

School Closure Arrangements (Covid 19 Addendum)



Approved by: Board of Trustees

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1. Context

During the pandemic parents may be asked to keep their children at home 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 will also be asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable.

This addendum to the Eastern Multi Academy Trust Child Protection Procedures contains details of our overarching safeguarding arrangements. Individual academies must publish their local arrangements on their website.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Trust Lead on Safeguarding	Paul Shanks	07483043451	paul.shanks@eastern-mat.co.uk
Trust Directors of Education	Jonathan Digby	-	Jonathan.digby@eastern-mat.co.uk
	Paul Shanks	07483043451	Paul.Shanks@eastern-mat.co.uk
Chair of Trust Board	Julie Perry		julie.perry@eastern-mat.co.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Julie Perry		Julie.Perry@eastern-mat.co.uk

Where there are concerns about staffing processes please also contact:

Gemma Everitt Head of HR gemma.everitt@eastern-mat.co.uk

2. 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 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 any deputies) 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.

Eastern Multi 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.

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 increased 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 academy will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. If required the relevant academy will seek direction from the relevant Director of Education.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the academy or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. Where necessary the academy will contact the relevant Director of Education for support and guidance.

Eastern Multi Academy Trust academy's will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school.

3. 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.

All EMAT school when they have any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon/they will also send a copy of this to Heidi Bailey heidi.bailey@eastern-mat.co.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

If any of our schools has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE and notify the Local Authority. A closure is defined as more than two days in a row in this instance.

Academy's and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – each academy will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Each academy 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.

Each Eastern Multi Academy Trust Academy has delegated the list of vulnerable children to members of staff who are competent, trained and have a good understanding of the background of these pupils.

Pupils have been categorised into three layers. Those that are high risk and need daily monitoring. Those that need regular contact and those that after a period of time out of a normal routine may become more vulnerable.

Each academy is responsible for recording conversations and ensuring that if staffing resources are low that the Trust is made aware so that they can be supported.

To support the above, each academy will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, each academy will notify their social worker.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Each academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least one Deputy DSL.

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 video call - 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 the child protection online management system, paper records, CPOMS, MyConcern and liaising with the offsite DSL (or a 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.

It is important that all academy staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

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

5. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Trust's safeguarding policy and the school's child protection procedures, this includes making a report via CPOMS, MyConcern or Encrypted e mail which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS/MyConcern/Email from home, they should contact the person responsible for safeguarding or DSL (or one of the deputy DSLs). Where an academy does not have electronic recording the member of staff should send an encrypted email to the DSL. If they are unable to contact the DSL (or one of the deputy DSLs), they should contact the Principal. If they are unable to contact the Principal, they should contact the Trust Lead on Safeguarding.

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 report the concern to the Principal. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal.

Concerns about the Principal should be directed to the relevant Trust Director of Education:

West Hub (North Wootton, Eastgate, Emneth, Upwell, Nelson & Southery): Paul Shanks paul.shanks@eastern-mat.co.uk

Breckland Hub (Admirals, Raleigh, Norwich Road, Queensway, Diamond, Glade, West Row): Greg Sadler greg.sadler@eastern-mat.co.uk

Secondary Hub (KESA, KLA): Jonathan Digby jonathan.digby@eastern-mat.co.uk

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

6. Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training will continue through Covid 19 but is likely to be provided remotely by the Local Authority.

All DSLs are expected to maintain their 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 any academy, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our multi academy trust, 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 on going disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the sending academy/HR team that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving school's child protection procedures (including this addendum), confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

7. 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, Eastern Multi 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) (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.

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- 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 on going disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

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

Eastern Multi 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 KCSIE.

Eastern Multi Academy Trust will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct: referring a case' [guidance](#).

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing:

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

This will be undertaken by the Head of HR.

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, Eastern Multi Academy Trust will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in KCSIE.

8. Online safety in schools

Eastern Multi 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.

9. Children and online safety away from school

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 Procedures 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 Trust's code of conduct and acceptable use of ICT policy.

Eastern Multi 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 must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by the Trust's Head of IT to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Eastern Multi Academy Trust will ensure children who are being asked to work online know how they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to the school, age appropriate practical support is available from:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

10. Supporting children not in school

Eastern Multi Academy Trust is 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 the plan should be recorded, as should a record of contacts made.

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

If staff have to use their own phone, they should withhold their number (e.g. dialling 141 before the number they are calling). The outgoing numbers must be deleted from the phone's call log, once they are no longer needed.

Eastern Multi Academy Trust and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

The plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider and make any referrals as appropriate.

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

Eastern Multi 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 each academy will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

11. Supporting children in school

Eastern Multi Academy Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils/students.

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

Eastern Multi 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 COVID-19.

Eastern Multi 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded (on CPOMS)

Where Eastern Multi Academy Trust has concerns about the impact of staff absence

– such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Trust.

12. Peer on Peer abuse

Eastern Multi Academy Trust recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any reports of peer on peer abuse and supporting victims.

Where any academy receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in KCSIE and those outlined within the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures.

Each academy will listen and work with the child/young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that child/young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

13. Support from the Eastern Multi Academy Trust

The Trust Lead on Safeguarding will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

The Trust will also provide regular information to the DSL's and Principal's as the Covid 19 epidemic progresses. This may take the form of an online meeting or distribution of information. It will also include a weekly monitoring document produced by the DSL's that is shared with the Trust Executive Leadership Team and the Chair of the Trust and Trustee overseeing safeguarding for Eastern multi Academy Trust.

14. Local addendums

Each academy is expected to produce and publish on its website a local addendum that outlines the approach of each academy during any national lockdown or bubble closure to ensure the safeguarding of all children and students. This should be approved by the local Academy Council.