



**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection at
The Mast Academy Trust**

**Birdsedge First School
Shelley First School
Kirkburton Middle School
Scissett Middle School**

School Name: The Mast Academy Trust

Policy owner: Gill Senior

Date: 8/4/2020

1. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of The MAST Academy Trust Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Gill Senior Trust Lead	01484 865444	gsenior@scissett.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Rachel Kaye BFS Debra Knowles SFS Alex MacIntyre KMS Adam Lawlor SMS		Rachael.kaye@birdsedgefirst.org headteacher@shelleyfirstschool.co.uk a.macintyre@kirkburtonmiddleschool.co.uk alawlor@scissett.com
CEO	Natasha Greenough	01484 865444	ngreenough@scissett.com
Trust Safeguarding Manager	Gill Senior	As above	As above
Chair of Trustees	Martin Jones		mjones@themast.co.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Liz Godman		lgodman@themast.co.uk

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

All schools in The MAST Academy Trust will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after children. The lead person for this will be:

Birdsedge First School – Rachel Kaye

Shelley First School – Debra Knowles/Rebecca Moran

Kirkburton Middle School – Gill Senior

Scissett Middle School – Adam Lawlor

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and relevant DSL will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Should it be deemed appropriate for the child to remain at home, written agreement should be sought from the allocated social worker.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the relevant DSL or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

The MAST Academy Trust will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Each school will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. school name will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

Any decisions for children to remain at home must be agreed between school and social worker with written agreement from the social worker provided.

To support the above, Schools in The MAST Academy Trust will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust have their own Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Birdsedge First School: Rachel Kaye
Shelley First School: Debra Knowles
Kirkburton Middle School: Gill Senior
Scissett Middle School: Adam Lawlor

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Birdsedge First School: Debra Knowles
Shelley First School: Rebecca Moran
Kirkburton Middle School: Alex MacIntyre
Scissett Middle School: Justin Hampson

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where 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 might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all staff and volunteers in The MAST Academy Trust have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS/Provision Maps, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should call or email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher and the Trust Safeguarding Manager. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use a yellow form to report the concern to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors:

Birdsedge First School: Phil Hanson

Shelley First School: Dan Baker/Tracy Pinnock

Kirkburton Middle School: Victoria Green

Scissett Middle School: Ruth Potter

Or the CEO/Chair of the Trust

Natasha Greenough

Martin Jones

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very 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.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter join the Trust, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as 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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the MultiAcademy Trust (MAT) Strategic Lead for Safeguarding that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's Safeguarding Policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

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. When recruiting new staff, all schools within The MAST Academy Trust will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

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.

Where The MAST Academy Trust are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The MAST Academy Trust will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

The MAST Academy Trust will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Schools in The MAST Academy Trust will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

The MAST Academy Trust will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

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

- No 1:1s, groups only
- 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.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- 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 should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS/Provision Maps, as should a record of contact have made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

The MAST Academy Trust recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at the Trust need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Home Visits

Home visits may be required to pupils who are considered Vulnerable where school have significant concerns around well being and or if the family have not responded to the phone calls arranged as part of the Safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable pupils.

In such situations, the DSL/Senior Member of staff will make a home visit.

If the Child has an allocated Social Worker/Family Support worker they will be advised of the home visit.

The member of staff carrying out the visit will follow government guidelines on social distancing and will not enter the house.

All pupil's not attending school should be cared for at home, therefore it is expected that the member of staff carrying out the home visit will be able to see the child – keeping a social distance, with the member of staff remaining on the outside of the property

All visits will be recorded on CPOMS/Provision Maps.

Any concerns raised by the member of staff carrying out the home visit should be shared with the Senior DSL and a referral made to Children's services or the Police, in line with School Policy if deemed appropriate.

Supporting children in school

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Schools within The MAST Academy Trust will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Schools in The MAST Academy Trust will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where any party has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the trust.

Social Distancing in School

At all times, Staff working on school site will be expected to model and promote social distancing in line with government guidelines.

Classroom settings will require children to sit at their own desks and use only their own equipment.

Children will be asked to wash hands at the end of each session/break time.

Hand sanitiser is to be available in all work spaces.

Cleaning staff are on site throughout the day to ensure spaces used are cleaned down after each sessions and again a full clean at the end of the day.

Peer on Peer Abuse

All Schools within The MAST Academy Trust recognise that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Safeguarding Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS/Provision Maps and appropriate referrals made.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Central Safeguarding Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

The MAT will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.