



Safeguarding Addendum January 2021

Committee	Trust Board
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Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

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1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the Spring term 2021. It reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Accountable Officer and Chief Officer of Police) .It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of coronavirus, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who:

- › Are assessed as being in need, including children:
 - With a child protection plan

- With a child in need plan
- Looked after by the local authority
- › Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- › Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:
 - On the edge of receiving support from children’s social care services
 - Adopted
 - At risk of becoming NEET (‘not in employment, education or training’)
 - Living in temporary accommodation
 - Young carers
 - Considered vulnerable by the school and/or LA

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- › The best interests of children must come first
- › If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately
- › A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- › It’s essential that unsuitable people don’t enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- › Children should continue to be protected when they are online

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children’s social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the Academy staff handbook.

If our DSL (or deputy) can’t be on site, they can be contacted remotely by phone or email.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with our off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- › Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- › Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- › Liaise with children’s social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority, about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register for those children allocated a place in school. We will also follow [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

Unless allocated a place in school due to vulnerability or being the child of a critical key worker, all pupils must remain at home and complete remote learning. Our teaching staff are setting appropriate remote learning for all children and we expect this to be completed daily. Where we have concerns that children are not engaging in remote learning, staff will complete wellbeing checks and regular reminders of this expectation. Where serious concerns arise, referrals will be made to appropriate external agencies. Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by following the process outlined in our Attendance Policy
- Notify their social worker, where they have one, and any other agencies involved

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible. We will be sending out Data Collection Sheets to all parents/carers across the Trust.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home. All allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be directed to the appropriate member of SLT for further investigation as per our bullying allegation process.

8. Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Contact

We will contact children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about,

Our Pastoral Team will make regular contact with all our vulnerable children and families, via Dojo messages, wellbeing calls, door knocks and emails from the safeguarding email address. We will also contact vulnerable families to offer support for emergency food bank or Hubb meals. If we are unable to make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

If concerns arise for children, due to lack of engagement with remote learning, pastoral team will also make contact to ensure we fulfil our duty of care.

10. Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Pastoral staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn within any photographs or videos submitted

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan requires us to seek support from across the MAT or engage with our support team Evolve.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.

We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Where families are loaning devices from school, they will sign an acceptable use policy before receiving the device. Devices will be checked once returned and any inappropriate use reported to the DSL/ SLT.

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

- Virtual live lessons, group work and 1:1s will be recorded to safeguard the children and staff members present. These will be monitored and stored for 3 weeks. 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.

- 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 provided by ESPRIT MAT to communicate with pupils.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

11.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- › Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- › Know what our school is asking children to do online, where relevant, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- › Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the teaching and resources our school provides
- › Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

Staff and volunteers will champion children within class and complete regular wellbeing circle times, wellbeing scales and celebrate the wellbeing days of the week. Staff will seek advice from/refer to support services where necessary.

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. During this lockdown or in the event of a bubble closure, staff will contact children to carry out welfare calls prior to them returning to school. For vulnerable families the pastoral team will make regular welfare calls. Where needed actions will be taken promptly.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

Staff and volunteers will be alerted to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

13. Staff and volunteer recruitment

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for

verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14. Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive a safeguarding induction in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated and when our Risk Assessment is reviewed. It will be approved by the full governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Remote Education policy