewed.

* + - Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming

may prevent the family ‘getting on’ with their day.

* + - Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family

members in the background.

* + - Staff must only use platforms provided by school to communicate

with pupils

* + - Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

**Supporting Children Not in School**

Bishopton PRU 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 additional or bespoke pastoral 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 (or alternative), as should any record of contact made.

Communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact and door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered, discussed with leaders and recorded.

SBC COVID – 19 Guidance has been made available to all staff undertaking home visits. It gives guidance on keeping staff and others safe. Appendix (a) below.

Bishopton PRU 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 continue to share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages and through the use of phone calls and letters.

Bishopton PRU recognises that school 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 at Bishopton PRU need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils’ work for home learning purposes. Regular check ins with the family will be undertaken in line with leaders’ expectations and contacts will be recorded on CPOMs and on a daily spreadsheet.

**Supporting Children in School**

Bishopton PRU is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.

Bishopton PRU 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 that the staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate and enable effective social distancing to maximise safety.

Bishopton PRU will refer to the government guidance for education and childcare   
settings on how to implement social distancing and will continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Bishopton PRU 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS (or alternative).

Where Bishopton PRU has concerns about the impact of staff absence on maintaining safe provision – such as the Designated Safeguarding Leads, senior leaders or first aiders – we will discuss this with the LA’s Chief Adviser and Chair of Governors.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

Bishopton PRU 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 2019 and those outlined within 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 CPOMS (or alternative) and appropriate referrals made.

**Support from the Local Authority**

LA advisers, Virtual School staff and the SEND manager will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable DSLs to carry out their role effectively.

**Contact and Support Arrangements for Vulnerable Learners and Families**

* Most vulnerable families will receive a daily welfare check – and any failure to make contact will result in immediate escalation to safeguarding Lead/headteacher. Concerns arising from welfare checks including failure to make contact will be referred to appropriate agencies. In some circumstances a home visit may be made but only after rigorous risk assessments.
* Families not judged to be at high risk will receive a call either once or twice a week as appropriate to check that everyone is safe and well.
* Safeguarding lead (to be identified on weekly rota) on call during working hours.
* Additional welfare and support contact to be arranged as necessary in liaison with social care.
* Attendance to be recorded in line with usual arrangements or specific DfE Guidance in exceptional circumstances.
* Concerns arising from attendance calls to be dealt with in the same way as concerns arising from welfare calls.
* Vouchers to cover FSM to be provided weekly to eligible families.

**Follow up actions in the event that the parent or carer of a vulnerable learner declining an offered school place.**

* Make immediate contact with designated social worker and discuss home/care situation – if they are happy that the situation is safe and stable then maintain on going contact (see below)
* If social worker is not comfortable with home situation then school and social care need to make a concerted effort to encourage parent/carer to take up the offer of place and to encourage learner to attend by:-

1. Arranging transport if this is the issue
2. Explaining the nature of the provision on offer and stressing the attractiveness of an opportunity to get out for a few hours a day.
3. Re-assuring parents and carers of the measures in place to keep everyone on the school site safe and well.

**Protocols for Safe Working in Times of Reduced Staffing**

When for any reason the number of staff able to attend school is severely restricted ie. Several illness as in the present situation or severe weather conditions then the following protocols should be observed:-

* The number of students being educated on site should always be within safe staff:student ratios. This to be reviewed daily used dynamic risk assessing. The Headteacher/Co Headteacher and CEO will remain responsible for decision making but can delegate this to the most senior member of staff on site.
* Where due to staffing difficulties the number of students on site has to be limited then priority must be given to the most vulnerable as set out above.
* All staff should be aware of who the duty DSL is on site and who to contact in th event of a concern about any learner. Recording systems on cpoms will still apply – in the event of any issues with cpoms, phone contact should be made with the DSL. Phone contact may be appropriate anyway to bring the immediate attention to the concerns.

**The normal instruction about reporting any concerns immediately stands as if anything of greater importance at when the school community id fragmented in this way, escalate to Headteacher or SLT member who is a DSL**.

* If he Headteacher is unwell then staff should be informed of who from SLT is temporarily assuming those responsibilities.
* When learners are working from home they should be reminded of e-safety.

**Staff Wellbeing**

* All staff who are unable to attend school but who are well and able to work should remain in contact via phone and email so that well-being can be checked and tasks shared.
* Staff who are unwell should be monitored and supported through the usual absence monitoring procedures (although guidance will be taken into account when deciding on formal process.

**Specific Safety Measures for Covid–19 Pandemic**

All students should have their health assessed before being allowed into the school building. Where necessary temperatures should be taken and any showing signs of a fever or a new persistent cough (or other symptoms as advised by medical professionals) should be sent home with instructions to self-isolate at once. DSL/Safeguarding Officer/Headteacher should contact parents/carers and explain the need for whole household to remain in quarantine in accordance with Government guidelines. Staff showing any symptoms should not come to work and self-isolate in accordance with the most up to date government guidance.

Appendix (a)









