Title	Annex to Brooke Weston Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy: COVID-19
Associated Policy	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

EFFECTIVE FROM: 8th March 2021

NEXT REVIEW: As government advice is updated or September 2021, whichever is sooner. All staff will be made aware of any changes.

1. Context

This annex has been added to the Brooke Weston Trust (BWT) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy following the period of partial closure between 5th January 2021 and 8th March 2021. From the 8th March 2021 all children and young people, except those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and have been directed to shield at home, are expected to attend school.

This annex has been added to provide all stakeholders with additional information about each schools safeguarding and child protection arrangements from the 8th March 2021.

The Principal of each school is responsible for ensuring this annex is carried out and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for its implementation. The responsibilities as set out in the BWT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy also still apply.

Details about BWT safeguarding key contacts and each schools individual contacts can be found in the main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and/or on each schools website.

2. Principles

BWT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. Safeguarding and child protection remains an essential part of our duty of care to all students and we have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people, whether they are on-site, at home or online.

We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is everyone's responsibility and everyone has a role to play in protecting children.

We recognise that schools are part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children and young people.

We continue to promote a culture of vigilance, where staff and volunteers act immediately if they have safeguarding concerns about a child. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. If anyone in a school has a safeguarding concern about any studennt they should act immediately.

A DSL or deputy should be available either on site or by phone at all times during school hours.

The best interests of children must always continue to come first

It is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children

Children and young people should continue to be protected when they are online.

The purpose of this annex is to;
- Ensure that children and young people are protected from maltreatment or harm;
- Promote safeguarding and child protection;
- Demonstrate the Trust's commitment to keeping children safe whilst operating under emergency measures related to COVID-19;
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm during this time; and
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to the Trust's safeguarding and child protection procedures during the COVID-19 outbreak.

This annex is reviewed regularly and amended as necessary to ensure that all schools are compliant with;
- all relevant legislation and statutory guidance;
- government guidance relating to the COVID-19 outbreak; and
- guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

All staff will be made aware of this addendum and updated regularly on further developments.

3. Guidance

The school continues to comply with all statutory safeguarding and child protection guidance during this time, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)

The school is currently operating under the latest Covid-19 guidance from the Department from Education, 'Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (February 2021)'.

Each school has a DSL and a deputy DSL. All DSLs and DDSLs will keep up to date with the latest safeguarding information and guidance via e-bulletins, Local Authority e-bulletins and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments.

4. Procedures

4.1 What to do if you have a concern about a child or young person

All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child or young person may be at risk, both on and off site, including online.

Where staff have a concern, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the BWT Safeguarding and Child Protection 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 the DSL and Principal. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Children are encouraged to report concerns via existing school systems, or to a trusted adult at home.

Parents/carers are encouraged to report concerns via existing school/college systems.

A trained DSL or Deputy DSL (DDSL) will be available at all times during school hours and when students are on the school premises for education purposes (e.g. Breakfast Club, after school activities etc.). Wherever possible, a trained DSL/DDSL will be available on site. Where this is not possible due to staff self-isolation, a trained DSL/DDSL will be available to be contacted via phone or video-conferencing. In this instance an appropriate senior leader will take responsibility for safeguarding on site.

Any changes in arrangements for contacting the DSL/DDSLs will be shared with staff before 9am each day, as well as any relevant safeguarding and child protection updates and training.

If the school becomes aware that a child or young person is suffering, has suffered, or is at risk of suffering harm or abuse, this will be managed in line with procedures outlined in the main body of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

4.2 Attendance

In line with government guidance, all children and young people must attend school unless they are self-isolating or shielding. The school is responsible for recording attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the local authority.

Parents or carers should contact the school on the first day of absence and inform the school of the reason why the child is not in attendance. Parents should inform the school of any COVID-19 tests that have been carried out and continue to keep the school informed of reasons for absence, as appropriate.

From 8th March 2021, all schools will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) for all students.

In accordance with the 'Remote Education Temporary Continuity Direction', all schools will provide remote education to students who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government COVID-19 guidance or legislation. Each school must keep a record of remote education delivered.

Absence information will be recorded in the register using the appropriate codes. Information about school attendance codes can be found in:
- School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2020)
- Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

Where students are not able to attend school, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.

We understand that some parents, carers and children may be anxious about children returning to school. All schools will work closely with families who are finding the transition more challenging to ensure that children and young people are attending regularly.

All schools will work with other agencies (e.g. health and other education professionals) to support school attendance if this is required. If a student who has a Social Worker does not attend school, this information will also be shared with them.

4.3 Supporting children who are learning at home

In the event that children are required to shield or to self-isolate, the school will continue to provide remote education and pastoral support. Each school has their own arrangements in place.

Anyone who has safeguarding or wellbeing concerns should contact the school and/or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as appropriate.

Please also see section 4.9 below.

4.4 Vulnerable children

If students who are self-isolating or shielding are within the government definition of 'vulnerable', schools will keep in regular contact with them.

When a vulnerable student is required to self-isolate, schools will:
- notify their social worker (if they have one);
- agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support;
- check if a vulnerable student is able to access remote education support;
- support them to access it (as far as possible); and
- regularly check if they are accessing remote education.

The government considers children to be vulnerable if they:
- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
- children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
- adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
- those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- those living in temporary accommodation
- those who are young carers
- those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- care leavers
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including students and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

We recognise that provision for students who have SEND may have been disrupted during the period of restrictions on attendance. All schools will continue to work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure the services and support are in place for a smooth return to schools for students.

4.5 Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) students

Children and young people who have been confirmed as CEV and have received a shielding letter should not attend school until they have been removed from the shielding patient list. The school may request to see a copy of the shielding letter. CEV students will be supported by their school.

4.6 Supporting children on site

All schools will refer to and follow 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 COVID-19. Each school documents this in their Risk Assessment.

For secondary schools, information about COVID-19 testing will be available on the schools website.

We understand that some children and young people will find the transition back into school challenging and will require further support. All schools will provide wellbeing and mental health support.

All schools will continue to work with their NHS School Nurse to support the physical and mental health needs of students.

4.7 Children attending Alternative Provision

Each school will have arrangements in place to monitor provision and attendance at any alternative provision that is used for its students.

4.8 Safer recruitment of staff and volunteers

The school continues to adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and all relevant legislation relating to safer recruitment.

The school will adhere to all government guidance in relation to checking identification for the purposes of obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service checks and when conducting interviews.

Where volunteers are used, the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) will be followed. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

All schools will continue to update the single central record and will log details of any risk assessment carried out on volunteers and any temporary staff from other educational institutions.

4.9 Online safety and remote learning

The trust recognises that many students have spent increased amounts of time online during the recent lockdown. All staff need to be aware of this and understand that this may have been unmoderated and unfiltered, increasing likelihood of exposure to threats and harms and subsequent wellbeing related issues. Staff should be extra vigilant to any concerns students may raise.

The trust recognises that children both on-site and off-site are vulnerable to abuse and radicalisation online. Children who are at home because they are self-isolating or shielding may be spending more time online and this increases their vulnerability.

BWT recognise that additional safeguarding arrangements are required to ensure that children are safe online at this time. All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk online and will report and respond to concerns in line with this policy.

Information for students and parents/carers about online safety and staying safe is available on each schools website.

All students, whether they are attending school or not, have been provided with online safety information and resources. Parents and carers should contact the school directly if they have any concerns or queries.

All schools are legally required to provide suitable remote learning for children whilst they are out of school. We are using technology to deliver learning to students who are at home. In order to ensure that children are safe when learning online, the school have:

- Trained staff involved on appropriate use of IT
- Provided students and parents/carers with information
- Reviewed the IT Acceptable Use Policy and Online Safety Policy
- Advised parents/carer on suitable websites and appropriate supervision

All communication with learners and parents/carers will take place using school/college provided or approved communication channels; for example, school/college provided email accounts, school website, text/email, Microsoft 365.

Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.

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

Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in each school's code of conduct/behaviour policy.

When delivering remote learning, all staff will abide by BWT's IT Acceptable Use Policy and Online Safe Policy including:

- Only use online tools that have been evaluated and agreed by leadership.
- Ensure remote learning activities are planned in accordance with curriculum policies, taking learner needs and technology access into account.
- If remote learning is taking place 'live' using webcams or chat facilities, staff and learners will ensure a professional environment is maintained. This means:
  - Staff will record the length, time, date and attendance of any online lessons/contact held or made.
  - Live sessions will involve at least two members of staff where possible.
  - Sessions will not be delivered in any 1:1 situation, unless pre-approval has been given by the DSL and/or Principal and the session is auditable.
  - Staff will record any online lessons so they can be audited or accessed later if required; learners and staff should be made aware that lessons are being recorded.
  - Staff will agree online behaviour expectations with learners at the start of lessons.
  - Staff will revisit our Acceptable use of Technology Policy with learners as necessary.
  - All participants will wear suitable dress, use professional language, and ensure backgrounds of videos (live or pre-recorded) are neutral and appropriate.
  - Staff and learners should ensure personal information and/or, inappropriate or unsuitable personal items are not visible.
  - Where possible, other household members should not be in the background or in shot; if this unavoidable, they should follow appropriate language and behaviour expectations.
  - If live streaming, staff will mute and/or disable learners' videos and microphones, as required.

Learners are encouraged to report concerns to a member of staff or a trusted adult at home. Where this is not possible, additional support can be accessed online via:

- Childline – www.childline.org.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful online content – www.reportharmfulcontent.com
- CEOP (to make a report about online abuse) – www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
- Internet Matters (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online – www.internetmatters.org
- London Grid for Learning (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) – www.lgfl.net/online-safety/
- Net-aware (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC) – www.net-aware.org.uk
- Parent info (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) – www.parentinfo.org
- Thinkuknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online) – www.thinkyouknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre (advice for parents and carers) - https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers

Staff have received updated safeguarding training to ensure that they are equipped with the skills to keep children safe when using technology for remote learning should it be required.

Use of staff and learner personal devices, including mobile phones, will be managed in line with our existing IT Acceptable Use Policy.

4.10 Volunteers

Schools may use volunteers to assist in handing out and securing COVID-19 test kits to students and staff members. Other duties may be required such as building test kits, cleaning down areas and directing people. Under no circumstances will a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis provide personal care on a one-off basis, will be in regulated activity. This means that if a volunteer is administrating a COVID-19 test whilst un-supervised, they will be in regulated activity and therefore require an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check. Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information).

Supervision must be:

- by a person who is in regulated activity;
- regular and day to day; and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

In appointing volunteers, the school will continue to follow safer recruitment processes.

4.11 Elective Home Education (EHE)

All schools will encourage parents to send their children to school, particularly those who are vulnerable.

Where an application for EHE is made, all schools will consider whether a parent's decision to educate at home gives greater cause for concern compared to remaining in school. Where the DSL believes there is additional cause for concern they will consider making a referral to the local authority in line with existing procedures. This will happen as soon as the school becomes aware of a parent's intention, or decision, to home educate.

In any event the Local Authority will be informed of a parental request for EHE.

All schools will work with local authorities and, where possible, coordinate meetings with parents to seek to ensure EHE is being provided in the best interests of the child.

If a parent wants to admit their child to a school, each school will follow the normal processes for in-year admissions applications.

4.10 Mental Health and Wellbeing

BWT recognises the potential impact of partial school closure and the national lockdown on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Some students may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker and young carers. It is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation.

The wellbeing needs of children and young people must be continually reviewed to consider students who had these needs prior to lockdown and also those who may now because of it. In particular:
- All staff must be made aware of this, know how to identify the signs and what to do if they have a concern.
- Training for all staff should be provided and may include http://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/685525.
- Consider using pastoral and extra-curricular activities to support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement.
- The PSHE curriculum should be reviewed to ensure children and young people are equipped with a range of strategies to self-care and signposted to age appropriate and suitable materials. These should be shared with students and their parents/carers regularly.
- Parents and carers should also be given information about how to support their children and how to seek further guidance or help.
- Pastoral/wellbeing support must be available to support students with approaches to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

5.   Support from Brooke Weston Trust

The BWT Safeguarding Team consists of Claire Greaves and Sarah Fleming. This team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL's ad DDSL's to carry out their roles effectively. This includes remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction. The team will also provide regular group and individual support sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting. Brooke Weston Trust will use the DSL Team on Office Teams to share documents, ask/answer questions and share information.

6.   Contingency Planning

In the event that restrictions in schools are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, BWT will refer to the contingency framework[1], which has been updated and outlines how schools should operate in the event of any restrictions.

The Trust will always ensure that safeguarding children is our priority and work within restrictions to keep children safe.

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[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities