



COVID-19 arrangements for
safeguarding and child protection at
The Buckinghamshire Primary Pupil Referral Unit

April 2020

Agreed by the Management Committee: April 2020

Date shared with staff: April 2020

The safety and welfare of all children must always be the Buckinghamshire Primary PRU's priority and the principles within the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2019 and our CP Policy still apply.

1. Contacts
PRU Contacts

Site	DSL	ADSL	Telephone
Pathways	Kate Mayhew Teacher in Charge kmayhew@bucksgfl.org.uk	Sam Haig Senior teacher shaig01@bucksgfl.org.uk	Pathways: 01296 387300
Woodlands	Wendy Smith Deputy Executive Headteacher wsmith@bucksgfl.org.uk	Stuart Chandler Senior teacher schandler@bucksgfl.org.uk	Woodlands: 01494 475350 (Wendy Smith can be contacted on the number for The Oaks shown below)
The Oaks	Wendy Smith Deputy Executive Headteacher wsmith@bucksgfl.org.uk	Sarah McGowan Senior teacher smcgowan1@bucksgfl.org.uk	The Oaks: 01494 586845

Nominated member of the Management Committee for safeguarding: Louise Sim

Contact: lsim01@bucksgfl.org.uk

Executive Headteacher: Stuart Cateridge

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Tel 01296 397300 or 01494 475350

A member of the DSL team will always be available during school hours. The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

The DSL team will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Responsibilities

We continue to take a whole school approach to safeguarding and it is the responsibility of all staff to report any concerns that they may have for the safety and/or welfare of any children with whom they have contact. This contact may be via e-mail, virtual teaching, through a phone call or directly with the child.

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

A written notification, Letter of Assurance, will be obtained from a setting or school if any of their staff members come to work at any of the primary PRU sites and a risk assessment will be put in place.

Any volunteers coming into the PRU, will be subject to relevant checks being completed 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. A risk assessment will be put in place on an individual basis.

Any staff or volunteers, carrying out duties in this school, who are usually based in another setting, will read the PRU's Child Protection Policy and KCSIE 2019, Part 1 and annexe A. They will be informed of who the DSLs are and made aware of the PRU's and local procedures for reporting concerns.

Induction to safeguarding training will be completed by the DSL team for any volunteers who are not familiar with the PRU.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the PRU is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the PRU, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, the PRU will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Our DSL team, led by the DEHT, will ensure that they keep informed of any up to date information, both at a local or national level, as a result of COVID-19, that will impact the welfare of all students within the PRU and will ensure that relevant information is shared with all staff, including any staff who may be carrying out temporary duties.

The DSL team will ensure that the child protection files are kept up to date and any required information is shared with the relevant agencies.

All staff must be made aware of how to report any welfare concerns following established procedures, using CPOMs and by discussion with DSLs.

All staff continue to have a duty to report any concerns about the conduct or actions of any other member of staff. This report will be made to the Executive Headteacher or Chair of the Management Committee in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include:

- Children who have a social worker
- Children with Child in Need (CIN) Plans
- Children on Child Protection (CP) Plans
- Looked after children
- Young carers
- Disabled children
- Pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans (0-25)

Children who are placed with the PRU on a full time basis and are deemed to be vulnerable will be offered a place in order to continue to attend, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Any decisions will be made taking into account the individual circumstances of the child in consultation with the local authority and/or other professionals involved in the well-being of the child. It is expected that pupils who are dual registered will be offered places at their mainstream school. The PRU will, however, keep in contact with the school, child and parents as necessary as decided on an individual basis to meet the needs of the child.

The PRU must offer support to those children and parents/carers, who have concerns about the child contracting Covid-19 through attendance at school. The PRU will also refer the guidance published by Public Health England and follow their advice. In cases where the child has a social worker, the PRU must make contact with them to discuss the concerns. Guidance will also be sought from the Virtual School Headteacher for children who are looked after (CLA).

The PRU must identify those children who are a concern, but do not meet the criteria to be classed as a vulnerable child. The PRU will put in place an appropriate communication plan, which will be agreed by SLT. Communication details will be noted and dated.

It is not expected that PRU staff will carry out door step visits. If that changes, a full risk assessment will be done including advice about social distancing and PPE. Such visits will only take place with the express approval of the Executive Headteacher.

Those with an EHCP should be risk-assessed by their school in consultation with the local authority (LA) 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. The PRU will agree a communication plan and a programme of learning based on individual circumstances.

The PRU 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's Virtual School Headteacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The PRU will regularly review CP/CIN cases to determine vulnerability and prioritise resources accordingly. The lead person for this will be Wendy Smith.

The PRU 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.

Mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Teachers at the PRU must be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work whilst they are at home. The PRU will refer to the separate guidance on providing education remotely.

Appropriate support is in place for children of critical workers and vulnerable children attending school. The government guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools will be referred to in order to support mental health issues that can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state, which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem.

Support for pupils and students in the current circumstances will include existing provision in the school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone) or from specialist staff or support services. Further advice on support can be found on schoolsweb at <https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/covid-19-corona-virus-latest-advice/covid-19-mental-health-and-well-being/>

Online Safety

All staff are aware of the PRU's ICT and E-Safety Policy, however during this period of the COVID-19 outbreak, there are other aspects of e-safety that need to be considered. Teachers will consider e-safety when setting work and/or engaging with parents and carers and will continue to signpost parents to information which will help them to manage online safety for their child whilst at home.

All staff must be reminded to familiarise themselves with the Staff code of conduct and ICT code of conduct (including acceptable use of social media).

Children and online safety away from school and college

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.

The PRU will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems are in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- 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 must only use platforms provided by the PRU to communicate with pupils.
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.
- Parental consent will be obtained prior to any pupil taking part in a virtual lesson.
- Teachers must not engage in any 1:1 virtual teaching sessions.
- Ensure that ground rules are in place so that the students have a good understanding of how the sessions will be organised and run.
- Consider the needs of vulnerable pupils, such as SEND.

[Guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning](#) and from the [London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming](#) is available which could help plan online lessons and/or activities and deliver them safely.

The PRU will ensure that children, who are being asked to work online, have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online.

As well as reporting routes back to school, children will be signposted to age-appropriate practical support from, for example:

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

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In the communications with parents and carers, the PRU will emphasise the importance of securing 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 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.

For those students who are still accessing computers at the PRU and therefore are online, the PRU will still continue to ensure that the appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place.

Contact plans for supporting children not in school

The PRU will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any contact plans. These plans must be reviewed at least once a fortnight, and where concerns arise the DSL will consider any referrals needed as appropriate.

We have contact plans for children with a social worker, and children who we have safeguarding concerns about. Contact plans set out:

- How often the PRU will make contact – this will be at least once a week.
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well.
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both.

These plans are agreed with children's social care, and the Virtual School, where relevant, and will be reviewed on a fortnightly basis.

If a member of staff is unable to contact a parent/carer then a record of the attempt needs to be made. If a second unsuccessful attempt is made then the member of staff needs to alert the DSL, and make contact with the social worker, where appropriate, and the dates/times of unsuccessful contact shared. The DSL will then consider any referrals needed as appropriate.

The PRU will share safeguarding messages on its website.

Supporting children in school

The PRU will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Executive Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The PRU 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.

Peer on Peer Abuse

The PRU recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Pupils and parents will be informed of the procedures to report any concerns if they are different. It may be that a reminder of procedures may need to be sent. The PRU recognises that during the period of school closure, children may have more frequent access to online devices, which has the potential to lead to online peer on peer abuse. These would include:

- Sexting
- Online abuse
- Peer-on-peer grooming
- Distribution of youth involved sexualised content
- Harassment

Where the PRU receives a report of peer on peer abuse, it will be addressed promptly and appropriately, following the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.

The PRU will listen and work with the child, parents/carers and multi-agency partners, including a report to the police, if required, to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded, and appropriate referrals made.

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.

For those children where it has been agreed between the PRU, social workers and parents/carers that children will be attending school, the school will follow up on any pupil who does not arrive at the agreed time.

The PRU 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.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school or discontinues, a DSL will notify their social worker.

To support the above, the PRU will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

The Department for Education has introduced a [daily online attendance form](#) to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

Children moving schools

If any children are attending another setting, all relevant welfare and child protection information will be shared with that school. All relevant contacts, including social care contacts will also be shared with the school.

For looked-after children, any change in school must be led and managed by the Virtual School Headteacher. The receiving school must be made aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them.

The receiving school will have access to a vulnerable child's EHC Plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker is (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible Virtual School Headteacher is). All medical information must be shared with the receiving school and suitable arrangements made for any children requiring medication to be administered. A risk assessment and protocol will be drawn up to cover individual cases. Contact telephone numbers will be shared with any receiving school. Wherever possible this will take place prior to the child arriving or as soon as possible following their arrival.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or ADSL) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEND provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case senior leaders must take responsibility.

Whilst schools must continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR, this legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. School must follow the advice about information sharing that can be found at paragraphs 76-83 of KCSIE.

All staff will be sent this additional policy to read and to sign to say they have read and understood the content. If staff are working from home, they will be asked to email confirming the above.