



**COVID - 19**

**School closure arrangements**

**for**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection**

**at**

**Cromwell Primary School**

## Contents

1. Context
2. Vulnerable Children
3. Attendance Monitoring
4. Designated Safeguarding Lead
5. Reporting a Concern
6. Safeguarding Training and Induction
7. Safer Recruitment / Volunteers and Movement of Staff
8. Online Safety in Schools
9. Children and Online Safety away from School
10. Supporting Children not in School
11. Supporting Children in School
12. Peer on Peer abuse
13. Mental Health
14. Support from the Local Authority

## Safeguarding children during Coronavirus (COVID-19)

### **Context**

This additional guidance is based on DfE advice published on 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 – please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

This addendum addresses how the school will apply the safeguarding and child protection policy in order to safeguard all pupils/students during COVID-19. It applies both to the minority of children who are attending school and the majority who will be staying at home pending further government advice.

Throughout the closure parent / carers will be able to access the school via an email address - [advice@cromwell.bham.sch.uk](mailto:advice@cromwell.bham.sch.uk) – which will be monitored on a daily basis by Senior Leaders /DSLs.

Role	Name	Contact No.	Email
Designated Senior Lead (DSL)	Rubina Darr Executive Head	07795611870	<a href="mailto:R.Darr1@cromwell.bham.sch.uk">R.Darr1@cromwell.bham.sch.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Sophie Harris Asst. Headteacher	07799667565	<a href="mailto:S.Harris@cromwell.bham.sch.uk">S.Harris@cromwell.bham.sch.uk</a>
Head of School @ Bordesley Village	Julie Fisher DSL	07979750184	<a href="mailto:j.fisher@bvcs.bham.sch.uk">j.fisher@bvcs.bham.sch.uk</a>
Safeguarding Governor	Aqila Samimy	07546379950	<a href="mailto:A.Samimy@bvcs.bham.sch.uk">A.Samimy@bvcs.bham.sch.uk</a>

### **Vulnerable children**

From 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 the government asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. Children who absolutely need to attend are those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and children defined as vulnerable as follows:

- Children who have a social worker, including 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.
- Children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans\*.
- Other children who the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers to be vulnerable, including those children who may be in receipt of early help; were previously the subject of child protection or child in need plans; were previously looked after; or whose situation and wellbeing at home may become unsafe or insecure if they do not attend school.

\*The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in consultation with the local authority and parents/ carers to determine whether children with an EHC plan need to continue to be offered a school 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 will not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability for these purposes.

The DSL and deputy DSLs, are aware of the most vulnerable children on roll at Cromwell Primary School and have the flexibility to offer a place to those children at risk of children's services involvement.

The school will create and maintain an up to date register/database of all pupils who are considered vulnerable which will contain the names and contact details of the child's parents / carers; other significant family members; social workers; family support workers; and /or any other key professionals. The register / database will be accessible to the DSL lead and deputies including secure access for DSLs who may need to self-isolate and/or work from home.

The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers / family support workers to help protect vulnerable children. The lead person for this will be: Rubina Darr.

In circumstances where the school considers a child to be vulnerable and eligible to attend school but a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to school, the DSL, alongside the social worker, where applicable, will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer. *It should be noted that where the child has a social worker, there is an expectation that the child will attend the setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk.*

Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of their child(ren) contracting COVID19, the DSL will discuss those anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. If the child has a social worker, the DSL will liaise with the social worker and seek to involve them in the discussion with the child's parents/carers.

Cromwell Primary School will encourage our vulnerable children to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

Local authorities and educational settings do not need to complete their usual day to day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

If the school has any eligible children in attendance, the daily attendance sheet will be submitted to the local authority by 11.00am using the appropriate pro forma.

For any child(ren) eligible to attend school, who does not attend, the school will follow the normal absence management procedure.

The DSL and a child's social worker will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Cromwell Primary School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The school will also follow up with any parent / carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and who subsequently do not attend.

For each child identified as vulnerable but who the DSL considers can be safely cared for at home the DSL will identify the nature and frequency of contact the child will need to reassure the DSL of their safety and wellbeing.

To support the above, Cromwell Primary School will, when communicating with parents / carers, ensure emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL and Deputy DSLs are as named in the main policy (DSL- Rubina Darr & Deputy DSL- Sophie Harris).

Wherever possible, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be available on site at all times the school is open. In the event that this is not possible (every effort will be made to ensure that such occasions are rare), the DSL or a deputy DSL will be readily accessible via telephone or online video contact, e.g. when working from home.

All staff will be provided with contact details in order to be able to contact a DSL without any difficulty and will be informed about which members of the DSL team are available on each day that the school is open.

The DSL team will meet weekly to discuss the welfare and status of each child on the register/ database of vulnerable children.

The DSL team will liaise with CASS, Social Services, Family Support Workers and other key safeguarding partners as normal, whether working in school or working remotely. When working from home, DSLs will be accessible via access to their school e-mail account and mobile telephones.

The DSL team will continue to attend – either in person or virtually – child protection conferences; core group meetings; strategy meetings; child in need meetings; and early help meetings.

### **Home Visits**

In line with current guidance, schools are not be expected to carry out home visits in general, due to possible staff shortages, levels of risk, self-isolation etc. Should any concerns arise these will be risk assessed with Birmingham Children's Trust who will offer advice and support via CASS, and decisions made about who else may have had contact with the family that can provide reassurance, i.e. partners in any plan, voluntary sector involvement. Families may be accessing support from these groups, including brokerage of support, food banks etc. At the very least, a phone call will take place and a risk assessment completed, based on the outcome of that call, in discussion with Birmingham Children's

Trust. There may be cases that require more specialist input and this again will be discussed with Birmingham Children's Trust according to need and risk on an individual basis.

### **Reporting a concern**

All staff and volunteers continue to have a responsibility for safeguarding children and will report any safeguarding concerns about children to a DSL in the normal way as set out in the main policy.

Staff should have access to the normal safeguarding recording format (e.g. Notice of Concern) when working off site including when working from home.

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

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access the normal safeguarding recording format they will contact the DSL via Email (cc to at least one other DSL and the Executive Headteacher) to inform them that they need to share a concern. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Cromwell Primary will continue to make reference to the threshold criteria Right Help Right Time and where they are concerned that a child is at risk, or that their needs appear to be significant and complex, then school will refer children to Birmingham Children's Trust through a written referral. The school will tell parents that they are making the referral for support and seek consent to share information. If the school is concerned that there are child protection concerns, consent will be overridden and will contact the Trust through CASS.

Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about the behaviour of an adult working with children in the school, they should inform the Head of School. If the notification needs to be made when the reporting individual is offsite, this should be done verbally and followed up with an Email to the Head of School on the same working day.

As normal, any concerns about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

The CLC MAT will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

### **Safeguarding training and induction**

The DfE recognises that DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst the threat of the COVID-19 virus remains and government guidance in relation to large gatherings and social distancing is relaxed.

DfE guidance states that for the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

The DSL will communicate any new or revised safeguarding advice, guidance, requirements, arrangements or information in writing to all staff and volunteers.

Where new staff or volunteers are recruited, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If adults from another school or setting are redeployed to work at the school during the COVID-19 virus, the school will take into account DfE supplementary guidance and will accept portability of pre-employment checks 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; and
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children; and
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

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

Upon arrival, all such redeployed staff will be given a copy of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, behaviour policy, the school's safeguarding recording and reporting procedures and confirmation of DSL details and arrangements.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

The school will maintain its commitment to ensuring that only suitable people are given opportunities to work with children at the school. Any recruitment during COVID-19 will therefore be undertaken following the normal safer recruitment processes subject to the school's policy, local authority guidance and advice and Part 3 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2019)* [KCSiE].

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to the guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face to face contact.

Safer recruitment principles also apply to the recruitment of volunteers, subject to KCSiE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked, be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Cromwell Primary School 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 in KCSiE (*paragraph 163*).

The school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per KCSiE (*Paragraph 166*) 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](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk).

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are in the school and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in

Regulated Activity. As such, the school will continue to maintain the single central record as outlined in *KCSiE (paragraphs 148 – 156)*.

### **Online safety**

The school is committed as always to providing children with a safe environment in which to learn. That includes online learning. The online filtering (in relation to school-owned devices) and monitoring systems will be in operation as normal. The school is unable to filter activity on devices not owned by the school.

The current situation could however, lead to an increase in online activity amongst children. They could then be at risk of several online harms, including grooming, exploitation and bullying which could in turn, impact on their mental health and well-being.

Parents will be directed to: <https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/broadband-mobile/> for guidance on putting some restrictions in place to keep children safe.

Where pupils/students are using ICT equipment in school, appropriate supervision will be in place as normal.

### **Children and online safety away from school**

As above, all online lessons should be delivered by school staff in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection, staff behaviour (code of conduct) and acceptable use of ICT policies.

The school will take account of guidance from DfE in relation to the planning and delivery of online learning when it is issued; as well as nationally recognised guidance including [guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning](#) and [London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming](#).

Staff will always use school/service owned technology and accounts for the delivery of remote lessons/tutorials. Where possible, applications that facilitate the recording of lessons will be used. School leaders will randomly sample recorded lessons in order to safeguard pupils/students and staff and to ensure that policies are being followed.

If staff need to deliver lessons/tutorials on a one-to-one basis or communicate with vulnerable children who are not attending school, via video chat, they will speak to parents/carers before lessons commence and at the end of lessons before logging off.

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk, distressed for some reason or vulnerable in some other way; and report and record that following normal safeguarding procedures. All such concerns must be brought to the attention of a DSL and dealt with by a DSL as per the main policy in the normal way.

Any online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the CLC MAT's Code of Conduct.



The school will also ensure that online learning tools and systems are used in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are other issues that staff need to take into account when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- 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.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- 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 that used by any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by the school's ICT manager/co-ordinator for communication with pupils/students
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

The school recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people and that the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 virus may well affect the mental health of some pupils and/or their parents/carers.

All staff will maintain as awareness of those issues in communications with children and their parents/carers including when setting expectations of pupils' work when they are at home.

### **Supporting children not in school**

Cromwell Primary School remains committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

Any child on the school's register/database of vulnerable children who it has been decided does not need to attend school; cannot attend school due to a risk to their own health or the health of another member of their household; or whose parents/carers are unwilling to send them to school will have an identified plan of support that will be overseen by a named DSL and recorded on the child's safeguarding file.

The plan will include regular communication with the child's named social worker or family support worker where there is one (at least once a week). A record of all communications\* with the child, parents/carers and practitioners in partner agencies will be made on the child's safeguarding file (\*including telephone calls, Emails, other online communication, video conversations and virtual meetings).

The school will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan in order to safeguard the child.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) by the allocated DSL in discussion with at least one other member of the DSL team, using regular/planned DSL team meetings as appropriate. Where concerns arise the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will continue to share safeguarding messages on its website, social media pages and via newsletters.

### **Supporting children in school**

The school will continue to be a safe space for all children who attend during the COVID-19 virus. Whenever the school is open and to maximise safety, the Head of School will ensure that appropriate numbers of staff are on site and that staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate.

The school will ensure that government guidance for education and childcare settings in respect of social distancing and advice from Public Health England in respect of handwashing and other protective measures to limit the risk of spreading COVID19 is followed regularly and robustly.

All children attending school will be provided with appropriate emotional support, bespoke to their needs, assessed vulnerability and circumstances.

Where the school has concerns about the availability of critical staff to work in school – particularly members of the DSL team, SENCo, designated teacher for children who are looked after and first aiders – those concerns will be raised and discussed immediately with the Executive Headteacher.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

The school recognises that a revised process for managing any report of peer on peer abuse and supporting victims may be required during the COVID-19 virus when only a relatively small number of children will be attending school.

Where the school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, it will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and as outlined in the main policy as closely as possible.

The school will listen and work with all children involved, their parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of alleged victims, alleged perpetrators and all other children attending the school.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on the child's safeguarding file and appropriate referrals made by the DSL.

### **Mental health**

Where possible, the MAT will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Through the website the school will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

**Support from the local authority**

Birmingham Children’s Advice and Support Service will be available as usual for advice and support via 0121 303 1888. The authority will also provide further updates and information via the School Noticeboard at <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/>.