



**Brown's School**  
Empowering Tomorrow's People

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## **COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION AT BROWN'S SCHOOL**

From 20<sup>th</sup> 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, and for vulnerable pupils

The way schools are currently operating in response to COVID-19 is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

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

This addendum of Brown's School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements.

## Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jeanette May	07791530068	jeanettemay@brownsschool.co.uk
Shared Designated Safeguarding Lead	Denise Mitchell	07717 747572	info@brownsschool.co.uk
Headteacher	Elaine Lovett	07584 415151	headteacher@brownsschool.co.uk
Deputy Headteacher	George Mitchell	01689 876816	georgemitchell@brownsschool.co.uk
Chair of Governors	Sarah Mortiboys	01689 876816	sarahmortiboys@brownsschool.co.uk

## 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.

Pupils 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, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services or offering a virtual consultation. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads, know who our most vulnerable children are. We have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Brown's 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 Looked After Children will be George Mitchell, Deputy Headteacher.

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 school, 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 COVID19, the School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

### **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.

Brown's 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. We 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.

To support the above, Brown's School, 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, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will notify their social worker.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Brown's School has two Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Jeanette May and Denise Mitchell

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL will be available to be contacted via phone when working from home.

Where a trained DSL is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This will be the Headteacher, Elaine Lovett or the Deputy Headteacher, George Mitchell. This will include liaising with the DSLs as necessary.

It is important that all Brown's School staff have access to a trained DSL. On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

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's Safeguarding Policy. Staff can ring the DSLs if they are not on site and concern forms can be emailed. The Senior member of staff at the school should be informed of the concern.

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 use a concern form to report the concern to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Sarah Mortiboys (details above)

## **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. Brown's School DSLs undertook training in September 2019 and will not need retraining until September 2021

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Brown's School understands that where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. However, Brown's School does not anticipate recruiting new staff or volunteers during this time.

## **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, Brown's 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 Brown's 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. However, the school does not anticipate utilising volunteers during this time

Brown's 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.

Brown's 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](mailto: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, Brown's School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in schools**

Brown's School 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.

Brown's 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:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- 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, 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 should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

However, at this time, Brown's School does not anticipate delivering virtual lessons.

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

Brown's School 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.

The communication plans will include texts, emails and phone calls. Other individualised contact methods may be considered and recorded.

Brown's School and its DSLs 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 will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website.

Brown's School 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 Brown's School are aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Brown's 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.

### **Supporting children in school**

Brown's School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Brown's School 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.

Brown's School 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 COVID19.

Where Brown's School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Leads or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately between the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Brown's 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 multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on concern forms and appropriate referrals made.

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### **DFE coronavirus helpline**

Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

### **Bromley coronavirus assistance helpline**

0208 313 4484 (weekday office hours)

