Annex 1

Temporary Policy Addendum:

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Busbridge CE Junior School

This Policy addendum is effective from 8th March 2021

(based on SCC model policy addendum ; reviewed and personalised by Richard Catchpole, HT – 05.03.21)

Context

On Monday 22nd February 2021, The Prime Minister announced the government's roadmap to cautiously ease lockdown restrictions in England. This included a direction that from 8 March 2021, all pupils should attend school.

Busbridge CE Jnr School (BJS) will continue to have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance keeping children safe in education (as amended, Jan 2021).[1]

We will ensure that where we care for children on site, we have appropriate support in place for them.

We will take advice and work with the local safeguarding partners.

We 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 coronavirus.

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

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1 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf

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Key contacts

Remain as per the School/College Safeguarding Policy.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989[2], including children 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 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 pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

BJS 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 Surrey County Council virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Mrs Rachel Barker.

In circumstances where a parent is hesitant about or does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and BJS will explore the reasons for this with the parent.

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

BJS will encourage all pupils to attend a school.

[2] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/17

Attendance monitoring

We expect all pupils to attend school.

Parents or carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of the illness and inform us of the reason for absence so that the correct attendance codes can be used in every case of absence. We expect parents or carers to make contact to make us aware of the status of any COVID-19 tests that have become necessary and to update the school on the welfare of the pupil.

From 8th March 2021, we will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)[3] for all pupils.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

The advice for pupils who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally.

For children self-isolating or quarantining or shielding – we will use code X.

In compliance with the Remote Education, Temporary Continuity Direction[4] will provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19).

Also, we will offer pastoral support to pupils who are:

- self-isolating
- shielding
- vulnerable (and off-school)

The Department for Education expects schools to grant applications for leave only in exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

[3] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made

[4] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/923539/Remote_Education_Temporary_Continuity_Direction_-_Explanatory_Note.pdf

Where pupils 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.

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 electronic safeguarding systems, which can be done remotely.

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 headteacher.

Safeguarding Training and induction

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (amended, Jan 2021). The DSL will 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 BJS, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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

When recruiting new staff, BJS 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 (2020) (as amended, Jan 2021).

Where BJS are utilising volunteers for the purpose of testing, 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 in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. [5]

[5] Paragraph 183. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (as amended, Jan 2021) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf

Volunteers

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.

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 as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (as amended, Jan 2021).

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 requests for support should still be made to children's social care and as required or, if there is suspicion a crime has been committed report directly to the police.

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

BJS 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 if there are virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and a unsuitable background should be blurred.
- 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 as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19

BJS is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

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.

Details of this plan must be recorded on the school safeguarding system, as should a record of any contact made.

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

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

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

BJS recognises that school is a protective factor for children, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers.

Teachers at BJS need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

BJS is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

BJS will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

BJS will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing[6] and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

BJS 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 the school safeguarding systems.

[6]https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963541/Schools_coronavirus_operational_guidance.pdf

BJS will ensure that appropriate support is offered to all students with respect to their mental health.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

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

Where an application is made, BJS will consider whether a parent's decision to educate at home gives greater cause for concern compared to remaining in school.

Where we feel that there is additional cause for concern the DSL will then consider making a referral to Surrey County Council in line with existing procedures. This will happen as soon as BJS becomes aware of a parent's intention, or decision, to home educate.

BJS will work with local authorities and 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 BJS, we will follow our normal processes for in-year admissions applications.

Contingency planning

BJS will ensure that for individuals or groups of self-isolating pupils and pupils who are shielding, we follow government guidance related to coronavirus (COVID-19), remote education plans.

BJS will continue to operate as normally as possible. In the event that restrictions in schools are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, we will refer to the contingency framework[7], which has been updated and outlines how schools should operate in the event of any restrictions.

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