



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Covid -19 Policy Addendum

March 8th 2021

Birdsedge First School

Shelley First School

Kirkburton Middle School

Scissett Middle School

This policy addendum is effective from 8/3/2021

Date shared with staff: Friday 5th March 2021

Date approved by Trustee: Thursday 4th March 2021

Context

On Monday 22nd February 2021, The Prime Minister announced the Governments roadmap to cautiously ease lockdown restrictions in England. This included a direction that all children in England are expected to return to onsite education from Monday 8th March 2021.

All schools within The MAST Academy Trust will continue to have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (as updated in January 2021).

We will ensure that were we care for children on site we will have appropriate support for them and will continue to work with the Local Safeguarding Partners as required.

We will continue to refer to Government guidance for education and child care 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 Coronavirus.

The addendum for The MAST Academy Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas;

- Vulnerable Children
- Attendance monitoring
- Reporting a concern
- Safeguard Training and Induction
- Safer Recruitment/Volunteers
- Children and online safety away from school
- Supporting children not in school
- Supporting children in school
- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Support from the Multi Academy Trust

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- Are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the children's act 1989, including children who have a Child In need plan, Child protection plan or are Looked after.
- Have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by education providers or local authorities (including social services). These children may include;
 - Children and young people on the edge of receiving support from social services (early help intervention)
 - Adopted children or children who are on Special Guardianship Order
 - Those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, employment or training)
 - Those living in temporary accommodation
 - Those who are young carers
 - Those at the providers or local authority's discretion, including pupils being assessed and supported for mental health reasons.

Schools within 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 and previously looked-after children. Key contacts in each school as per full safeguarding policy.

In circumstances where a parent is hesitant about or does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and appropriate staff member in school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

All children attending provisions within The MAST Academy Trust will encourage all pupils to attend following the full return on March 8th and will work with families to ensure this happens, in the best interest of the children.

Attendance monitoring

We expect all pupils to attend school.

Parents or carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of the illness and inform us of the reason for absence so that the correct attendance codes can be used in every case of absence. We expect parents or carers to make contact to make us aware of the status of any COVID-19 tests that have become necessary and to update the school on the welfare of the pupil.

From 8th March 2021, we will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)¹ for all pupils.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

The advice for pupils who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally.

For children self-isolating or quarantining or shielding—we will use code X.

In compliance with the Remote Education, Temporary Continuity Direction² will provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19).

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/923539/Remote_Education_Temporary_Continuity_Direction_-_Explanatory_Note.pdf

Also, we will offer pastoral support to pupils who are:

- self-isolating
- shielding
- vulnerable (and off-school)

The Department for Education expects schools to grant applications for leave in exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

Where pupils are not able to attend school, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.

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/Relevant electronic safeguarding platform, which can be done remotely.

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 report this directly to the Headteacher. Should the concern be about the Headteacher they should report this to the Chair of the governing body of the CEO of The MAST Academy Trust, Natasha Greenough.

Safeguarding Training and induction

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020), in addition January 2021 updates to KCSIE were also circulated across all schools. The DSL in each school will 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 a school within The MAST Academy Trust, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training – all schools should hold this letter of assurance on file.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's safeguarding and DSL arrangements.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

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 (2020) (as amended, Jan 2021).

Where schools are utilising volunteers for the purpose of testing, 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 in respect of whom no DBS has been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. ³

Covid Volunteers – Middle School only

The Middle Schools may use volunteers to assist in handing out and securing COVID-19 test kits to students and staff members. Other duties may be required such as building test kits, cleaning down areas and directing people.

ID checks will be made on all volunteers. Should a volunteer (i.e. parent volunteer) not hold a current DBS they will be placed on a red lanyard and fully supervised at all times, this includes any movement around school, which should be limited.

Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information).

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 Child Protection 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.

All schools within 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 if there are 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 and saved so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.

³ Paragraph 183. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (as amended, Jan 2021)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf

- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time in line with school timetable.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record the attendance of any sessions held.
- Staff should not use personal devices for any aspect of delivering online learning.

Supporting children not in school as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Schools within 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 support plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS/relevant electronic platform, as should a record of contact have made.

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

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 schools within The MAST Academy Trust need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

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

Each School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

Each school will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing⁴ and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Each school will ensure that appropriate support is offered to all students with respect to their mental health.

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963541/Schools_coronavirus_operational_guidance.pdf

Elective Home Education (EHE)

All schools within The MAST Academy Trust will encourage parents to send their children to school, particularly those who are vulnerable. Where an EHE application is made, schools will consider whether a parent's decision to educate at home gives greater cause for concern compared to remaining in school.

Where we feel that there is additional cause for concern the designated safeguarding lead will then consider making a referral to the local authority in line with existing procedures for EHE applications. This will happen as soon as the Headteacher becomes aware of a parent's intention, or decision, to home educate.

All schools within The MAST Academy Trust will work with local authorities and, where possible, coordinate meetings with parents to seek to ensure EHE is being provided in the best interests of the child.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

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

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