

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
COVID-19 Annex January 2021**

Brighton Girls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This commitment remains the same in the difficult circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whether the school is open to all pupils, partially open or closed with Guided Home Learning in operation, the principles and practices of the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and the *GDST Safeguarding Procedures* (including the Code of Conduct) will continue to apply. In order to ensure the safety and welfare of children, the school will also adhere to the latest DfE guidance, together with other relevant guidance and advice as this is published and updated.

In practice, the following procedures will also apply:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

There will always be a nominated DSL or deputy DSL available, either on site or contactable by phone or online video. Where a DSL or deputy is not on site a senior leader will take responsibility for safeguarding on site. The DSL will oversee the safeguarding aspects of the return to school, and advise on relevant policy and procedures.

The name and contact details of the 'duty' DSL will be published clearly to staff in the daily notices.

Pupils or parents with a safeguarding concern should contact:

Senior School:

Wendy Fox w.fox@brightongirls.gdst.net 01273 280280

OR

Nicci Plank n.plank@brightongirls.gdst.net 01273 280280

Nicki Scotcher n.scotcher@brightongirls.gdst.net 01273 280280

Prep School

Laura Comerford l.comerford@brightongirls.gdst.net 01273280280

OR

Poppy Pointon p.pointon@brightongirls.gdst.net 01273280280

Helen Hausdoerfer h.hausdoerfer@brightongirls.gdst.net 01273280280

Ensuring safety in school

The school will continue to use relevant guidance published by the Government, Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive to inform arrangements and decision making to ensure the school remains safe for pupils and staff. Safeguarding will be a key consideration of all risk assessments carried out. Appropriate staff will always be on site to maximise safety, and everyone on site should know how to contact the DSL(s), deputy DSL(s) and First Aiders. The school will maintain a record of all staff/volunteers on site on any given day.

Attendance

Attendance issues may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns. Pupils, both on site and learning remotely, will be registered and the school will follow up on any absence. Where a vulnerable child does not attend, the school will also notify their social worker. No one with COVID-19 symptoms should come into school for any reason.

Online Learning

The school will provide a safe environment for online learning. All pupils and staff must remind themselves of and adhere strictly to the Acceptable Use Agreements, Online Safety Policy, and Guided Home Learning Annex.

Mental Health and Pastoral Support

We recognise that the ongoing impact of the pandemic could have a significant effect on the mental health and wellbeing of all members of the school community, and there will be a particular focus on pastoral care as a consequence. The school's programme will provide pupils with support to help them to respond to issues linked to coronavirus, improve their mental and physical health, and maintain social connections. Staff will remain vigilant for signs of safeguarding risk or emotional distress.

Pastoral concerns will be addressed initially by the class teacher or tutor, who may involve the pastoral team or school counsellor depending on the nature of the issue.

Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the DSL. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern **immediately and without delay**. The revised statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020* highlights the fact that mental health problems can be an indicator of a safeguarding concern.

Where a pupil is known to the school or newly identified as being in need, the DSL will ensure that a communication and support plan is in place for that child. This may include email, phone or online video contact. The plan will be reviewed regularly and should concerns arise the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

All safeguarding and pastoral concerns will be logged on CPOMS in the usual manner, and information will be shared appropriately so that all relevant staff are aware of the

support needs or child protection issues of the children in their care. The school will liaise with parents and carers wherever possible to ensure pastoral records remain up to date and staff are aware of any changes to welfare, health or wellbeing before a child returns to school.

If children move between schools, welfare and child protection information will be shared as required.

Vulnerable Children

The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers and local authority to help protect vulnerable children. This will include liaising with relevant providers and ensuring that vulnerable children and those on the edge of receiving social care can attend school where appropriate, or are accessing education and pastoral support if they are unable to attend school. If instructed to close on public health advice, the school will contact the local authority to discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children.

Working in partnership

We continue to work closely with our local safeguarding partners and other local agencies.

Covid-19 Education Safeguarding Information & Guidance

Multi-Agency Child Protection Processes

Welfare Checks

FDFE will still be requesting Welfare Checks to support safeguarding decision-making. Information from schools is a highly valued part of this process.

Please check that you can meet this requirement: The Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one other person receives welfare check requests and has access to information systems in order to respond.

For some schools this will mean letting Gill Hibbert know who to add to request emails. For CPOMS users you may need to check what access individuals have and also whether they need to change to online authentication. Sometimes key information is in SIMS/CMIS, it would be helpful to have off-site access.

Referrals to Front Door for Families

Front Door is a priority service and will continue to make decisions about how to keep children safe in response to referrals.

Family Information Service

This service will continue to operate. FIS will maintain links with the Food Partnership so will have up to date information on food banks etc. FIS should also be able to support families with financial difficulties.

Children with a CP/CiN Plan or CiC

Social workers are RAG rating their cases, based on the level of risk to the child. ***Each child's case will have a Covid19 RAG rating and an associated Covid19 plan.*** Cases should be RAG rated as red if there is considered to be a high level of risk to the child. This may include the following factors:

- Risk of placement / home breaking down
- Cases within legal proceedings
- Cases featuring domestic abuse, mental health issues and / or substance misuse (issues which may be exacerbated by self-isolation or not being able to access normal support services).

Children's social work will make a contact with every child open to them at least once every 6 weeks. Those with a more significant RAG rating will be contacted more often. ***Children's social work will be seeking support from partners such as schools to help maintain contact with those RAG rated Amber and Green. Schools will be notified of the RAG rating as soon as practical.***

Child Protection Conferences

Initial CP Conferences: Schools to provide reports as usual within timescales (3 days prior to conference), including sharing with parents/carers and children/young people (as appropriate). ***All conferences will be conducted virtually*** and NOT in the scheduled hub or office. Check instructions in the invitation email carefully, especially for where to send report and any requirements around participation (e.g. direct phone numbers). ***School participation will be crucial to ensuring that the conference is quorate.***

Review CP Conferences: Schools to provide reports as usual within timescales (5 days prior to conference), including sharing with parents/carers and children/young people (as appropriate). ***Face-to-face conferences will not be taking place.*** The Child Protection Reviewing Officer will review all the information available to them and will make a decision as to whether a Child Protection Plan will be continued/ended. Plans will only end if it is really clear to the chair that the family can come off a plan. ***The CPRO may contact you by phone as part of this review process.***

Strategy Discussions will continue and be held virtually

Covid-19 Education Safeguarding Information & Guidance

Safeguarding Arrangements

Staff must have access to a Designated Safeguarding Lead for advice and guidance when children are in school.

- This can be by phone, as long as the DSL/DDSL is in a position to respond (i.e. is not ill) and knows that they are providing DSL cover.
- This can be a member of schools senior leadership, who may need to contact another school's DSL or Brighton & Hove Education Safeguarding Officer for further advice.
- Any arrangements for support from another school's DSL need to be agreed in advance.
- If DSL/DDSL is out of school, or likely to be out of school, it is recommended that they brief other members of school's SLT on:
 - How and when to contact Front Door for Families.
 - How to respond to Welfare Check requests from FDFP.
 - How to access the school's safeguarding information about children

Education Safeguarding Officer is Gill Hibbert

Gill.Hibbert@brighton-hove.gov.uk

07827 880772

Front Door for Families

Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm; Friday 9am to 4:30pm

01273 290400

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/front-door-families>

and then follow link to Online Form for Professionals

Emergency Duty Service (out of FDFP hours)

01273 335905 / 335906

Allegations Against Staff

These would normally be handled by the headteacher.

- If the headteacher is not available, it is appropriate for this role to be delegated to the DSL or another member of SLT.
- It is recommended that the headteacher briefs these member of staff.
- They need to know how and when to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Local Authority Designated Officer is Darrel Clews

01273 295643

Darrel.Clews@brighton-hove.gov.uk


BRIGHTON
GIRLS