

Support to schools during Covid pandemic

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Support for schools: risk assessments

- **Before:** advice on how to manage reduced numbers of staff and deal with pupils and staff showing symptoms
- **During:** risk assessment templates provided – co-produced by Health and Safety, Public Health and Education for partial re-opening and full re-opening
- **Throughout:** worked closely with Safety, Health and Wellbeing team and Public Health – ongoing support, advice, webinars

Support for schools: virtual learning

- Creation of on-line resource on BPSI website to provide materials for virtual learning for schools and parents
- Helped schools signpost to appropriate resources on schools' websites
- Conducted a survey with all schools to audit support needed for on online learning
- Followed up with workshop sessions on best use of different platforms
- Took part in a “Lost Learning” project with five other London LAs which involved speaking with schools and students, focussing on Year 5 and 6 in primary and Year 11,12 and 13 in secondary.

Support for schools: training

- Summer Term virtual training programme (BPSI) focused on the current challenges and preparing for September (recovery curriculum, supporting well being and mental health etc)
- Over 35 schools signed up to our BPSI Covid Learning Recovery Programme this term (for primary schools)
- EP team ran training for school staff on loss, bereavement, anxiety etc. and supporting schools that suffer bereavements in their communities e.g. death of pupils, staff and parents

Support for schools: communication and guidance

- Virtual meetings to share practice, discuss issues and give advice with:
 - all PVI managers
 - senior leaders (HTs, Deputy and Assistant Headteachers)
 - Designated Safeguarding Leads and SENCOs
- LNI 'updates' for headteachers
- Specific guidance : EYFS and KS1 'coming back to school', transition points (EY to KS1, KS2 to KS3), governor support during the pandemic
- Year 11,12 and 13 Transitions Strategy – well supported
- Helpline and pathway events across the LA to support students after their GCSE, A Level and BTEC results

Support for schools: vulnerable children

- Local Offer site updated with materials: new “Parent Zone” and “SENCo Zone”
- SEN/Inclusion Team ran ‘virtual’ training/input for families, schools and settings
- Children with SEN (and their families) also supported by: BEAM team and virtual training offer from the Autism team.
- Virtual School worked closely with social workers to ensure the Looked After Children (LAC) were accessing education
- Led on virtual Personal Education Plan meetings which all took place virtually
- Collaborative work with Family Services to encourage vulnerable children to attend school. This work continues with the full re-opening

Additional safeguarding support during this period (1)

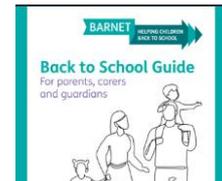
- Safeguarding Briefings, in response to Covid-19, focusing on Child Criminal Exploitation, Mental Health, sharing good practice, MASH and Early Help referrals.
- Regular safeguarding advice and guidance given to schools through breakfast briefings and DSL weekly drop-in sessions.
- Supporting schools and Family Services in getting increased attendance for vulnerable pupils.
- Close liaison with the Police Safer Schools Team regarding incidents in or around schools.

Additional safeguarding support during this period (2)

- Elective Home Education post enhanced and re-allocated to Education Welfare to further support partnership working.
- Training and support relating to Covid-19; DfE guidance and new working arrangements to support vulnerable CYP offered by BELS including Early Years Lead, EPS and Inclusion Advisory Team.
- Safeguarding Audit Tool updated - updated annually to reflect any changes in the DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and covers policy compliance, application of DfE guidance, training, curriculum, record keeping, buildings, safeguarding governor involvement

Support for young people – children's services

- Social workers continued to support children ensuring that the most vulnerable children continued to be seen.
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) continued throughout the period although referrals were over a third less
- Increase in anxiety related presentations to our Barnet Integrated Clinical Service (BICS) and to KOOOTH (our commissioned online counselling service) which has experienced a 25% increase.
- Wellbeing groups and workshops delivered by the BICS, with a focus on returning to school, and we have agreed to fund additional capacity for KOOOTH.
- Barnet Back to School Campaign
- Washable face covering provided to every secondary school student in Barnet
- DfE Wellbeing for Education Return to School – Mental health / Wellbeing programme being delivered to every school



At the end of the day (and at the beginning, and in the middle), we've been there to support....

"Thank you for all your work over this period keeping us well informed. The regular updates have been invaluable."

*"Thanks for all your help!
Such a good flow of info and
advice for us all. Amazing."*

"I have really appreciated the fact that the LNIs have always been available at the end of a phone and able to provide succinct interpretations of those 256 pieces of guidance!"

"Thanks for this and for your support during this challenging period. I really appreciate it - and have particularly valued the spreadsheet with all of the DfE updates/guidance- it has saved me lots of time."

"As a very busy and unusual term has come to an end, I want to thank you so very much for your help and support during this challenging time. Your reassuring and appreciative emails have been so very helpful and supportive. It has been wonderful to know I was not alone during this period. There is a real sense that you care and that you listen to your headteachers and it is so very wonderful to be part of Barnet. I am well aware that Barnet is unique in this way!"

"We have not met, but I am the Chair of the Local Governing Body at XXXXX School. As we approach the end of this challenging school year I just wanted to drop a short note to express my gratitude for all the support you and your colleagues have given to XXXX and the whole team at the school. Nobody has ever had to face the challenges that have presented themselves over recent months. I am a little on the sidelines but through my communications and discussions with XXXX I know how you have all really stepped up to the challenges, and the advice and support you have all given has been a big part of why the school has been able to achieve all it has done since March. So on behalf of everyone at the school thank you so much for everything"

...and the support
continues.....

Key issues now facing schools that governors need to focus on:

- Support for your headteacher/principal and the rest of the staff
- Supporting schools with regards pupils and staff developing symptoms and testing positive – schools remaining open, contingency planning.
- Ensuring curriculum is meeting the needs of the pupils including emotional/well being needs
- Ensuring the school is able to provide a blended approach to learning i.e. switching to home learning when required
- Ensuring vulnerable pupils are attending school and being well supported
- Ensuring school is safe for pupils, staff, parents and community –updating risk assessments etc

Business As Usual for governors:

- How to organise meetings – virtual?
- Recruitment of governors – are they representative of your community? Are BAME individuals under represented?
- Policies, statutory functions that need to be carried out
- Headteacher Performance Management (by 31st December) – reviewing out of date objectives, setting new objectives
- Budget – strategic planning, monitoring
- Communication with parent/carers, staff
- How to be involved in the life of the school from a distance
- Well being of your headteacher/principal¹³