

COVID-19 Interim safeguarding guidance

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1. Further contacts and resources

Rationale

Bedales Schools are committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of our pupils, both remotely and in person. We value our close relationships with pupils and their families, and will seek to actively promote and support the physical and mental wellbeing of those in our care.

Staff who interact with pupils remotely and in person will continue to remain alert to the signs that a young person is at risk. Any concerns will be acted upon in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, including referrals to outside agencies including Children’s Services and the police.

Scope

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to Covid-19, and as the Schools reopen under national lockdown.

This guidance is informed by various sources, listed at the end, as well as [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2020\)](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), the [Bedales Staff Code of Professional Conduct](#), the [Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#) and the [Bedales Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#).

Key Contacts

Who to contact if....	Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
.. you have concerns about a child at any of the 3 schools	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jen Moore	07884 665434	jmoore@bedales.org.uk
... you have concerns about a child at Dunhurst	(Dunhurst) Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Graeme Thompson	07929 020961	gthompson@bedales.org.uk
.. you have concerns about a child at Dunannie	(Dunannie) Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sharon Rose		srose@bedales.org.uk
.. you have a concern about the conduct of a member of staff	The Head	Magnus Bashaarat (Bedales), Colin Baty (Dunhurst and Dunannie)		mbashaarat@bedales.org.uk cbaty@bedales.org.uk
.. you have concerns about safeguarding practices at Bedales Schools	The Safeguarding Governor	Clare Bradbury		cbradbury2017@bedales.org.uk
.. you have concerns about an adult in a position of trust	The LADO (Local Area Designated Officer)	Barbara Piddington or other LADO staff	01962 876364	Child.protection@hants.gov.uk

If you have urgent and immediate concerns about a child's welfare, dial 999 immediately

Key principles

This is not 'business as usual' and we must be prepared to be vigilant in reporting new, and monitoring existing, safeguarding concerns

Teachers are an important point of contact for pupils and their families at this time

- We must always act in the best interests of children
- Safeguarding is everyone's primary responsibility
- Act immediately on safeguarding concerns, sharing with the DSL team
- A member of the DSL team will always be available (see contacts above)

- Children should continue to be protected online as well as in person; parents should be made aware of potential challenges and should be equipped with ways to manage these

How to raise concerns

Please continue to use CPOMS to record any safeguarding, child protection and/or bullying matters as it is the most secure and effective means of logging your concerns. ALL STAFF can access this; click here <https://bedales.cpoms.net/> and follow the prompts. Please contact Jen Moore if you have any queries on this. You can also contact the safeguarding team with general queries on safeguarding@bedales.org.uk – all members of the safeguarding team have access to this inbox.

The role of the DSL team at this time

All staff will continue to have access to a trained member of the DSL team, either in person or by phone, video call or email. The DSL will maintain responsibility for coordinating safeguarding and will work with pastoral staff to manage ongoing and emerging safeguarding concerns. This will include maintaining safeguarding and child protection files, liaising with Children's Social Care teams nationwide as well as Safeguarding Leads in other schools, and supporting social workers to carry out statutory assessments when necessary.

To ensure continuity of service, staff will be notified by email if the DSL becomes incapacitated – appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure cover of the role.

Identifying vulnerable children

The government defines vulnerable children as those who have a social worker and those with EHC (education, health and care) plans in place. They are prioritising the allocation of additional care and support to these children. Those children are expected to attend an educational setting during this time.

Supporting children who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition

Several children in our care will not meet the above definition of 'vulnerable', but, for various reasons, we may have concerns about their welfare. Houseparents and pastoral staff have identified pupils who they consider vulnerable at this time; the list may be updated at any time during their absence from school. This information is shared in pastoral team meetings to ensure we have an overview of their care. Teaching staff should share any low-level concerns with houseparents and tutors as normal.

Recognising signs of abuse

Children and young people are normally seen by lots of adults every day. The current self-isolation and lockdown measures make some young people more vulnerable to all forms of abuse (physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect), and it becomes harder for adults to spot the signs of this abuse taking place. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. We should share any concern, however small, as it may prove part of a bigger picture in the child's life.

Types of behaviour that might raise concern may include, but are not limited to, the following: visible bruising, hearing aggressive or repeated shouting, a child appearing unusually quiet or reserved, a child reporting long periods spent alone. The NSPCC has useful information [here](#).

Remember, share your concerns if a child discloses something to you, or if you hear or see something that worries you. You can do this using the information provided above.

Attendance

Monitoring pupils' attendance will help to build an important picture of how that child is coping in these challenging times. At Bedales staff should continue to use ISAMS to register students for lessons. Houseparents and tutors should monitor attendance and share any concerns about persistent absences, contacting parents where applicable. At Dunhurst Tutors will register twice a day in the morning and in the afternoon, the Dunhurst Office Manager Juliet de Watteville will compile registers which will be monitored by Deputy Head Pastoral, Graeme Thompson. Dunannie children in Key Stages 1 and 2 will have daily contact with their class teachers via Microsoft Teams. Early Years children are accessing online learning via Tapestry. A daily record of registration will be taken by teachers and collated by Dunannie office staff.

Some pupils will be unable to access remote learning, for example those living in time zones where it becomes difficult to access lessons. Others will have periods of absence due to internet problems, illness, family illness or bereavement. Houseparents and tutors should help ensure that staff are aware of these barriers. We must make reasonable adjustments to our expectations of students in these circumstances. The schools are required to provide daily attendance data to the DfE during school closures.

Remote teaching

All remote learning must be conducted using the appropriate email addresses, Teams channels and other learning platforms provided by Bedales Schools. Lessons, particularly 1:1 lessons, must be recorded by the teacher and you should ensure you have received the appropriate training to deliver this. You can access the relevant guidance on delivering 1:1 lessons [here](#). By agreeing to participate in remote learning sessions, students and staff give consent to this material being recorded for learning and safeguarding purposes. Lessons can be accessed remotely by senior staff to ensure safeguarding and Teaching & Learning needs are fulfilled.

Staff and pupil expectations

While much of our teaching will now take place from the home, it is important to establish and maintain as professional an environment as possible. This can present difficulties, particularly as colleagues may work alongside family members. Alongside all other expectations outlined in the staff code of professional conduct, colleagues and students should ensure:

They, and any family members visible on-screen, are appropriately dressed

Teaching takes place from 'public' spaces, i.e. from a space that is not obviously a bedroom

Nothing inappropriate is seen or heard in the background. The 'blur background' function may be helpful in ensuring this.

Family members are not able to access any personal student data

The language used is appropriate for the student, as well as other family members who may be within earshot

Any non-timetabled contact (e.g. tutor group 1:1s) take place during reasonable working hours (8am-5.30pm Monday-Friday; 8am-1pm on Saturdays- Bedales Senior only)

Any further scheduled contact between staff and pupils should take place within mutually convenient times within the normal school working day, and be organised and communicated to your line manager well in advance

Learning materials are age-appropriate; video links have been checked in advance

Any phone calls to pupils or parents are conducted using work mobile phones or through Teams; colleagues are not to disclose their personal phone numbers by calling pupils or parents

Monitoring pupils' mental health

While we cannot fully anticipate the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of pupils and their families, we know that some families will face unprecedented strain and may experience financial pressures, family conflict and bereavement. Additionally, other pupils may be temporarily located away from immediate family, unable to provide or receive the type of support needed. Houseparents, pastoral staff and tutors will stay in regular contact with parents and children, and will be an important source of reassurance – if not concrete answers - in many cases. Some useful websites and online contacts are at the end of this document. Support sessions are being offered to pupils by the school counsellors.

Online safety

Given the likely increase in 'screen time' for children during this period, we must acknowledge that there is an increased possibility of risky online behaviour, including: access to harmful online content; vulnerability to 'sexting' and creating/viewing/sharing Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (YPSI) and vulnerability to adults committing sexual offences against children; an increased risk of exposure to online bullying, and susceptibility to online fraudsters. The school will provide age-appropriate guidance and resources for pupils and parents to help keep children safe online during this time.

Peer-on-peer abuse

While we can expect instances of in-person peer-on-peer abuse to decrease while physical encounters are restricted, there is an increased probability of online peer-on-peer abuse as pupils have more exposure to social media platforms. Although it will be difficult for staff to monitor and sanction any instances of peer-on-peer abuse, we can work with pupils and parents to try to achieve an appropriate resolution.

15. Further contacts and resources

Public Health England's advice can be accessed [here](#) (details in the bibliography)

Childnet.com has resources to keep children happy and safe online, accessible [here](#)

CEOP's ThinkUKnow materials – resources for online safety for all age groups can be accessed [here](#)

NetAware's reviews popular social networks, apps and games based on sexual content, violence & hatred, bullying, suicide & self harm and drink, drugs and crimes - <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/>

Childline provides a range of online tools that young people might find helpful, including:

information about [coronavirus](#)

[Calm Zone](#) – activities to help let go of stress
[games](#) to help take your mind off things

[information and advice](#) on a range of topics including feelings, relationships, family and schools

peer support [message boards](#)

[Childline Kids](#), a website for under 12s.

Childline can also give confidential help and advice. Calls to 0800 1111 are free or children can [get support online](#).

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