



# OLD BUCKENHAM HALL

## Safeguarding Policy Addendum

### COVID 19 Safeguarding Arrangements

## **Introduction**

Old Buckenham Hall (OBH) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. (Everyone under the age of 18) We expect all staff to share this commitment and to become familiar with our Safeguarding Policy.

The way in which OBH is currently operating in response to COVID-19 is fundamentally different to how we would normally operate, however safeguarding principles remain the same: OBH continues to have regards to *Keeping Children Safe in Education – Sept 2019*.

This Policy takes account of local procedures set out by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership including their referral thresholds. Their full procedures can be viewed at [www.suffolkscb.org.uk](http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk)

## **Context**

From 20th March 2020 parents and carers 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.

OBH is continuing to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. This addendum forms part of Old Buckenham Hall's Safeguarding Policy and contains the safeguarding provision for pupils being educated both on and off site during COVID-19.

The Safeguarding Policy (OBHP23) remains fundamentally the same and continues to have regard for the Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance. This Addendum sets out the adjustments OBH is making in line with the changes to operational practice.

This Addendum has been produced in line with the Government Guidance contained in *Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers - Published 27 March 2020*.

The Addendum will continue to be reviewed on a monthly basis or as and when further guidance is updated and issued by the Government.

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### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

It is important that all OBH staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or alternate).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Emma Easdale (07776 691665) [emma.easdale@obh.co.uk](mailto:emma.easdale@obh.co.uk)

The Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads are

Camilla Webster [camilla.webster@obh.co.uk](mailto:camilla.webster@obh.co.uk)

Stephen Gillott [stephen.gillott@obh.co.uk](mailto:stephen.gillott@obh.co.uk)

David Griffiths [headmaster@obh.co.uk](mailto:headmaster@obh.co.uk)

Chairman of Governors, Andrew McGregor [chairman@obh.co.uk](mailto:chairman@obh.co.uk)

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or alternate) available on site. Where this is not possible a trained DSL (or alternate) will be available to be contacted via phone, email or online video - for example when working from home.

Responsibilities will include but are not limited to updating and managing access to the child protection online management system (CPOMS), liaising with the offsite DSL/ alternates, and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college, reporting any changes and keeping records.

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

### **Critical Worker Definition**

Children with a parent or carer who is listed on the government's critical worker list should be considered for a school place, so long as their job cannot be done from home.

Many parents working within these sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home and every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. OBH will contact parents and carers to establish whether those who are eligible will require a school place.

The critical worker list includes those involved in: Health and social care; Education and childcare; Key public services; Local and national government; Food and other necessary goods; Public safety and national security; Transport; Utilities, communication and financial services

### **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 school 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. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

SMT, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

**OBH** will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

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 **OBH** will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, **OBH** or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

**OBH** will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

### **Attendance**

**OBH** is following the *Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance recording for educational settings – updated 26 March 2020*.

In the case of social worker involvement, **OBH** will liaise where necessary with the child's social worker to agree with the families whether the child in need should be attending the education provision provided. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school or discontinues, **OBH** will notify their social worker immediately where contact has been unsuccessful.

If a child who is expected in school fails to attend, it will be followed up in accordance with **OBH**'s Attendance and Registration Policy (OBHP38) and contact will be made with the parent, carer or social worker. If contact has not been made by 09.30 on that day, this will then be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL. The DSL will attempt to make contact using a range of methods (phone, text, email). If contact is unsuccessful a home visit will be arranged by the school or other appropriate agency. In the case of a home visit being required, a risk assessment will be

completed and logged. The risk of COVID19 will not override the duty of care the school owe in ensuring the child is safe.

Form teachers will have daily live form meetings. If a child does not engage for 4 consecutive days the DSL will be informed and she will contact the family. Records will be kept and information shared with agencies as necessary.

### **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy (OBHP23). This should include creating an alert on CPOMS and informing the DSL or Alternate.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access this from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headmaster. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Families will be under immense pressure at the moment and not every home will be a place of safety for the child. Some children will be living in a confined living space and may be witnessing or be subject to an abusive household situation. Due to an increase strain on families both financially and emotionally, in response to COVID19, there is an increased requirement for safeguarding vigilance, reporting and monitoring. Children's services may be working at a reduced capacity which will mean there is an additional prominence for persistent referring and the following up of any referrals made.

***Staff with any concerns or who are unsure would raise it with the DSL in the first instance but can if they wish make a direct referral to Children and Young People's Services via Customer First 0808 800 4005.***

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Headmaster immediately. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmaster whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors:  
Andrew McGregor

### **Supporting children in school**

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

OBH 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.

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

OBH 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.

Details of this plan must be recorded, as should a record of contact. The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

OBH and its DSL 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.

### **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 alternate) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or alternate) 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 OBH they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction by the DSL.

### **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 OBH continue to follow safer recruitment processes as laid down in our Recruitment Policy (OBHP19) and 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 **OBH** 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.

**OBH** 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.

**OBH** 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, **OBH** will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **Mental Wellbeing**

At this unprecedented time staff, pupils, parents and carers may be experiencing severe stress and anxiety. Everyone reacts differently to events, and changes in the way that we think, feel and behave vary between different people and over time.

Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home and/or on site. Equally taking into consideration their own working arrangements and workload.

Mental health issues can bring about changes in a young people's behaviour or emotional state which can be manifested in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem.

Staff should have special consideration for:

- Emotional state (fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem);
- Behaviour (aggressive or oppositional; habitual body rocking);
- Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking, overfriendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions).



To support parents and carers, pupils and staff, OBH will take into consideration the below factors:

- The importance on how to connect with and support others;
- The importance of voicing concerns;
- How to handle worries and concerns and coping strategies;
- The importance of physical wellbeing;
- The importance of sleep;
- Managing media and information;
- Understanding the facts;
- Focusing on positives and goal setting;
- Keeping an active mind;
- Worries about health and finance;
- Routine.

Support can be offered and arranged through a pupils' form tutor, ([firstname.surname@obh.co.uk](mailto:firstname.surname@obh.co.uk))

Emma Easdale, Designated Safeguarding Lead and School Nurse ([emma.easdale@obh.co.uk](mailto:emma.easdale@obh.co.uk))

Mandy Huxtable, school counsellor ([mandy.huxtable@obh.co.uk](mailto:mandy.huxtable@obh.co.uk))

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

OBH 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 School Safeguarding Policy (OBHP23) and Antibullying Policy (OBHP03).

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

### **Online safety in schools**

Many pupils will have an increased use of the internet in response to COVID-19 which may put them at an increased risk. OBH will continue to provide a safe online working environment for our pupils. See E-Safety Policy (OBHP09)

OBH continues to operate an appropriate firewall, filtration and monitoring system. Staff are trained and are aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other online risks.

If you have any concerns please contact Chris Bunting, Head of ICT [chris.bunting@obh.co.uk](mailto:chris.bunting@obh.co.uk)

## **Children and online safety away from school**

OBH recognises that in response to COVID-19 the majority of pupils will not physically be attending school. This increases their vulnerability and online safeguarding risk factors.

OBH staff will be extra vigilant during remote interactions with pupils and report any concerns they may have in accordance with School Safeguarding Policy. Where necessary, concerns will be referred to social services and if required the police. Staff will be made aware of the importance of keeping themselves safe online.

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

**Staff** - OBH adopts the same principals for online learning as is set out in our Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy (OBHP08) and Staff Code of Conduct. (OBHP20).

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

- No 1:1s, groups only.  
The exception to this is zoom learning success lessons which are pre-arranged via parents. Parents are encouraged to be present in the same room for the duration of the lesson.
- 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 agreed by the Headmaster to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

**For pupils, parents or carers** - OBH adopts the same principals for online learning as set out in the pupil Behaviour Policy (OBH04).

OBH will maintain continued communication with parents and carers during this time to reinforce the importance of safe online learning.

Advice will be given such as, but not limited to:

- Confirmation of online tools and or sites that the school will be using/if using;
- Confirmation of what the child may be asked to do online;
- Confirmation as to who their child will be interacting with online;

- Allowing the parent or carer the opportunity to voice any concerns;
- The importance of not leaving the child alone during screen time;
- Monitoring the search history;
- Maintaining open communication with the child about online safety;
- How to report a concern;
- Ensuring during face-to-face online sessions the child take place in an appropriate central home location.

OBH will ensure parents and carers understand the importance of safe online procurement if wishing to engage in a supplementary online learning resource or tutor for their child. It is importance that parents, and carers understand that anyone having access to their child should be vetted appropriately and should be procured through a reputable source.

**Help and Support** - OBH has ensured that both parents and pupils have an open line of communication with the school

OBH emergency contact details: 01449 740252

All children have been made aware how to report a concern remotely and have also been issued with the ChildLine contact details.

ChildLine: 0800 1111 who are operating a 9am – Midnight service in response to COVID19.

UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/>

CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

Police: 999 if the child is in immediate danger.

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline: Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk) Telephone: 0800 046 8687 Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

Young Minds Crisis Messenger: 85258 – free text service for 24/7 support

NSPCC Helpline: Phone: 0808 800 5000 Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Mind: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)