

**Annex 1**

**COVID-19 school lockdown arrangements for  
Safeguarding and Child Protection at**

**Birchensale Middle School**

**Policy owner: Mark Brazier**

**Date: Updated by WCF January 2021**

## **1: Context**

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 another national lockdown was imposed. Schools, alternative provision, special schools, and colleges will remain open to vulnerable children and children of critical workers only. All other children and students will learn remotely.

Birchensale will continue to follow DfE COVID guidance (DfE COVID Safeguarding guidance)

### **Safeguarding and designated safeguarding leads**

Keeping children safe in education is statutory safeguarding guidance that all schools, FE colleges, sixth form colleges and designated institutions must continue to follow. Other 16 to 19 providers are required to comply with relevant safeguarding duties and to follow the guidance in keeping children safe in education by virtue of their funding agreement.

Birchensale will ensure that all School staff are aware of this revised policy.

Birchensale will ensure that a DSL or DDSL will be on site where possible, however, in some circumstances:

- a trained DSL (or deputy) is available to be contacted via phone or online video, for example working from home

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, a senior leader should take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site.

### **Contact details for reporting to Public Health**

Birchensale will contact for COVID-19 queries related to education settings.  
Worcestershire County Council Public Health Team  
Email: [WCChealthprotection@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:WCChealthprotection@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01905 845491

For notification of suspected cases:

On-line notification:

<https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/TestAndTracePublic/SchoolEducation>

For notification of confirmed cases:

Worcestershire County Council Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT)

Monday-Sunday 0900-1800

Email: [WCChealthprotection@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:WCChealthprotection@worcestershire.gov.uk) Please add to the subject line "[school name] - positive case confirmed"

Tel: 01905 845491

You can find all our procedures and guidance on the management of suspected cases, management of confirmed cases and arrangements for management of a possible outbreak on our website: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Public Health guidance for settings

This annex of the Birchensale Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Context
2. Vulnerable children and critical workers
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 and colleges
9. Children and online safety away from school and college
10. Supporting children not in school
11. Supporting children in school

#### **Key Contacts:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	<b>Mark Brazier</b>	<b>mjb107@birchensale.worcs.sch.uk</b>
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)</b>	<b>Sarah Pugh</b> <b>Pete Clifton</b>	<b>sp125@birchensale.worcs.sch.uk</b> <b>pclifton@birchensale.worcs.sch.uk</b>
<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Mark Brazier</b>	<b>Mjb107@birchensale.worcs.sch.uk</b>
<b>SENCO</b>	<b>Rachel Batchelor</b>	<b>rbatchelor@birchensale.worcs.sch.uk</b>

#### **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 our most vulnerable children are. We ensure that all children with an EHC plan will have returned to school in September 2020. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

All CYP with EHCPs should be able to attend in school provision during the lockdown, however parent/carers may choose for their child to remain at home during this period, in which case they should receive remote learning.

Risk assessments should be updated for CYP with EHCPs whose parents/ carers do not choose to take up an onsite school place during the current lockdown. Schools should contact SEND casework if they have any concerns about making the provision outlined in a child's EHCP through the provision of remote learning.

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation
  - those who are young carers
  - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
  - care leavers

- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

## **Critical workers**

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections. Children with at least one parent or carers who is a critical worker can go to school if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.

Birchensale 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: **Rachel Batchelor**.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, will be notified if a child has had to self-isolate, either through the child having a confirmed case of COVID or is in a school bubble, that has had to collapse in order to self-isolate for 14 days so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Birchensale or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

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

## **Attendance monitoring**

Birchensale will inform social workers, if a child is not able to attend school due to COVID.

To support the above, Birchensale 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, we will notify their social worker.

## **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding and child protection Policy, this includes making a report via MyConcern.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their MyConcern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads, marking the email with 'high importance' and clearly noting 'Safeguarding Concern' in the subject title. 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. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors. All concerns must be reported to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO).

### **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 (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 Birchensale 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 consider 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 Birchensale will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment checks.

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

## **Online safety in schools**

Birchensale 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.

## **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. If children are sent home to self-isolate due to a break down in school bubbles, online safety will continue to be followed.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the School's code of conduct.

Birchensale 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:

It is preferable to work online with groups of pupils. Where this is not possible, try and have the parent or carer in the room. If for any reason a session becomes a one-to-one call, stop the call and do the following before resuming. 1. Ensure all cameras/video are turned. 2. Ensure the audio call is recorded.

- 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.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Birchensale to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

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

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

Where the 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 MyConern, as should a record of contact have made.

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

Birchensale and its DSL/DDSL 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/DDSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages. Birchensale 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 Birchensale need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

### **Supporting children in school**

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

Birchensale 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.

Birchensale middle School will refer to the Government guidance foreducation 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.

Birchensale 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, when appropriate.

Where Birchensale have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the SLT.

## **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Birchensale middle School 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 Policy.

The school will listen and work with the 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 MyConcern, and appropriate referrals made.

## **Social Distancing**

All staff and students working in school will observe the government guidelines on social distancing. Currently these are:

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands regularly