

Boston High School – Safeguarding Annex due to School Closure April 2020 (to be read in conjunction with the full Safeguarding Policy)

Principles

Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory safeguarding guidance that schools should continue to have regard to as per their legislative duty and/or funding agreement requirements.

The current way we are operating in response to coronavirus (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 will always continue to come first if anyone in a school has a safeguarding concern about any child we will continue to act and act immediately.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is available to staff, pupils, parents and carers throughout the school closure.
- Our pupils will continue to be protected when they are online, when using our learning platforms.

Our School Closure arrangements in response to COVID-19 and safeguarding pupils.

Designated Safeguard Lead (or Deputy if DSL is unavailable due to isolation):

- A DSL or Deputy will be on school site where possible, the safeguarding phone will be monitored by the DSL at all times. The phone number will be communicated to all stakeholders via Website, Letter, and Social media. The rota of availability will be made to all staff.
- The DSL will continue to receive, respond and act on any DFE, or Local Authority Safeguarding updates.
- The DSL will continue to report through any safeguarding concerns immediately through the correct channels in place, during the school closure.
- The DSL will continue to communicate with all external agencies in regards to any vulnerable pupils on roll.
- The DSL will continue to communicate with all staff about any new or existing vulnerable pupils.
- The DSL will promote the new safeguarding arrangements to parents/carers and pupils.
- The DSL will communicate and put Risk assessments in place for any vulnerable pupils when the school is closed.

All staff :

- Read the new Safeguarding Annex and confirm with an email to DSL
- Phone the safeguarding mobile or email the DSL if they have any concerns about a pupil.
- Will keep all communication with any pupils about a safeguarding concern.
- Will complete a safeguarding referral form if they feel there is an issue.
- will communication with the pupil of concern to let them know, it is their duty to report any concerns to the DSL.
- Will only communicate to pupils through our school email system.

Parents/Carers:

- Will within reason, have online protections in place for you their children home.
- Will report to the DSL if there are safeguarding concerns.

- Will contact the school if they have any questions or queries in relation to online safety.
- Will report any potential online issues to the relevant platform reporting system, e.g through CEOPS reporting button.

Our Pupils:

- Will take responsibility for their online safety at home.
- Will report any online concerns to school immediately, and the relevant platform they are on.
- Will only communicate with their teachers through school email address.

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.

Those 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 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Boston High 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 this will be: Jemma Curson and Kate Osborn for LAC/EHCP.

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 an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and school name will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Boston High or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

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.

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.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Boston High School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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, Boston High 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).

Supporting children in school

Boston High School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. We 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.

Boston High 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. We 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.

Where we have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Headteacher will carry out this role. Where this is not possible, the Senior Leadership will contact the Local Authority for support.

Every school will face unique challenges at this time, as ever, safeguarding pupils at Boston High School remains our top priority.