

Addendum 1



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

The Bridge School: The Bridge School
Policy owner: Hazel Simmons
Date: 30.03.20
Date shared with staff: 30.03.20

1. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever 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 who absolutely cannot be safely cared for at home.

The Bridge School is complying with this requirement and providing a welfare service to many other families as well as offering an on demand information and support service (as far as is practically possible) for every pupil of the school.

This addendum of The Bridge School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

| Role | Name | Contact number | Email |
|--|--|---|--|
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Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. 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.

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 place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers and teachers visiting the home to provide any essential services, thus limiting the amount of contact for all involved. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

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

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to extend the

provision to include those on the edge of receiving children's social care support if they deem it to be essential.

The Bridge School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The DSL and Deputy DSLs will lead this action.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker, who need extra support, will be offered a package of care to be delivered in the child's home, to avoid increased and unnecessary contact, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that will put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want this package, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and The Bridge School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent and provide remote support as required.

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

The Bridge School will encourage all vulnerable children and young people to access education remotely for the entirety of the critical situation.

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 Bridge School will submit the daily attendance sheet (detailing all children being support in their homes as attending education) to the DfE by 12 noon - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

The Welfare and Safeguarding Officers will make twice weekly calls to families of vulnerable children to ensure maintained communication. Some families may have a plan where contact is more regular or includes doorstep visits. In addition, teachers will call parents and families of their class at least weekly to maintain, encourage participation in the remote resources, record issues and progress, and also see if they require further work or resources. All communication will be recorded onto CPOMS (welfare) and EARWIG ACADEMIC (education) and any concerns raised immediately with the DSL.

To support the above, The Bridge School 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.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child is not in school and is not contactable, The Bridge School will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Hazel Simmons

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Tina Sharman

The Alternate DSLs are: Elaine Griffin and Nick Whitman

If your concerns are about a member of the safeguarding team then please speak to the DSL - Hazel Simmons.

If your concerns are about the DSL or the above officers, then please speak to Rosemary Prince at rprince@unitysp.co.uk

A trained DSL (or deputy or alternative DSL) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video at all times during term time.

It is important that all The Bridge School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On any day during term time, any of the designated officers may be contacted by phone or email.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, 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 Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads, Headteacher and the Trust Safeguarding Manager. Who will record the concern on CPOMS. This will ensure that the concern is recorded and actioned.

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 use a yellow form to 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 by telephone and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Rosemary Prince via the email rprince@unitysp.co.uk

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

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

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

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter The Bridge School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

All staff are required to complete the on-line Safeguarding course by 20th April 2020 to ensure up-to-date knowledge and understanding through this critical period.

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

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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

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

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, The Bridge School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

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- 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

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

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

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

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, The Bridge 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 Bridge School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Teachers and TAs working remotely in pupil's homes will use ONLY approved school iPads for recording children's progress. In any event, staff will seek and gain permission from the parents to take photographs in their homes before doing so.

Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

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

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

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, preferably uniform, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video 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 specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

The Bridge School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Bridge School 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 The Bridge School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

The Bridge 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 pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety including within the child's home.

The Bridge 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.

Where The Bridge 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 trust.

Peer on Peer Abuse

The Bridge 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 CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Central Safeguarding Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

The MAT will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.