

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection – March 2020

Updated January 2021

Shared with staff via email

1 Context

From 20th March parents were asked 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 and those who are considered vulnerable and cannot be safely cared for at home.

2. Key Contacts

Janet Murray-Brown	DSL	07909977948	jmurraybrown@bourne.org.uk
Nikki Constable	DDSL	07928453119	nconstable@bourne.org.uk
Yvonne Watkins	Safeguarding Trained	01243 375691	ywatkins@bourne.org.uk
Helena Jewer	Safeguarding Trained	01243 375691	hjewer@bourne.org.uk
Alice Hardwick	Safeguarding Trained	01243 375691	ahardwick@bourne.org.uk
Charlie Colley	Safeguarding Trained	01243 375691	ccolley@bourne.org.uk
Catherine Hall	Safeguarding Trained	01243 375691	chall@bourne.org.uk
Diane Shepherd	Governor	01243 375691	office@bourne.org.uk

3. 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 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 (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are and they have the flexibility to offer that student a school place.

Bourne Community College will continue to work with and support children's social workers 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 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 school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

The school will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

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

To support the above, school will, when communicating with parents 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 does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, school will notify their social worker.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Janet Murray-Brown, school based

Deputy DSL. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Nicola Constable, school based

Additional Deputies Charlie Colley, Yvonne Watkins, Helena Jewer, Alice Hardwick, all school based

The DSL or Deputy will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings

6. 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 CURA, which can be done remotely. In addition to the report on CPOMS it is vital that the member of staff also emails the DSL or DDSL.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CURA and email from home, they should ensure a phone call is made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. 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 speak with the DSL or the Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Head whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Shelagh Legrave

WSCC will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

7. Safeguarding Training

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). 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 BOURNE COMMUNITY COLLEGE 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
- 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.

8. 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 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 (2020) (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 Bourne Community College 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.

Bourne Community College 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.

Bourne Community College 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, Bourne Community College will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

9. Online safety

Bourne Community College 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.

10. 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 our Technologies Policy.

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

11. Supporting children not in school

Bourne Community College 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. Students have been identified using Student Managers and HOY knowledge. Phone calls/emails to students, parents/carers either on a daily, twice weekly or weekly basis will be made dependent upon their level of need and risk

Details of this contact must be recorded on CURA for students whom staff are concerned about with action. A record of contact that has been made will be recorded on the central engagement spreadsheet.

The communication plans include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step Visits by NC or outside agencies. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Bourne community College 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.

Bourne Community College 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 at this school need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home. Bourne Community College 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 CURA where appropriate.

12. Supporting children in school

Bourne Community College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

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

The SLT will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to student ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Bourne Community College 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.

Bourne Community College 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 CURA.

Where Bourne Community College has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the Governors and Local Authority.

13. Students sent home as part of a year group bubble or students who are self isolating

Students who are self-isolating or whose year group bubbles have been sent home to isolate will be provided with work to be completed remotely. Work provided will either be in the form of a paper work pack or work on line, which will be monitored by staff.

14. Peer on Peer Abuse

Bourne Community College 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 the Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CURA and appropriate referrals made.

15. Support from the LA

The LA will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.