



BALLARD

BESPOKE EDUCATION

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection at Ballard School

From 20th 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.

This addendum of the Ballard School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Vulnerable children
2. Attendance monitoring
3. Designated Safeguarding Lead
4. Reporting a concern
5. Safeguarding Training and induction
6. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
7. Online safety in schools and colleges
8. Children and online safety away from school
9. Supporting children not in school
10. Supporting children in school
11. Peer on Peer Abuse

Key contacts:

- andy.marshall@ballardschool.co.uk - Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL)
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- sally-anne.kingsley-smith@ballardschool.co.uk - Pastoral Support Manager (DDSL)
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- angela.guillen@ballardschool.co.uk - Head of Senior School (DDSL)
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- james.blake@ballardschool.co.uk - Head of Upper Prep (DDSL)
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- jane.hunt@ballardschool.co.uk - Head of Pre-prep (DDSL)
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- jan.brook@ballardschool.co.uk - Head of Learning Support (DDSL)
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Headmaster – Mr Andrew McCleave

Chair of Governors – Mr Peter Goodfellow

Safeguarding Governors - Mrs Merrielle Billington and Mrs Fiona Morgan

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 by Mrs Brook, Head of Learning Support, 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.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Pastoral Team 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.

Ballard School 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 will be Mrs Jan Brook, Head of Learning Support.

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 the School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Ballard School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Ballard School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

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.

Ballard 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. Ballard School 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.

HOW WILL THIS LOOK IN OUR SCHOOL?

To support the above, Ballard School will, when communicating with parents, 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, [COVID-19 school closure arrangements - March 2020](#) Ballard School will notify their social worker.

At Ballard School we ask that teachers still take hand written registers of their classes when working with them online. Teachers will chase up absentees with emails home to parents and CC form tutors. Heads of Section will let teachers know if any pupils are unwell and not able to do the lessons. If teachers and/or form tutors have concerns regarding repeated absence they will contact the relevant Head of Section for follow up.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Ballard School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and several Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Andrew Marshall, Deputy Head Pastoral.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Sally-Anne Kingsley-Smith, Mrs Jacqui Besley, Mrs Angela Guillen, Mr James Blake, Mr Simon Ridley, Mrs Jane Hunt and Mrs Jan Brook.

The DSL lives close to the School site and will be available to be contacted via phone - for example when working from home.

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 the safeguarding online management system, MyConcern 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 Ballard School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). All our staff know they can contact DSL and DDSLs by email and through MyConcern.

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 School Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their MyConcern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL can be contacted by phone on 01590 645899. 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 contact the Headmaster.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Mr Peter Goodfellow, via our Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Rebecca Munro, bursar@ballardschool.co.uk.

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 school staff have had safeguarding training and have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). 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, or new volunteers enter Ballard School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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

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

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, Ballard 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).

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.

Where Ballard School are utilising volunteers, we 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.

Ballard 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.

Ballard 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."

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 or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone

engaging in regulated activity. As such, Ballard School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up-to-date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety at Ballard School

Ballard School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

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

Children and online safety away from School

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 must follow the guidelines set out by the School.

Ballard School 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:

- 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 recording 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 provided by Ballard School.
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

Ballard School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

Where the Pastoral team has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child.

Records will be kept of contact made.

The communication plans can include: remote contact via Microsoft Teams, phone contact, door-step visits (only for essential circumstances). The School will use Microsoft Teams as the main method of communication.

Ballard School and its Pastoral team 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 Pastoral team will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The School will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Ballard School recognises that school is a protective factor for children, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Ballard School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

The School will ensure that where we care for children of critical key workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child.

Supporting children in school

Ballard School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

The School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headmaster will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff-to-pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

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 COVID-19.

The 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.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Ballard School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

If we receive a report of peer-on-peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in Part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Child Protection Policy.

The School will listen and work with the pupil, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on MyConcern and appropriate referrals made.

AJ Marshall
March 2020