

Bradford Academy's response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. Many learners are now at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and periods of self-isolation.

Despite the changes, the Academy's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure.**

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the academy and following [advice from government](#) and local agencies.

At present, Bradford Academy is open for the purpose of emergency childcare for keyworkers and for vulnerable learners who either have an allocated social worker, they have an EHCP or classed as CLA.

We know that some families need more support than others and that attending education settings is an important protective factor for children receiving support from a social worker. We want to prioritise supporting those most in need at this difficult time.

Local arrangements:

Bradford Academy link with local authority is Mr Richard Lait

[email address Richard.lait@bradford.gov.uk]

Excerpt from the Director of Bradford Children's services letter to Head Teachers:

The Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, issued a letter on Sunday providing further clarity on how the local authority and schools, childcare settings, colleges and other educational establishments should work in partnership to ensure a comprehensive offer is available for children who are vulnerable and those whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response. **The guidance reinforces that where children can be safely cared for at home then they should not attend an educational setting but where a parent is an essential worker they have the right to seek a place for their child.**

The Secretary of State's letter states that;

"While as many school as possible should try to stay open for eligible pupils, this will not be possible for all settings and the LA should coordinate pooling of resources so pupils are able to access provision elsewhere".

The local authority has been asked to work with schools, both LA maintained and academies, to ensure that there is sufficiency of places for children of key workers and vulnerable children. The plan that has been developed is designed to ensure that as the Covid-19 virus spreads throughout the workforce and the general population there is sufficient resilience within the system to continue providing an offer to these children.

The key principles within the plan to help deliver this successfully are that:

- All schools should remain open wherever possible, to provide childcare for the children identified by the government.
- Where a school, local authority maintained or Academy, is unable to open they should notify the local authority.
- When the local authority is notified that a school can no longer provide a service to vulnerable children and the children of key workers, it will coordinate and broker an alternative placement with schools to ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place for vulnerable children and those of key workers.
- Working closely with schools and Academies there will be an on-going assessment of the resilience of the current arrangements for children. If, following consultation it becomes evident that the current arrangements can no longer provide a sufficient number of placements then

consideration will be given to the contingency plan involving the possibility of a move to the delivery school model.

If your school is planning to close **for any reason**, please contact us first on **01274 437043** to see if there are ways we can support you to stay open.

To assist with information sharing during this rapidly changing time schools and academies will be provided with a local authority Strategic Link person and details will be sent by separate email. If you are needing to fully close, please contact your strategic link person in order to provide detailed information about the numbers of children who are accessing childcare provision and alternative placements will be provided to parents. It is important that schools do not use the Bradford Schools Online (BSO) school closure process as this has been temporarily suspended.

I would like to thank you personally again for all the hard work you and your staff are undertaking at this very difficult and ensuring that as a whole system partnership the shared goal of ensuring our vulnerable children kept safe.

Kind Regards

Mark Douglas

Strategic Director

Children's Services

Reporting arrangements

The academy arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The **Designated Safeguarding Leads** are:

Mrs J Jakes VP Primary 07493 347 027 j.jakes@bradfordacademy.co.uk

Mrs J Millar VP Secondary 07393 440 256 j.millar@bradfordacademy.co.uk

The **Deputy DSLs** are:

Mrs D Hitch 07388 869 043 d.hitch@bradfordacademy.co.uk

Mrs G Kaur 07425 072 846 g.kaur@bradfordacademy.co.uk

Mrs N Kauser n.kauser@bradfordacademy.co.uk

Mrs R Whiteley SENCO r.whiteley@bradfordacademy.co.uk

The academy's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always contactable by phone while the academy is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible the other DSL or Deputy DSLs will be contactable by phone **and the Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be on site** according to the staffing rota published by the Executive Principal on a three weekly basis.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in the academy or not. **COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.**

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting children's services are:

- Bradford Children's social care 01274 435 600
- Bradford Children's Services initial contact point 01274 437 500
- Social services duty team 01274 431 010
- Bradford LADO 01274 434 339

Should a child in the academy's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure, available here

Identifying vulnerability

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable children. The all-through academy leadership team has considered our intake carefully and made the following arrangements all underpinned by the latest DFE guidance available from www.gov.uk/government/publications

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups:

- **Looked After Children** – [Liaison with both the Virtual Schools and allocated Social workers – Jen Jakes Primary, Jules Millar Secondary] attendance at the academy is provided unless in consultation with the child’s social worker and or carer/family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child and reduces the risk of contracting the virus.
- **Previously Looked After Children** – [Classed as vulnerable learners weekly contact from designated teacher by telephone – childcare can be provided based upon information shared with the DSL if in the best interests of the child and no other viable alternative is available]
- **Children subject to a child protection plan** – [DSL and Deputy DSL Liaison with named social workers will continue by phone and secure Galaxkey email, virtual attendance of safeguarding staff at scheduled core groups, CP reviews will continue as normal. We will ensure weekly contact by telephone, door step visits to be coordinated with CSC. All actions will be recorded on CPOMS under the COVID 19 tag against each child’s records. There is an expectation that children with a social worker **must** attend school (or another school by arrangement eg Managed Move dual registered learners), **unless in consultation with the child’s social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child.**
- **Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker** – Attending education settings is known as a protective factor for children receiving the support of a social worker. It is right that we prioritise support for those who will benefit the most. We are balancing this carefully with the urgent need to reduce social contact right across society to support our work to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Leaders of Bradford Academy and designated safeguarding leads know who their most vulnerable children are and **will have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edges of receiving children’s social care support.** [They are allocated to the academy vulnerable learners list and receive a weekly check in by telephone and or door step visit as required]

- Children with an EHCP – [Those with an EHC plan should be risk-assessed by their school or college in consultation with the local authority (LA) and

parents, **to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college 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.** Source DFE guidance vulnerable children 27 March 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

- **Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker and other children the school considers vulnerable.** More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. These children can be offered care at academy if required by arrangement with the Principals.

Each of these children has an individual plan which has been shared with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Looked After and previously Looked After Children.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- **Children of key workers who may attend school** – The academy doors will be opened at 8am until 8:30am where learners can arrive at the doors of café mojo and be registered, parents/carers will be provided with an emergency contact as the main office is closed. Learners will be supervised and have breakfast and lunch provided. At all times the principles of social distancing will be adhered to. These sessions will be led by a nominated member of senior leadership team and supported by staff named on the rota circulated to staff by the Executive Principal.
- **Children at home** – The Academy Attendance team will make telephone contact with mainstream learners not deemed to be vulnerable once per fortnight and record the outcomes of the conversation in CPOMS under the COVID-19 tag. Where we can, the academy will signpost families to local external agencies for support during the period of lock down. The

virtual academy of online learning led by the Vice Principals Mrs Sutcliffe and Mr Gill will set age appropriate work for learners to access. They will monitor the use and uptake of the facility and coordinate learners' interactions with teaching staff via the area email addresses provided.

The plans in respect of each learner in these groups should state how often they are to be reviewed on a weekly basis by the Academy Senior Leadership Team.

Holiday arrangements

The Academy will continue to provide places for children over the Easter break including children of keyworkers and learners who are vulnerable as outlined above.

Attendance

The school is following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a learner is expected and does not arrive the academy will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family/carers. If contact is not possible by 9:30am the DSL must be informed. The DSL will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent (Skype, FaceTime, through a relative etc) but if necessary arrange a home visit by the academy or another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure learners are safe.

The academy will also follow the attendance procedure if contact proves impossible with children at home. Regarding children missing education and contacting West Yorkshire Police by 101 to log a call.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, [poverty](#), and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both [children](#) and their [parents and carers](#),

informing the DSL about any concerns through CPOMs for learners and via email for any other matters they may become aware of.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of the academy closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the [signs of peer-on-peer abuse](#), including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

We also address the issue of peer-on-peer abuse in our remote learning curriculum. [please [describe](#)].

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of [cyberbullying](#) and [other risks online](#) and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure [appropriate filters and monitors are in place](#)
- Our governing body will [review arrangements](#) to ensure they remain appropriate
- The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly [this is recommended in the guidance, suggesting a COVID-19 annex is added here too]
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.

- Staff have read the [20 safeguarding considerations for livestreaming](#) prior to delivering any livestreamed sessions
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school, [Childline](#), the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) and [CEOP](#).
- Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:
 - [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
 - [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
 - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. **We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern**, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team via phone, email or the CPOMs software accessible through the academy learning gateway.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

- We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged Dawn Holt Bradford LADO 01274 434 339

If necessary, the academy will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 using the address

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

New staff or volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. This will take the form of a phone call and a compulsory new starters powerpoint and include the update for COVID-19 remote working protocols supplied by Human Resources.

They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct and KCSIE Part 1 2019. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a learner and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a [written risk assessment](#) to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with learners until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the learners.
- The academy will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with [DBS guidance](#).
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to [initially check these documents online](#) through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The academy will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by both Tehmina Hashmi Executive Principal and David Fearnley Director of Human Resources of who is working in the academy each day. A print out of Invenry is accessible to triangulate with the rota of staff on site daily.

New learners at the academy

Where learners join our academy from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. This file must be provided securely **before** the learner begins at our academy and a call made from our DSL or a deputy to the placing school's DSL to discuss how best to keep the child safe. In some unusual circumstance this may not be possible. Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about a learner placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system CPOMS, will be securely copied to the placing school DSL and will be securely returned to the placing school on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on [date] and is available on the school website at [link](#)

Author:

Mrs Jules Millar

30th March 2020