

Beech Lodge

Annex to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

COVID – 19 Child Protection Policy

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Date:	Version 1: 31st March 2020 Version 2: 1st June 2020 Version 3: 7th September 2020 Updated: 30th October 2020
Review Date:	As required
Notes:	This annex is continually being reviewed and is likely to change in response to the changing nature of the risk and latest Government advice. The guidance below is correct as of the date above. This annex is to be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Child Protection Policy, School Emergency Plan Version 5 March 2020 and COVID-19 Risk. Procedures and Risk Assessment Plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to protect pupils, staff, contractors, other workers and visitors Beech Lodge School is committed to implementing this annex to the Safeguarding Child Protection Policy with immediate effect.

All staff and contractors who work at the School are required to share this commitment by complying with the relevant policies and procedures.

NOTE: This plan should be read in conjunction with the School Safeguarding Child Protection Policy – Sept 2020, COVID-19 Emergency Plan Version 5 dated 16th March 2020 and School COVID-19 Risk Procedures and Risk Assessment Plan dated 7th September 2020.

This annex is publicly available on the school website: www.beechlodgeschool.co.uk

CRISIS SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The membership of the Crisis Safeguarding Team (CST) are:

- Dan Gillespie (Headteacher – Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Jack Rider (Assistant Head Pastoral – Deputy DSL)
- Peter Titus (Pastoral Lead – Deputy DSL)
- Daniela Shanly (Proprietor)
- Lucy Barnes (Principal)

Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Safeguarding Leads have overall responsibility for the implementation of this Annex.

The Proprietor has overall responsibility for the management processes.

2. GUIDANCE

The School will follow the up to date advice published by the Government and Public Health England in conjunction with further advice from the local health protection team including but not limited to:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

The guidance is continually under review and will be updated

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

The principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education continue to apply. Beech Lodge School will operate virtually (online) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak – and provide onsite schooling from 10th September for all pupils.

The following important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they will continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy will be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children will continue to be protected when they are online, including the use of filters and monitoring.

4. OUR APPROACH

Beech Lodge School will continue to take a whole institution approach to safeguarding. This will allow us to satisfy ourselves that any new policies and processes in response to COVID-19 are not weakening our approach to safeguarding or undermining our child protection policy.

- Many of our pupils are considered vulnerable as they have Education Health Care Plans. Therefore we take their safeguarding extremely seriously and work closely with all the local authorities (including their social workers and heads of virtual schools where relevant) who place pupils with us and provide them with regular comprehensive information on our pupils and our provision.
- Safeguarding procedures for pupils physically attending school remain as stated in our safeguarding policy and include new arrangements for social distancing (see section 6).
- There will be a DSL or DDSL present on the school site during school hours.
- We carefully manage online interactions and the possibility of adult or peer on peer abuse - see below.
- Our staff are regularly trained to act and act immediately if they have concerns about any of our young people regardless of their status (eg looked after, vulnerable etc) They have been trained in the new arrangement for safeguarding during the Coronavirus outbreak.
- Our DSL and deputies and systems/files to co-ordinate their work remain in place. DSL and deputies can be contacted via phone or video.

- We recognise that lack of attendance at a physical school can be cause for safeguarding concern. In a virtual school this is even more important, therefore attendance in each lesson is recorded and action is taken to engage all pupils in lessons.
- Staff will record attendance and a record of student presentation in regard to their wellbeing for each online session. Any concerns or patterns of behaviour/attendance will be monitored by DSL and DDSLs each day.
- Should additional staff be recruited they will be subject to the same safer recruitment standards and induction training as previously.
- The Single Central Record will remain comprehensive and up to date.
- Risk assessments will continue to be utilised. A risk assessment has been completed for every child and will continue to be updated should the pupil's presentation or situation change.

5. MENTAL HEALTH

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents.

- Government guidance for Mental Health and Behaviour in School is referred to. Beech Lodge School offers online pastoral care for pupils.
- Mental health of pupils is reviewed daily and then as needed as the pandemic progresses.
- Staff are careful when setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home to not exacerbate any mental health issues. Staff teaching online sessions complete Welfare Forms at the end of each day to be reviewed by the DSL and DDSL; Welfare Forms do not need to be completed for pupils that are physically at school.

6. ONLINE/REMOTE LEARNING

Beech Lodge School carefully considers the safety of pupils when working online. The starting point for online teaching is the same principles as in the physical school.

- Our behaviour and e-safety policies outline acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media.
- Beech Lodge School ensures any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Pupils are advised of their options if they have concerns online, starting with the school staff who will deal with the issue as a safeguarding matter. In addition they are informed of places for practical support.

- Childline - for support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Beech Lodge School is in regular contact with parents and carers concerning online conduct, safety, and the online activities and sites they will be visiting. The school also advises parents and carers to consider the importance of securing other online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents and carers, which is shared with them, to keep their children safe online includes:

- 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 careers 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

Staff Conduct Online

Staff will not request or respond to any personal information from children other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They will ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'. This means that adults will:

- not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work;
- not give out their personal details;
- use only equipment and Internet services provided by Beech Lodge School for professional contact; Staff will always save any messages received that they are concerned about and forward these to the DSL. Staff will also routinely save or screenshot their Microsoft Teams Chat with pupils/parents
- follow Beech Lodge School's e-Safety agreement re use of technology.
- ensure that their use of technologies could not bring Beech Lodge School into disrepute.
- Not meet pupils outside school hours or school duties

NB Given the intention of Beech Lodge School to be supportive to all pupils and their families, there may be exceptions to the above. If this is the case, staff will protect themselves and the pupil and her/his family by making sure that a record is made detailing the reason(s) for the exception and ensure that a senior manager (preferably the DSL and / Head of School) is aware of the arrangement.

In case of Pandemic/ School Closure/ Emergency the school must move to a virtual School. Virtual classrooms can also be used to engage a pupil who is struggling to attend school.

Monitoring

All staff are aware of the dangers inherent in working alone with a child online and therefore Beech Lodge School takes steps to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils and staff.

- All online/video classrooms or activities have a teacher and an LSA present as they would in school.
- Pupils can be lent school computer equipment to work on at home.
- All equipment is subject to filtering (against extremist or terrorist sites) as it would be in the physical school. Staff will be alert to young people who are at risk when the school is being run virtually.

Some confidential, therapeutic and one-to-one sessions need to be conducted privately and staff can do this via Microsoft Teams – these sessions will be recorded. In case of an emergency or pupils crisis, designated staff members may contact via video calls on Microsoft Teams – Beech Lodge School is able to monitor these sessions as staff will always record them. Any recordings are automatically stored securely on the Microsoft Team and Google Drive of whoever started the meeting - access to which is only granted to any relevant staff and kept in accordance with GDPR regulations. These files would only ever be accessed if necessary in safeguarding situations. Pupils are always informed that they are being recorded. Alternatively, staff will include the pupils' Key Worker or a member of the SLT in an online meeting.

7. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL

From 10th September 2020 the school is open for the new term for all pupils.

This section of the Policy is based on the latest Government Guidance regarding on <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

We have put a number of measures in place in order to ensure the safety of our school community and reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission at school.

These measures include but are not limited to:

Access to the School

- Implementation of staggered drop off and collection times to avoid crowding in the carpark.
- Access to the school is through the outside classroom doors to avoid crowding in corridors
- Any person to be sent home if they display any symptom, if the school has a suspected case the school will contact Public Health England for immediate advice.
- Staff and pupils are to endeavour to adhere to social distancing guidelines
- Hand sanitiser is available throughout the school
- Children to be discouraged from entering the admin block

- All communal equipment such as photocopiers to be wiped down after use
- Small class sizes allow social distancing in the classroom
- Use of outdoor space as a teaching area where possible
- Frequent hand washing
- Change of clothes to be brought to school
- PPE can be worn by staff and pupils if preferred and is to be worn when administering first aid
- All pupil's families contacted and communicated with in order to plan for safe reopening of the school
- Individual risk assessments of pupils completed
- Clear signage around the school showing sanitising areas and entry/exit points

All of the measures above are reviewed frequently according to government advice and guidelines.

8. RECOVERY AND RESUMPTION

Once we are back to 'business as usual', we will agree and plan the actions required to enable recovery and resumption of normal working practises. Agreed actions will be detailed in an action plan and set against timescales with responsibility for completion clearly indicated.

Ongoing and long-term support needs of Staff and Pupils.

Depending on the impact of the pandemic to the School community, the CMT may need to increase Pastoral Support for pupils and the use of external counselling and health services.

Once recovery and resumption actions are complete, communicate the return to 'business as usual' and ensure all staff are aware that this Annex is no longer in effect.

9. REVIEW

The situation is ever-changing and so this Annex will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Once the crisis is over and in view of lessons learned from the pandemic and the consequent response to it, we will implement recommendations for improvement and update the School Safeguarding Child Protection Policy as necessary.

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