

COVID 19 Annex

Beckfoot Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Guidance

Publication date to Trust staff: 31 March 2020

Context

On 20th March 2020, to try to halt the spread of the Coronavirus, the Government asked parents/carers to keep their children at home, wherever possible, Schools are to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend and cannot be cared for safely at home.

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 'key workers' and are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

The Beckfoot Trust is committed to working together and with families, the LA and external agencies to safeguard and protect our most vulnerable children in what are unprecedented times for everyone.

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 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 DSL) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

From Monday 23 March 2020 educational provision across the trust will remain accessible for children of critical workers and vulnerable children. Most of our pupils will be cared for and safeguarded by parents and carers and family members in their home and supported by online distance learning packages from schools.

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 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.

Schools should use their prioritised lists of vulnerable learners to identify those that might also need to be offered a school place if it unsafe for them to remain at home.

Beckfoot Trust schools 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 and make regular check on their welfare, proportionate to risk.

The following guidance sets out how we will do this. We need to be vigilant and proactive and work together with others.

We will keep in touch with our most vulnerable children by:

- Directing them to where they can access 'look after' provision
- Regular phone contact with home
- Regular contact with Bradford Children's Social Care (CSC) for high profile families – those children who are CLA, CP, CiN or young carers.

We will refer vulnerable families immediately to Bradford Children's Social Care if:

- They cease attending 'look after' provision and we cannot contact them
- We have escalating concerns about their welfare and safety

Designated safeguarding Leads

Trust schools must ensure that there is always a DSL available in person or virtually.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

It is important that all CVPS staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy DSL). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to contact them if required.

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 Beckfoot trust 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSL. 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 report the concern to the headteacher immediately.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Trust Safeguarding Director: Jenny Cryer.

Don't forget you can call Children's Social Care directly if you have an immediate concern for a child's safety. You will be asked for the child's name and date of birth.

- During office hours call **Children's Social Care Initial Contact Point - 01274 435600** - (8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday)
- At all other times, **Social Services Emergency Duty Team - 01274 431010**
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the **Police on 999**
- For all general enquiries, please contact **Children's Specialist Services on 01274 435600**
- For more information see: <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/content/report-abuse-contacting-childrens-social-care>

Contact with vulnerable families

All matters pertaining to safeguarding vulnerable children must be communicated to and through the DSL. If your DSL is unable to work, HTs will allocate the nominated member of the safeguarding team to undertake DSL duties.

MUST:

- Create a prioritised list of 'vulnerable' children/families – LAC, CP, CIN, EH, young carers, etc... See Government definition above. The list may also include those children school view as vulnerable though fall outside of this definition. Schools need to be mindful of the guidance and capacity when identifying the children requiring support/contact.
- Create a list with two contact numbers for family and any allocated external agency.
- Establish the frequency of contact for each group of children and the best time to contact (e.g. daily, twice weekly, weekly).
- Personalise the letter template and distribute to all included families.
- Follow guidance below for each category or individual mini risk assessment for specific cases.
- Ensure identified staff can use 3CX by installing app on an electronic device.
- Maintain contact with allocated social workers or key workers as per school policy.
- Maintain supervision with DSL as per school policy (likely by call).

COULD:

- School counsellors will continue to support children they work with via phone calls.

Phone calls

- The caller must speak with the adult and the child, where the child is verbal and not too ill.
- A basic log of the call must be made on CPOMS unless concerns shared.
- If significant concern, follow normal internal safeguarding procedures.

Trust approach to home Visits - Safe System of Working

Staff safety and infection control are both of huge importance when these visits are taking place. With this in mind the following steps need to be clearly communicated to (and then followed by) staff who are undertaking this essential safeguarding function:

1. Please be aware that home visits are only necessary once attempts to contact the pupil by phone have failed (as per the procedure).
2. Visits must always be undertaken in pairs.
3. Staff must travel to the visit in their own vehicle (alone) and meet their colleague on site but maintain social distancing (2m) from each other.
4. One member of staff should knock on the door and stand well back from the door when attempting to see/talk to the pupil.
5. The other member of staff should stay back and observe (end of the drive etc. but at least 2m away from their colleague).
6. **Under no circumstances should a member of staff enter the property.**
7. If there are any concerns these should be referred to the school DSL and then to CSC / LADO / MEST as appropriate.
8. Visits should be brief, polite but to the point.
9. **Staff should not be attending properties where there are any concerns / previous history of physical violence towards school staff (or known history of violence). In these circumstances' guidance should be sought from Children's Social Care.**

4 Steps for Effective Safeguarding for vulnerable C & YP not attending school

Step 1

Phone home

Determine frequency of calls based on risk.
Speak to parent/ carer - check-in.
Ask to speak to the child (where possible) - check-in.

Log on C-POMS



Step 2

Persist with phone calls

Schools should continue to make calls, use their local intelligence and attempt to seek contact through relatives, neighbours, their PCSO and other links within the community.

Log on C-POMS



Step 3

Refer to CSC

Contact allocated social worker for the family in the first instance.

If you don't get a response and have been unable to make any contact with a high a priority family for **3 days** refer to:

CSC: 01274 431010

Log on C-POMS and continue to make contact



Step 4

Home Visit

Only in **exceptional** circumstances, where a highly vulnerable child and their family remain uncontactable should a home visit be considered.

Headteachers should take the decision as to whether a home visit is required.

Home visits should be conducted using the Trust safety guidance and staff should be first read the Trust homevisits risk assessment

Log on C-POMS

Support for learners with SEND

Schools' DSLs should liaise with SENDCO to check that appropriate arrangements are in place for children with EHCPs or complex SEND needs in preparation for them being out of school for a prolonged period. For example, young people with Autism may struggle with the changes.

Any additional home support that may be given should be communicated to **Niall Devlin**, Strategic Manager, Integrated Assessment and Psychology CBMDC:
Niall.Devlin@bradford.gov.uk

Online Safety

Trust schools must ensure that links to online safeguarding advice are accessible from the front page of school websites. As an IT service, there is a limit to our ability to monitor devices which are either not connected to nor part of our network and need to refer staff and student to the Trust's Online Safety Policy. Schools should take the opportunity to reinforce guidance in the Trust's Online Safety Policy policy with all staff and ensure staff and student safety.

Beckfoot Trust schools 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.

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 following the guidance in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

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

When using **online video conferencing** as a tool to keep in touch or as a teaching tool the following guidelines should be followed:

1. No beds / bedrooms should be visible. If pupils are learning at a desk in a bedroom ask pupil to point camera away from anything that identifies the room as a bedroom, e.g. an innocuous wall.
2. Pupil to staff one to one conferencing should be avoided. There always should be **two** members of staff in the online meeting space.
3. Pupils and family members should be aware of the call and that people will potentially be able to see/hear them. All should use appropriate language and be dressed appropriately. Pupils should be given the option of audio only to protect privacy if they wish.
4. GDPR – there are no major issues as such. **No recording to be allowed** (either by pupils or staff). If staff want to record something to send to pupils this should be a 'one-way street' e.g. a You Tube video etc.

Please use the links below to help guide you.

This is a link to a 'manual' which will help guide you:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/safe-remote-learning/>

This is a link to a poster that includes 20 top tips:

<https://static.lgfl.net/LgflNet/downloads/digisafe/Safe-Lessons-by-Video-and-Livestream.pdf>

Student 'Stay Safe' Card

Schools' should have issued the 'Stay Safe' Card upon closure and publish stay safe email and telephone contacts for key agencies and support services on their school website.

Beckfoot Trust: Where can I get help and advice when not in school?



Our Website: www.beckfoottrust.org

NHS Direct : Tel. 111 or online www.nhs.uk

Mental wellbeing issues: www.youngminds.org.uk

Child line : Tel. 0800 1111 or online www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC : www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/

For help with exam preparation: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

In an emergency only, Police/Ambulance/Fire Service : Tel. 999

Beckfoot Trust

'Stay Safe' -Look After Yourself and Your Family

Eat well - remember your 5 fruit and veg. a day and drink lots of water.

Try to say active - use phone apps, Just Dance, Joe Wicks daily PE on YouTube

Keep in touch with friends by phone or e-mail .

Remember to keep washing your hands!

Stay Safe Online

SMART

- S Stay Safe**: Don't give out your personal information to people / places you don't know.
- M Don't Meet Up**: Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Always check with an adult you trust.
- A Accepting Files**: Accepting emails, files, pictures or texts from people you don't know can cause problems.
- R Reliable?**: Check information before you believe it. Is the person or website telling the truth?
- T Tell Someone**: Tell an adult if someone or something makes you feel worried or uncomfortable.

Supporting children in school

The Beckfoot Trust 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.

Schools should 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.

Trust school 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.

Where Headteachers have serious concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSLs) or first aiders they will discuss them immediately with the Safeguarding Lead for the Trust.

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. Beckfoot Trust schools and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – trust schools will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Trust schools 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, trust schools 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 does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, trust schools will notify their social worker.

Reporting concerns

Trust schools should record any safeguarding concerns on CPOMs. For concerns that need a more immediate schools' staff should contact the DSL in the first instance and the deputy DSL or other named DSLs in their absence.

Don't forget you can call Children's Social Care directly if you have an immediate concern for a child's safety. You will be asked for the child's name and date of birth.

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Vulnerable pupils attending alternative provision

Schools should check on what is in place for pupils who have been accessing education from a commissioned alternative provider, TRACKS, or one of the PRUs, Pipeline, James etc...

Risk-assessment of these pupils if they have a social worker or setting should be undertaken and agreement reached on whether they are safe to remain in the home if provision is not available.

For those who do not yet have an appointed social worker/deemed as highly vulnerable schools need to ensure they are prioritised appropriately for checks on welfare following the Trust '4 Steps to Safeguarding' approach.

Schools should ensure that you record on C-POMS any alternative plans to attendance that are agreed with social workers following risk assessment non-attendees

Peer on Peer Abuse

The Beckfoot Trust 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 Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the child or 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 CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

Safer recruitment/ volunteers and movement of staff

Guidance for colleagues DBS checks

The current guidelines state the ID Verifier (us) must be in physical possession of the applicant's original ID documents. However, as the public are currently being advised to work from home, we know this will no longer be possible.

To prevent issues receiving documents and delays to application processing times, the DBS have made temporary changes to ID verification guidance for Standard and Enhanced DBS Checks.

• **From 19th March 2020**, the DBS Standard and Enhanced ID checking guidance changed for a temporary period, meaning ID Verifiers will now be able to use either of the following methods.

- View ID documents via video link
- Use scanned images of original ID documents in advance of the DBS Check being submitted

Please note: Applicants will still be required to present original versions of these ID documents when they first attend their employment or volunteering role. Personnel Checks are unable to take responsibility for this method of ID verification, therefore it's essential that you see original ID documents at this stage

HR action

Whilst these temporary measures are in place, you are no longer needed to ask your applicants to visit your school in person or send original ID documents in the post in order to carry out ID verification.

If your applicants usually visit your school, they can now instead show their ID documents to you via a video link (e.g. Skype or Teams) or send scanned images of their original ID documents to you digitally (e.g. email).

Volunteers

Where schools are utilising volunteers, HR should continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE.

Please note that under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.