



The
Maltby Learning Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy - Appendix 9: Safeguarding During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic



CONTEXT

Government guidance from 1 September 2020 deemed that all children should return to school. To this end the MLT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should be used alongside the revised Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020), with reference being kept to this annex as applicable. Maltby Learning Trust understands that there are ongoing uncertainties as a direct result of Covid-19; this annex includes provisions which the school will have due regard for during this period. The information in this Annex is under constant review and is updated to reflect changes to government and local guidance as necessary

The key revisions to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) Part One are outlined below together with additional guidance in respect of children who would have been deemed vulnerable under Covid-19 Guidance. It was noted that the return to school of all students in September 2020 had the potential for an increased identification of safeguarding concerns; staff should continue to remain vigilant to indicators of harm. This included concerns relating to mental health; Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) specifically highlights the relevance of mental health within safeguarding considerations.

Designated safeguarding leads and deputies may require additional time during to support staff and children regarding new safeguarding concerns, particularly when referral to social care and/or consultation with other agencies is indicated. This may include the school nursing team and other agencies who may have continued virtual support to students not in school during the lockdown period, and who may not be fully re-engaged with face-to-face work.

KEY CONTACTS

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead			
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads			
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children			
Principal			
Trust Safeguarding Leader	Sara Graham		sgraham@maltbylearningtrust.com
Chair of			

Governors			
Safeguarding Governor / Trustee	Paul Martin		pmartin@maltbyacademy.com

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Covid-19 guidance dictated that vulnerable children included 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. It is also important to be mindful of students who are deemed to be clinically vulnerable and those students with mental health needs. Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. While the attendance policy applies to all students, any vulnerable students not attending school should be subject to the same scrutiny and monitoring which applied during Covid-19 school closure with contact being made home and close liaison with external agencies maintained on a daily basis, particularly where a social worker is involved. Where a student is self-isolating, these checks should be maintained by safeguarding officers in addition to contact which relates to engagement in online learning.

Visits from external agencies and specialist workers may be necessary in school. These should be planned in advance with the knowledge of the Principal, and health and safety measures implemented in line with the Reopening of School Risk Assessment

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child in Need Plan, 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.

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2020: KEY CHANGES TO PART ONE

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) Part One was circulated to staff during the first week of September. Staff should remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns as per existing training for example, peer-on-peer abuse. The information below highlights some of the key changes made in Part One of this document

Mental Health

- Mental health is subject to greater, explicit focus and is included in the definition of safeguarding, which now includes '*preventing impairment of children's **mental** and physical health or development*'
- New paragraphs have been added to state:
 - All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
 - Only trained professionals should make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but staff are well placed to observe children and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem, or be at risk of developing one

- Abuse, neglect and other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact, and it's key that staff are aware of how these experiences can affect children's mental health, behaviour and education
- Staff should take action on any mental health concerns that are also safeguarding concerns, following your school's child protection policy and speaking to the DSL or deputy

Contextual Safeguarding

Information relating to contextual safeguarding has been rewritten as follows:

- All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Information relating to CSE and CCE has been rewritten as follows:

- Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Each Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: NAME

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: NAME

Each academy should 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 if self-isolating at 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 Academy staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). In the event the trained DSL and deputy are not on site, staff will be made aware and directed to the relevant senior leader.

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

The DSL will ensure that the welfare and child protection records for any child moving schools, particularly those categorised above as a vulnerable child, will be provided to the receiving establishment or received from the outgoing establishment as soon as reasonably possible.

New guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) outlines the role of the DSL in promoting educational outcomes of vulnerable children, including those who have a social worker, by working closely with staff in school so that challenges to learning can be better understood and necessary adjustments made.

REPORTING A CONCERN

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 makes it explicit that allegations against staff include supply staff and volunteers,

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

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

SAFER RECRUITMENT, SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

DSL training did not take place while a threat of the COVID -19 virus remained. For the period COVID-19 measures were in place, a DSL (or deputy) who had been trained continued to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they missed their refresher training. Priority will be given to ensure that any DSL or deputy whose training expired during Covid-19 is facilitated to attend updated DSL training as soon as dates become available, either face-to-face or online.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and will have read Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL will continue to 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 the Academy, full safer recruitment checks in line with the MLT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will re-commence and staff will be provided with a safeguarding induction. Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

The Academy 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.

Communication with parents will be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online.

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 may still be necessary in the event of students who are self-isolating and should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

The Academy 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 our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

The Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people. The DSL will provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children and their families who are absent from school, speaking directly to children wherever possible to help identify any concerns. Where a member of staff has occasion to use a personal phone to make these calls, they should withhold their personal number.

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, as should a record of any contact made.

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

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

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

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

The Trust recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and recent circumstances may affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers at Maltby Learning Trust need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

Maltby Learning Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Maltby Learning Trust will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal in each Academy will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to student ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Maltby Learning 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.

Where any Academy has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – there will be immediate discussion with the Trust.

SUPPORT FROM THE MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

The Maltby Learning Trust Central Safeguarding Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable each 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 MLT will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.