

# Covid-19 Return to School: Child Protection Policy Addendum

May 2020 – Version 1

Based on DfE guidance ‘Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other provider’ updated May 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>



**THE EDUCATION  
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# Birchwood

## Return to School/College Child Protection Policy: Covid-19 Addendum

Policy Author: **The Education People**

Date written/Updated: **(May 20)**

Date shared with staff: **(June 20)**

*This addendum will be reviewed following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures and reshared as required.*

### 1. Key School Contacts

	Name	School email	School Phone Number
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jane Waters	Jane.waters@birchwoodpru.kent.sch.uk	03000658450 or 07980865348
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Emma Easby Rachael Hill	<a href="mailto:Emma.easby@birchwoodpru.kent.sch.uk">Emma.easby@birchwoodpru.kent.sch.uk</a> office@birchwoodpru.kent.sch.uk	07716641233 07716 641237
Head Teacher Acting	Jane Waters	Jane.waters@birchwoodpru.kent.sch.uk	03000658450 or 07980865348
Chair of Management Committee	Sonette Schwartz	sschwartz@brockhill.kent.sch.uk	01303 265521
Safeguarding Governor	Louisa Coppins	Louisa.coppins@turnerschools.com	01303 842400

### 2. Policy Context

- From the week commencing 1 June 2020, the government is asking schools and colleges to plan to welcome back more children, as part of the response to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Secondary schools and colleges are expected to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils. Birchwood will invite back all Year 10 pupils and will also invite all KS3 pupils for daily teaching sessions. Only small numbers of pupils are involved in each year group and a total of 11 pupils will be on-site. The Recovery Planning document risk assesses a maximum of 14 pupils on site at any one time due to the size of the building and the restrictions around entry and exit points.
- The way Birchwood is currently operating in response to coronavirus continues to be different, however, as more children return, our safeguarding principles in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) 2019, remain the same:
  - the best interests of children will always come first

- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy DSL is available
- 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
- The Recovery Planning Document has been written with the current guidance referred to throughout including all safeguarding updates and the Return to School Guidance produced by KCC
- This addendum of Birchwood Child Protection policy contains details of any amendments to our existing safeguarding arrangements and should be read alongside our current policies and procedures: e.g. school website, staff 'T' drive or on request from the School Office.
- All staff and volunteers will be aware of the policy addendum and any revisions; the addendum will be made available publicly.

### 3. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

- Birchwood - Lead Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Jane Waters
- Birchwood - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) are: Emma Easby and Rachael Hill
- The DSL (or a deputy) will be available on-site. However, if in exceptional circumstances this is not possible, a named DSL will be available to be contacted via phone or video call.
- If a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.
  - This will include updating safeguarding files and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with social workers where they require access to children and/or to carry out statutory assessments at Birchwood.
- All staff on-site will have access to a trained DSL (or deputy) and know on any given day who that person is, and how they can speak to them.
  - Up to date details of the DSL/Deputy DSLs will be visible to staff and children.
- The DSL/Deputy DSLs will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.
- Birchwood will ensure that the DSLs (and deputies) have time to support staff and children regarding new concerns, and making referrals as appropriate, as more children return.

### 4. Vulnerable Children

- Vulnerable children in all year groups continue to be encouraged and expected to attend school where it is appropriate.
- Vulnerable children for the purposes of continued attendance during the coronavirus outbreak are those across all year groups who:
  - are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child.
  - have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment, their needs can be as safely or more safely met in Birchwood.
  - have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable and could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at Birchwood's and local authority's discretion.

- There is an expectation that children with a social worker will attend, unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed they are at less risk at home or in their placement for example due to underlying health conditions.
- Where vulnerable children are not attending Birchwood, we will keep in daily contact with them.
- Birchwood will continue to work with professionals involved with children and share relevant information with them, such as social workers, early help workers and virtual school heads (VSH). This is especially important during the COVID-19 period.
  - This will include information about attendance and any welfare concerns.
  - If there is a safeguarding concern, this will be shared with the relevant professional as soon as possible.

## 5. Attendance

- From the 15<sup>th</sup> June, children in specified year groups and vulnerable children will be returning to school as agreed.
  - No one with symptoms should attend Birchwood for any reason.
  - Vulnerable children's attendance is expected, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan.
  - Parents and carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend educational provision whilst current Covid-19 restrictions are in place.
- For learners agreed to be in school, we will resume our usual day-to-day attendance registers and processes in accordance with existing policies.
- Birchwood will continue to complete the Educational Setting Status form to keep a record which gives the DfE daily updates on how many children and staff are attending.
- Birchwood will:
  - continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend. Birchwood will also follow up directly with their parent/carer.
  - continue to follow up with any parent/carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't.
- Birchwood will ensure that regular contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not returning to school due to parents preferring home learning to be set.
  - With support from the DSL, teaching and/or pastoral staff who are encouraged to make calls directly with children, where possible and appropriate.
    - Staff will make calls from the school site and/or via school phones and devices.
    - If a school phone is not available or accessible, phone calls will be made from withheld numbers so personal contact details are not visible.
    - Staff will record the date, time and attendance of calls.
- To ensure contact can be maintained, Birchwood will confirm emergency contact numbers are correct with parents/carers and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

## 6. Reporting Concerns

- Where any concerns are raised about learners or staff, Birchwood will follow existing and updated local arrangements as set out by Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) and as outlined in our existing child protection policy.

- Birchwood recognises that new safeguarding concerns may arise regarding individual children as we see them for the first time in person following school closures.
- All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk, both on and off site, including online.
  - If a member of staff has any safeguarding concerns about a child, this will be reported to the DSL as soon as possible.
  - If the concern is urgent, the member of staff will speak to a DSL in person or via phone/video call if they are not on site, immediately.
  - In the event a member of staff cannot contact a DSL, this will not delay them taking immediate action to safeguard a child in line with our existing child protection policy.
  - Concerns will be recorded using existing safeguarding processes as outlined in our Child Protection Policy.
- Prevent is a vital part of our work to safeguard children from radicalising influences; the school will continue to follow local processes where we have concerns during this challenging time.
- Learners are encouraged to report concerns via existing school systems, or to a trusted adult at home.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to report concerns via existing school systems.
- Where staff are concerned about an adult working with learners, they should report the concern to the headteacher.
  - If there are concerns about any member of staff or volunteer, the LADO service will be consulted with.
  - Concerns around the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of the Management Committee.

## **7. Movement of Children**

- For looked-after children, any change in school will be led and managed by the virtual school head with responsibility for the child.
- The receiving institution will be aware of the reason any child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. This will take place ideally before a child arrives or as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Any exchanges of safeguarding information will take place between DSLs (or a deputy) and SEND information will be shared by special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of special educational needs (SEN) provision for children with EHC plans.
- Birchwood will continue to have appropriate regard to data protection law but is aware this does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

## **8. Safer Working Practice, Including Safeguarding Training and Induction**

- All staff will follow our existing staff code of conduct and any addendum updates with regards to safer working practice, both on and off site.
- Staff will continue to follow any updates to the school code of conduct which have been made to reflect current Covid-19 measures and increased numbers of learners on site from 15<sup>th</sup> June.
- School leaders/DSLs should be aware of the updated Safer Working Practice Guidance
- All staff have read KCSIE 2019 Part 1 and accessed safeguarding training.
- Staff will be made aware if any local processes or arrangements have changed as more children return, so they know what to do if there are concerns about a child.

- Any new staff will receive child protection induction training from the DSL and will be provided with a copy of the school Child Protection Policy and Covid-19 Addendum.
- Face to face DSL refresher training is 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.
- Formal DSL refresher training will be undertaken as soon as possible; the DSLs (and deputies) will continue to do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments.

## 9. 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.
- During the return to school period, if Birchwood recruit new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment practices including those set up in part 3 of KCSIE 2019.
- If volunteers are recruited Birchwood will continue to follow the guidance in accordance with KCSIE 2019 and with a mind to updates to the Safer Working Practice Guidance produced as a response to Covid-19.
  - Volunteers who have not had the relevant checks will not be left unsupervised with a child.
- If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school we will consider the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability if the current employer confirms in writing that:
  - the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
  - there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
  - there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual
- A new DBS check for returning staff who have continued to be employed but have not been working in regulated activity is not required, however, if for any reason the school have concerns about an individual, we may obtain a new check.
- 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. The Home Office and Immigration Enforcement have also temporarily adjusted the Right to work checks due to coronavirus (COVID-19).
  - Birchwood will continue to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child in accordance with KCSIE 2019.
- Birchwood will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where appropriate. During Covid-19 measures, all referrals will be made by emailing [Misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto: misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk).
- Birchwood will continue to update the single central record in line with KCSIE. (Paragraphs 148 to 156)

The SCR will provide the means to log everyone that will be working or volunteering in the school on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other institutions.

## 10. Supporting Wellbeing

- Birchwood recognises that staff, parents/carers and learners may experience some degree of emotional wellbeing or anxiety challenges as more children return to school.

- Birchwood recognises that many children consider school to be a safe place and the current situation may impact on learners', staff and parent/carers mental health.
- Birchwood will plan to ensure everyone feels supported through an inclusive culture and that everyone returns to a positive working environment to help relieve any anxiety or fear.
- Birchwood will ensure the whole community are welcomed. Staff and learners and will be given the opportunity for wellbeing check ins within trusted relationships.
- Birchwood will ensure that all children who are categorised as vulnerable or children of critical workers, as well as those children returning to school from 15th June onwards, are appropriately supported.
  - Staff will address the wellbeing of learners through a range of approaches including age/ability appropriate activities.
  - The Multi-Agency Lead will be available for learners and will be given the time to provide support as required.
  - Counselling through CHATTs will be offered to all pupils (face to face or by telephone)
- Birchwood is conscious of the wellbeing of all staff and the need to implement flexible working practices in a way that supports staff and promotes good work-life balance.
  - Senior leaders and the DSL (or deputy) will be available to provide support to staff as required.
- Teachers will be aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of learners (and their parents) who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of children's' work.
- Birchwood will continue to signpost staff, learners and parents/carers, on or off site, to a range of appropriate sources of support, internally and externally.

## 11. Supporting Children in School

- Birchwood is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.
- Birchwood will be mindful of the specific needs of learners who have been identified as the first to return.
- Birchwood is aware that children of different ages with differing needs will be accepted as the weeks progress, so will keep this under review.
- Birchwood needs to be confident we have up to date information on learners returning to site which reflects any changes in circumstances which could impact on their welfare.
  - Birchwood led by DSL or deputy, will do all we reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise us of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that we should be aware of before a child returns to school.
- Birchwood will be a safe place for all children to attend and flourish. A senior member of staff will ensure that there is an appropriate number of staff on site and that staff to learner ratios have been considered to maximise the safety of children.
- Birchwood will follow the current government guidance in relation to social distancing and all matters relating to public health from the respective authorities.
- Birchwood will continue to record any support provided to children in relation to safeguarding issues in line with our existing safeguarding recording system.

## Peer on Peer Abuse

- Birchwood continues to recognise and respond to cases of peer on peer abuse by considering each incident on a case by case basis and basing any intervention on usual processes outlined within KCSIE 2019.
- Birchwood recognises that the current circumstances and the changeable nature of Government guidance may mean that the school needs to adapt elements of the process in some cases to ensure that they are able to respond in line with advice when required.
- Government guidance has recommended smaller class sizes, staggered lunch breaks, social distancing, and several adaptations to the school day that will require a range of strategies to help manage children's interactions with one another and their own understanding of what is appropriate behaviour at this time.
- The DSL will continue to consult as appropriate with multi-agency professionals to ensure that children's safety and wellbeing is not compromised when incidents of peer on peer abuse are brought to their attention.

## Online safety

- Birchwood expectations with regards to online behaviour and education when using school provided devices or internet access on site will continue to be implemented in line with existing policies.
  - Any concerns regarding onsite online behaviour or use will be responded to in line with existing policies.
- Birchwood will continue to provide a safe online learning environment where learners use school provided devices on site; appropriate filtering and monitoring will continue to be implemented.
  - Learners internet use will be supervised by staff according to their age and ability and learners will be directed to use appropriate online resources and tools.
- Use of staff and learner personal devices, including mobile phones, will be managed in line with our existing mobile technology policy.
- The Online Safety Lead and the DSL's have all completed the Annual Online Safety Course through the National Online Safety organisation.

## 12. Supporting children not in school

- The Government has strongly encouraged children in eligible year groups to return to school unless they are self-isolating or shielding, however there may be a significant number of children still not attending school.
  - Birchwood will continue to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people on the school roll but who may not be physically attending.
- All DSLs will continue to identify vulnerable children who would benefit from Early Help as identified in KCSIE 2019, provide pastoral support and consider whether they would benefit from external support.
- There will be clear plans around how best to communicate with learners who are identified as vulnerable, as well as those whom DSLs have concerns about, who do not receive a statutory service.
  - This could include telephone contact and/or doorstep visits at the discretion of the DSL.

- Birchwood and the DSL will work closely with all relevant agencies and professionals regarding safeguarding a child who has been identified as able to return but for whatever reason is not doing so.
  - Any plans will be reviewed regularly and if concerns become significant, the DSL will consider any requests for support if considered appropriate.
- Where parents/carers opt to supplement the schools remote learning offer, we 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.
- The school will utilise its website to ensure that safeguarding messages are shared with children and their families. This will include links to appropriate services and resources that are aimed at supporting them throughout this period.

### Online safety away from school

- All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk online and will report and respond to concerns in line with the Child Protection Policy addendum.
  - Where necessary, referrals will be made to LADO, children's social care and as required, the police.
- Learners are encouraged to report concerns to a member of staff or a trusted adult at home. Where this is not possible, additional support can be accessed online via:
  - Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
  - UK Safer Internet Centre's 'Report Harmful Content': <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>
  - National Crime Agency Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (NCA-CEOP): [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)
- Parents/carers will continue to be encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parent controls are implemented.
- Birchwood will ensure any sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.
- All communication with learners and parents/carers will take place:
  - within school hours as much as possible. (*Or hours agreed with the school to suit the needs of staff*)
  - with staff using school devices over personal devices wherever possible and in line with our existing AUP. Where this is not possible, staff will speak with SLT.
  - using school provided or SLT approved communication channels; for example, school provided email accounts and phone numbers and/or agreed systems e.g. Google Classroom, Microsoft 365 or equivalent.
    - Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.
- Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our school behaviour policy/code of conduct.
- When delivering remote learning, staff will:
  - only use online tools that have been evaluated and agreed by leadership.
  - ensure remote learning activities are planned in accordance with our curriculum policies, taking learner needs and technology access into account.
  - record the length, time, date and attendance of any online lessons/contact held or made.
  - revisit relevant policies such as our acceptable use of technology policy with learners as necessary.

- Where remote learning is taking place 'live' for example using webcams or chat facilities, staff and learners will ensure a safe and professional environment is maintained in line with our Remote Learning Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

### 13. Additional support and links

- As well as through existing school mechanisms, learners, staff and parents/carers can access age appropriate and practical support and advice via a range of national and local services:
  - Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
  - Kent Resilience Hub: <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk>
  - NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-with-children/>

#### DfE Guidance

- Closure of educational settings: information for parents and carers: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers)
- Vulnerable Children Guidance: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people)
- COVID-19: guidance for educational settings: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance recording for educational settings: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings)

#### Specific Links relating to Coronavirus for Learners and Parents/Carers

- Kent County Council: [www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus](http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/](http://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/)
- Mind: [www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/)
- Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/>
- Kent Children's University: Home Resources Learning Packs: [www.theeducationpeople.org/blog/kent-childrens-university-home-learning-resources-pack-is-live/](http://www.theeducationpeople.org/blog/kent-childrens-university-home-learning-resources-pack-is-live/)
- Children's Commissioner:
  - Children's guide to coronavirus: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/childrens-guide-to-coronavirus/](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/childrens-guide-to-coronavirus/)
  - Resources for parents during coronavirus: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/coronavirus/resources/](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/coronavirus/resources/)
- Sport England: [www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout](http://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout)
- Place2be:
  - [www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-supporting-children-who-may-be-especially-vulnerable/](http://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-supporting-children-who-may-be-especially-vulnerable/)

- o [www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-information-for-children/](http://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-information-for-children/)

### **Online Safety**

- NCA-CEOP: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- Internet Matters: [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)
- Childnet: [www.childnet.com/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19](http://www.childnet.com/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/working-remotely-advice-professionals-parents-posh-rhc](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/working-remotely-advice-professionals-parents-posh-rhc)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/)
- Parent Info: <https://parentinfo.org/>
- BBC Own it: [www.bbc.com/ownit](http://www.bbc.com/ownit)

### **Domestic Abuse**

- Domestic Abuse Services: [www.domesticabuseservices.org](http://www.domesticabuseservices.org)
- Victim Support: 0808 16 89 111 [www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/supportline](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/supportline)
- Oasis Domestic Abuse service – Service provider, East Kent. (Thanet and Dover): [www.oasisdaservice.org/home](http://www.oasisdaservice.org/home)
- Clarion Housing Association – Service provider for North and South Kent
  - o South Kent: (Ashford, Folkestone & Hythe and Canterbury) Rising Sun Domestic Abuse service helpline: 01227 452852 (Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm)
- National Women’s Aid Domestic Abuse 24hr helpline:0800 2000247