

SpringForward Safeguarding Protocol

Introduction

This document is to be read by all participants taking part in the SpringForward mentoring programme which is run by RNCSF. Pupils and Mentors must ensure that they have read, understood, and agree with the guidelines contained below. Any questions relating to this, should be addressed to admin@springforward.org.uk

Safeguarding children and protecting those who are supported by Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation's (RNCSF) programmes is everyone's responsibility.

Background checks

RNCSF's Safer Recruitment policy is clear that volunteers/mentors who are employed by a third party, and who are engaged by RNCSF to carry out regulated activity with children and young adults (under the age of 18 years), must complete the same pre-appointment checks as those that RNCSF completes for its staff.

RNCSF requires written confirmation through a Letter of Assurance from the mentor's employer, which includes confirmation of the following checks have been completed before employees of the third party can commence volunteering/mentoring work with pupils in association with RNCSF :

- pre-appointment checks and relevant training including:
 - online search,
 - enhanced DBS renewed every 5 years (including number)
 - 2 references
 - right to work in the UK
 - induction and annual training.

If a third-party employer is unable to provide the required written confirmation or the employee falls outside of these pre-appointment checks, the employer will be required to bring them into line at their own expense and volunteering/mentoring work will not commence.

Should a participating Virtual School mentor wish to check a mentor's DBS, they should request this from RNCSF in the first instance who will facilitate a communication with the mentor.

Mentors

1. As school employees, mentors are expected to adhere to their professional code of conduct in all interactions with pupils.
2. Mentors will use their school's official email address for all contact with pupils or their carers/key workers, including for accessing the online platform used for mentoring sessions.
3. Mentors will use the carer's email address for all contact where the pupil is under 18.
4. Mentors must include the Virtual School key contact and SpringForward admin in all correspondence with the pupil (if over 18) or the carer/key worker.
5. Mentors will be provided with the name and contact details of the pupil, carer, and Virtual School key contact before the first session in an introduction email. This information is confidential and should not be shared.
6. Mentors can contact the pupil directly only when the Virtual School has confirmed that they are 18 or over.
7. Mentors agree to use Microsoft Teams or Zoom or Meet online conferencing for the mentoring sessions. Should another platform be requested by the pupil/carers, this needs to be agreed and pre-authorized by RNCSF.
8. If a session is requested to be in-person, this will be agreed on a case-by-case basis with mentors and RNCSF working in conjunction with the Virtual School and with the same requirements as online delivery with a supervisory third-party present at all times and in a communal environment.
9. Mentors must schedule and agree session times in advance with the carer/pupil, set up a Teams/Zoom/Meet meeting and share with the pupil (where over 18), the carer/key worker and RNCSF (admin@springforward.org.uk).

10. RNCSF will keep a record of all session times; it is the mentor's responsibility to inform RNCSF (admin@springforward.org.uk) and the Virtual School key contact if timings change.
11. Mentors will not schedule further mentoring sessions in addition to the 5 agreed sessions without RNCSF's knowledge and the pupil/carer's knowledge and consent.
12. Mentors will have a neutral background for the sessions.
13. Mentors will make sure the screen used behind the session is clear and there is no personal information along the tool bar, etc.
14. At the end of the session, the mentor must actively end the meeting for all.
15. All pupils and mentors should always have their web camera on. No sessions should be recorded, nor screen shots taken, unless by prior consent of the pupil/carer and Virtual School Advisory teacher.
16. If mentors have any safeguarding concerns, they must report them to the appropriate person as soon as possible; in the first instance, this is RNCSF staff and the Virtual School Advisory teacher / key contact as soon as possible, or at least within 24 hours of the mentoring session.
17. Mentors should never provide their personal email, telephone number, or contact the pupil outside the sessions.
18. Mentors are trained professionals who are experienced in working with young people and will employ their safeguarding training, should a pupil make a disclosure about themselves or another person. The mentor should follow established safeguarding practice, including a professional referral if required.

Signed:

Position:

School:

Date:

Pupils

1. Pupils should treat their mentors with respect, courtesy, and consideration.
2. If under the age of 18, pupils must use their carer or key worker's email address to attend the online sessions.

3. Pupils may not share any personal details, such as home address or personal contact details, with the mentor.
4. During the sessions, pupils should turn off their phone and any other distractions, such as games, TV or radio, to better concentrate. If pupils need to use their phone for calculation or translation, for example, they may do so with the mentor's consent.
5. Pupils should have their webcam video on so that the mentor can see them and evaluate their understanding visually.
6. Pupils should use a neutral or blurred background filter during sessions.
7. Pupils should attend the online sessions in a communal space in their home, e.g. lounge, at a table or desk, i.e. not in the pupil's bedroom. They should be dressed appropriately and have all their materials ready before the tuition commences. They should engage in the session in their home and not in any public space, such as in a café, without prior agreement and permission of their Virtual School and the mentor. If a session takes place in-person, the same requirements are in place.
8. Pupils may not record or take screen shots of any part of the session.
9. If a pupil feels uncomfortable or concerned about any aspect of their interaction with the mentor, they should speak with their carer or key worker, who will discuss with the social worker and Virtual School as soon as possible, and inform RNCSF (admin@springforward.org.uk) where necessary.

Carers and Key Workers

1. Where the pupil is under 18, carers and key workers agree to use their email address for the online sessions.
2. Where pupils are under 18 and in semi-independent accommodation, the Virtual School key contact or key worker will provide a safe email address for the pupil to use.
3. Carers and key workers will confirm timing for the session with the mentor in advance at a time when they can be present.
4. Carers and key workers will help ensure that the pupil is prepared for the session. Pupils should attend the online sessions in a communal space in their home, e.g., lounge, at a table or desk, i.e., not in the pupil's bedroom.

They should be dressed appropriately and have all their materials ready before the tuition commences. They should engage in the session in their home and not in any public space, such as in a café, without prior agreement and permission of their virtual school and the mentor.

5. Carers and key workers are requested to support the young person by maintaining quiet in the immediate vicinity of the pupil so that they can maintain their concentration.
6. Carers and key workers should ensure that the pupil does not record or take screen shots of any part of the session.
7. Carers and key workers can requested for provision to be in-person, and this will be agreed on a case-by-case basis with mentors and RNCSF with the same requirements as online delivery with a supervisory third party present at all times and in a communal environment.
8. Carers and key workers should report any concerns they have about the mentor / mentoring sessions or any safeguarding matters to RNCSF staff, the Virtual School Advisory teacher / key contact as soon as possible, or at least within 24 hours of the mentoring session.

SpringForward Staff

1. RNCSF staff will hold data on the mentoring sessions, including contact details of carers, key workers and, if appropriate, young people's contact details, in a secure online file in accordance with GDPR.
2. RNCSF staff will request and share with the mentor additional information to that provided by the Virtual School Advisory contact to assist with the mentoring process.
3. Any safeguarding concern that is reported to RNCSF, whether by mentor, young person, carer or key worker, must be conveyed to the Virtual School Advisory Teacher and RNCSF Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as it is received or at least within the first 24 hours of hearing the concerns.

Key contacts

RNCSF Designated Safeguarding Lead

Ali Henderson



Phone: 07917521040

Email: ajh@royalspringboard.org.uk

RNCSF Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Sarah Butterworth

Phone: 07384 467390

Email: seb@royalspringboard.org.uk

RNCSF Schools Team - Additional Safeguarding Leads

schools@royalspringboard.org.uk

RNCSF SpringForward Admin

admin@springforward.org.uk