

## South Bank Multi Academy Trust

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# COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at South Bank Multi Academy Trust York High School

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### **1. Context**

- 1.1 From 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 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. 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 critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.
- 1.2 From the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June, the government is expected to open schools further to children in Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and Year 10. The government is encouraging all eligible children to attend school. Schools will continue to provide care for keyworker and vulnerable children.
- 1.3 This addendum of the South Bank Multi Academy Trust (SBMAT) Child Protection and Safeguarding policy contains details of the individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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## 2. Key contacts

| Role                                | Name                         | Contact number               | Email   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead        | Jonathan Louth               | 01904 555509                 | j.louth@yorkhighschool.co.uk                                  |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | Jill Womack                  | 01904 555521<br>07771 810746 | j.womack@yorkhighschool.co.uk                                 |
| Headteacher                         | Rod Sims                     | 01904 555506                 | r.sims@yorkhighschool.co.uk                                   |
| Chair of Governors                  | Nicola Mitchell              |                              | nicki.mitchell@luptonfawcett.law                              |
| Safeguarding Governor / Trustee     | Rosemary Swords<br>Pat Boyle |                              | rosemary1@live.co.uk<br>central.services@southbanktrust.co.uk |

## 3. Vulnerable children

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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 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.
- 3.4 Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.
- 3.5 Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who the most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.
- 3.6 SBMAT 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. The lead person for this at York High school will be: Jonathan Louth

- 3.7 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 increased 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 SBMAT school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 SBMAT schools will encourage their vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

#### **4. Attendance monitoring**

- 4.1 SBMAT schools should resume taking the attendance register when more groups of pupils begin to return to school. Schools do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.
- 4.2 Pupils that are not eligible to return to school at present, should be recorded as a code X (not required to be in school). This may also be used for children that are eligible to return to school but are not required for a specific session.
- 4.3 Where a child is shielding, self-isolating or has an ECHP and their risk assessment states their needs cannot be safely met in school a code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances) should be applied.
- 4.4 If a pupil cannot attend school due to illness a code I (illness) should be recorded and a note stating if the illness involves coronavirus symptoms.
- 4.5 If a pupil does not attend school despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating or ill they should have a code C (leave of absence authorised) applied.
- 4.6 Schools should use other specific authorised absence/attendance codes as appropriate i.e. code M (medical appointment).
- 4.7 Each school that has children in attendance (e.g. eligible year group, vulnerable or has keyworker parent(s) / carers) will continue to submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings/process-for-recording-attendance-and-using-the-educational-setting-status-form>
- 4.8 Schools should continue to update the Central Team with attendance information via the confirmation email received from the DfE once attendance data is submitted on the portal.

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

## **5. How will this look in your school?**

5.1 To support the above, each SBMAT school 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.

5.2 In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker.

## **6. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

6.1 Each SBMAT school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

6.1 As schools reopen to more pupils the optimal scenario (where resources allow) is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site to support staff and children regarding new concerns and referrals. Where this is not the case, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video. In the event of an emergency and the school DSL or Deputy DSL is not available then the SBMAT schools will offer DSL cross-school support via phone or online video.

6.2 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.

6.3 This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management systems, 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.

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

6.5 It is important that all relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including those that are returning to school) is accurate. As much as reasonably possible the DSL and Deputy DSL will invite parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing they should be aware of before a child returns to school.

6.6 The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, safeguarding / welfare partners and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

## **7. Reporting a concern**

- 7.1 As schools open to more children staff may identify new safeguarding concerns following the partial school closure. Where staff have a concern about any child whether they are returning to school or remaining at home, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the SBMAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; this includes making a report via CPOMS or existing school system, which can also be done remotely.
- 7.2 In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS / existing school system remotely, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher via phone and follow this up with an email. This will ensure that the concern is received.
- 7.3 Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern (including those relating to children returning to school) immediately and without delay
- 7.4 Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.
- 7.5 Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the school Chair of Governors and Trust Principal.
- 7.6 The SBMAT will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

## **8. Safeguarding Training and induction**

- 8.1 DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 All existing SBMAT school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.
- 8.4 Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter a school they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.
- 8.5 If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to a SBMAT 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

8.6 For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the original school Business / Finance Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

8.7 Upon arrival, they will be given confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

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

9.1 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, each 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 (2019) (KCSIE).

9.2 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.

9.3 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

9.4 Where a SBMAT school is utilising volunteers, they 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.

9.5 Each 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 at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

9.6 Each school 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.

9.7 During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

9.8 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, each SBMAT school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **10 Online safety in schools**

10.1 Each school will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

10.2 Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

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

11.1 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 and Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

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

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

11.4 Below are some things to consider when delivering 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 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 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.

- 11.5 It is important that as schools reopen to more children they continue to provide a safe online environment for those who remain at home.
- 11.6 Each SBMAT school will work alongside Vital (the Trust's IT provider) to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online using the school's IT system.
- 11.7 More information and support for online safety issues can be found via:
- The [UK Safer Internet Centre's online safety helpline](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk) 0344 381 4772 or email address email [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)
  - The [NSPCC Learning website](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)..

## **12. Supporting children not in school**

- 12.1 SBMAT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.
- 12.2 Where a school 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.
- 12.3 Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS / existing school system, as should a record of the contact that has been made.
- 12.4 The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, doorstep visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.
- 12.5 SBMAT and the school DSLs will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.
- 12.6 This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.
- 12.7 Each school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.
- 12.8 SBMAT 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 at each SBMAT school need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

## **13. Supporting children in school**

- 13.1 SBMAT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. It will use advice from safeguarding partners and adopt processes into local arrangements
- 13.2 SBMAT will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

- 13.3 SBMAT 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.
- 13.4 SBMAT will ensure that where we care for eligible returning children, children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, there will be appropriate support in place for them. This will be bespoke to each cohort and recorded where necessary on CPOMS / existing school system.
- 13.5 Where a SBMAT school has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as Designated Safeguarding Leads or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the Trust.

#### **14. Peer on Peer Abuse**

- 14.1 SBMAT recognises that during the closure and partial reopening of schools a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.
- 14.2 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 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 14.3 Each SBMAT school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.
- 14.4 Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS / existing school system and appropriate referrals made.