

South Bank Multi Academy Trust

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

1. Context

In January 2021, the government issued a further national lockdown to reduce the number of Covid-19 transmissions. Part of these measures involve the closing of schools to all but vulnerable children and children of critical workers, however children that are not eligible to attend school will continue to receive education delivered remotely and in line with South Bank Multi Academy Trust's pupil remote learning policy.

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:

1. Context
2. Key contacts
3. Vulnerable children
4. Attendance monitoring
5. Designated Safeguarding Lead
6. Reporting a concern
7. Safeguarding training and induction
8. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
9. Online safety in schools
10. Remote learning and online safety away from school
11. Supporting children not in school
12. Supporting children in school
13. Peer on peer abuse

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 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 Pat Boyle | | rosemary1@live.co.uk central.services@southbanktrust.co.uk |

3. 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 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 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.

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.

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 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.

SBMAT schools will encourage their vulnerable children and young people to attend school, or remote learning classes.

4. Attendance monitoring

Schools should continue to record attendance in registers and follow-up on absences of pupils that were expected in school. However if a parent wishes their child to be absent, schools are expected to authorise this absence during this national lockdown period.

HOW WILL THIS LOOK IN YOUR SCHOOL?

To support the above, each SBMAT school will, when communicating with parents/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, the school will notify their social worker.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

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

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. 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.

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 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.

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.

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

6. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, 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 be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS / existing school system from home, 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.

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. 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.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the school Chair of Governors and Trust Principal.

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

7. Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

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.

All existing SBMAT school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL should 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 a school they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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

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.

Upon arrival, they will be given 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, 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 (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.

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

Where a SBMAT school is utilising volunteers, they will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

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 179 of KCSIE.

Each school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 182 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, 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 164 to 171 in KCSIE.

9. Online safety in schools

Each school 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. Remote learning and online safety away from school

Children that are not attending school will continue to receive education via remote learning. Full details of the remote learning measures can be found in the SBMAT pupil remote learning policy, which is available on the Trust website.

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.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the SBMAT code of conduct and the remote learning policy.

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

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 within the home and with an appropriate background, for example, not in bedrooms.
- 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.
- 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.

There may be circumstances where one-to-one sessions are deemed appropriate, e.g. to provide support for SEND pupils. Any one-to-one sessions will be decided and approved by the school senior leadership team in collaboration with the SENCO and DSL.

Remote learning is delivered via an encrypted and closed group platform to provide a secure environment for the use of video/webcams in an online classroom setting. However, if parent, guardians or carers feel there is a need to safeguard their child they may turn off the video feed, but must leave the audio activated so verbal contact can be maintained.

11. Supporting children not in school

SBMAT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

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.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS / existing school system, as should a record of the contact that has been made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, doorstep visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

SBMAT and the school DSLs 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.

Each school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

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.

12. Supporting children in school

SBMAT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

SBMAT schools 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.

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.

SBMAT 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 / existing school system.

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 Principal.

13. Peer on Peer Abuse

SBMAT 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 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

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.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS / existing school system and appropriate referrals made.