

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - Annex 1 – Temporary Policy Addendum

COVID-19 Academy Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at The Baird Primary Academy

This Policy addendum is effective from 8th March 2021 and should be viewed in conjunction with the main Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Date shared with staff: 11th March 2021

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 academy.

The Baird 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 Baird’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key Contacts

These remain as per the Academy Safeguarding Policy.

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989², 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 pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

The Baird 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. Steph Jarvis, Safeguarding Officer and Carly Welch, Principal will lead this.

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 The Baird will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

The Baird will encourage all pupils to attend the academy.

Attendance Monitoring

We expect all pupils to attend the academy.

Parents or carers are expected to contact the academy on the first day of any 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 academy 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:

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/17>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>

- 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 the academy 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 Direction⁴ we will provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend the academy 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-academy)

Where pupils are not able to attend the academy, 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 academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns relating to staff working with children should also be reported following the process outlined in the academy Safeguarding policy. Staff may also use procedures outlined in the Trust Whistleblowing Policy for raising serious concerns.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Safeguarding Training and Induction

All existing academy 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, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

For movement within the Trust, an academy should seek assurance from the previous academy that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

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

Safer Recruitment / Volunteers

When recruiting new staff, The Baird 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).

At present, our risk assessment details that only essential visitors are allowed on site. We therefore will not be having any volunteers into the academy at the current time.

⁴[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/923539/Remote Education Temporary Continuity Direction - Explanatory Note.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/923539/Remote_Education_Temporary_Continuity_Direction_-_Explanatory_Note.pdf)

Pupils and Online Safety away from the Academy

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 Trust ICT Acceptable Use policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and the Academy online safety policy.

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

In the event of any bubble or full closure, we will revert to remote education using virtual teaching. Below are some things that staff will consider during virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only – if a member of staff is working 1:1 with a child, a second adult will be present in the call, to ensure safeguarding procedures are adhered to
- 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 the 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 Services Director to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting Pupils not in The Academy as they are following clinical or public health advice related to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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

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 academy, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded using the usual method of reporting for the academy, as should a record of contact have made – this will be recorded in CPOMS.

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

The Baird 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.

The Baird 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 will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting Pupils in The Academy

The Baird 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 Baird will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing⁵ and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

The Baird 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.

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

Contingency Planning

The Baird 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.

The Baird will continue to operate as normally as possible. In the event that restrictions in the academy are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, we will refer to the contingency framework⁶, which has been updated and outlines how we will operate in the event of any restrictions.

Support from the University of Brighton Academies Trust

The Interim Safeguarding and Welfare Lead 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 Principal will ensure that as children return they will try to give designated safeguarding leads and their deputies more time to:

- support staff and pupils with new safeguarding and welfare concerns
- handle referrals to children's social care and other agencies where appropriate

⁵https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963541/Academys_coronavirus_operational_guidance.pdf

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities>