



The Orchards

BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

COVID-19 additional interim arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at The Orchard's Specialist School, Trafford

***In response to wider reopening of schools: this
replaces earlier interim additional arrangements***

School Name:	The Orchard's Specialist School
Policy owner:	Helen O'Brien
Date:	5 th March 2021
Date shared with staff:	5th March 2021
Distribution:	All staff, governors, website

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.

In January 2021 similar 'lockdown' restrictions were introduced leading to further supplementary guidance. This latest addendum is issued in response to the return to school of all pupils announced on 22nd February.

Prolonged absence from onsite school potentially presents an increased risk to children and vulnerable adults. Organisations such as the NSPCC and The Children's Society have highlighted the potential risks for children whose homes are not safe places. Contacts to Childline have significantly increased during lockdown periods.

Incidents of serious domestic violence and abuse appear to be increasing. This is of particular concern as the usual means of detecting and escaping from domestic abuse are limited during the lockdown and households may be under increased pressure. The police and other partners are aware of the increased risk and have made more resources available to prevent and respond to this threat.

The arrangements set out here are in addition to the normal safeguarding and child protection policy. It is important that, as far as possible, we continue to adhere to the good practice set out in the full policy.

<i>Context</i>	2
<i>Vulnerable children</i>	4
<i>Attendance monitoring</i>	4
<i>Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	6
<i>Reporting a concern</i>	6
<i>Safeguarding Training and induction for staff and those involved in governance</i>	6
<i>Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff</i>	7
<i>Online safety in schools and colleges</i>	8
<i>Children and online safety away from school and college</i>	8
<i>Supporting families whilst children are not in school</i>	9
<i>Supporting children in school</i>	9
<i>Support for staff wellbeing</i>	10
<i>Lateral Flow Testing in Schools</i>	10
<i>Covid Vaccination in Schools</i>	10
<i>Support from the Multi-Academy Trust</i>	10

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen O'Brien	07960 088075	HO'Brien@tos.bfet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Helen Walker	0161-748-0670	hwalker@tos.bfet.uk
	Sarah Cattell		scattell@tos.bfet.uk
	Jane Cawood		jcawood@tos.bfet.uk
	Imogen BoSmith		ibosmith@tos.bfet.uk
Head of School	Helen O'Brien	07960 088075 / 0161-748-0670	HO'Brien@tos.bfet.uk
Trust Safeguarding Manager	John Stephens		JStephens@bfet.uk
Acting Chair of Governors	Ben Spivey	via school	admin@tos.bfet.uk
Safeguarding Governor / Trustee	Nik Clifton	via school	admin@tos.bfet.uk

Vulnerable children

All of the children who attend The Orchard's Specialist School have an EHC (Plan) and are therefore considered vulnerable. Many of our children also have a social worker allocated to their family.

We 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.

It is possible that children deemed 'vulnerable' will face greater barriers to a full return to school. Monitoring their attendance and providing appropriate support to support their inclusion will mitigate this risk.

Attendance monitoring

From 8 March 2021 all pupils should begin their full return to school. There may need to be a phasing of the return in secondary and some specialist settings to allow for the implementation of lateral flow testing but the expectation is that all pupils will attend school.

The usual arrangements will apply for parents/carers to report absences and to make schools aware of the status of any COVID-19 tests and to update the school on the welfare of the pupil.

We will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) 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 formally 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.

We 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).

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.

We will follow up on any pupil that we were expecting to attend who does not attend. In all circumstances where a child (and particularly those deemed 'vulnerable') does not return to school or discontinues (including electing to home educate) we will ensure that every effort is made to ensure the child is safe and will liaise with relevant partner agencies as appropriate.

We recognise that some parents/carers may be anxious about their children returning to school. Through the schools' well-established routines for controlling infection and risk assessments we will endeavour to reassure both parents/carers and children that school is a safe place for them. It is much better to work constructively with parents/carers to develop a strong relationship of trust that

supports a decision for all children to return to school. However, warnings and penalties for non-attendance may be used as a last resort.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Orchards school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Helen O'Brien

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead are: Helen Walker, Sarah Cattell, Jane Cawood, Imogen Bosmith

The DSL and deputy will continue to maintain good contact with children's social care and other partner agencies. Using remote access where necessary they will contribute to relevant multi-agency discussions such as strategy meetings and reviews.

Personal Education Plans for children who are looked after will need to be considered and a discussion held with heads of the local virtual schools to see what would be most useful in supporting children and young people to be fully included and successful in their return to normal onsite school experiences.

Reporting a concern

The process of reporting concerns about a child or an adult are unchanged. Processes set out in the full policy apply. Where students are absent of having to shield/self-isolate **do not delay raising concerns. Access to normal systems should be possible from 8 March, but if you are unable to access normal online reporting systems whilst working remotely, make a careful, thorough, factual note of the concerns. There is a format for this in the main policy if needed.** Emergencies need to be reported to the police in the same way as normal.

Safeguarding Training and induction for staff and those involved in governance

Safeguarding training may continue to be delivered in a COVID-19-secure way either virtually or – following a risk assessment – in person.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child. It is worth reminding staff of any additional risks associated with school closure.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction either virtually or in person as appropriate. If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to school, we will

take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept DBS 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.

When new staff arrive, they will be given a copy of The Orchard's School safeguarding and child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

During times of emergency measures there are people who seek to exploit any gaps or relaxation in procedures. It is essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes set out in our policies including, as appropriate, relevant sections of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSIE). Our Safer and Fair recruitment policy can be found on the Trust's website; pages 7 and 8 detail the pre-employment screening which is still required: [Safer and Fair Recruitment policy](#).

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 we are deploying 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. We 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 from paragraph 183 – 188 of KCSIE (2020). We will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 150 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 restrictions, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, we will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164 to 171 in KCSIE and in accordance with the process detailed on page 11 of the Bright Futures' 'Safer and Fair Recruitment' policy.

Online safety in schools and colleges

Any teaching conducted virtually should adhere to the same high professional standards expected in all other contexts. We will need to ensure that any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Andrew Hall, safeguarding consultant, has offered the advice (below) for online lessons, especially if live webcams are used. As schools open more widely, the demand for online learning will reduce. However, as the need for some limited remote education continues, it may be necessary to review arrangements for making best use of technology to keep in touch with children & families and maintain a good link.

Specific considerations if online (live):

- 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 approved platforms to communicate with pupils, noting that Teams/Skype and Zoom in particular have improved their security and password access arrangements.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Any safeguarding concerns observed or highlighted during any communication with students must be recorded and reported following the usual systems.

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 videos and teaching should follow the same principles as set out in The Dunham Trust code of conduct.

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

The Orchards is not delivering virtual lessons, however some staff are uploading learning videos such as stories or attention autism sessions for families to share. We want to encourage this as much as possible however please consider;

- Staff 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.
- 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 children. Currently this is class dojo & the class you tube channels.

Supporting families whilst children are not in school

We acknowledge the very significant challenges that having children at home brings to all families. For the families at The Orchards this present different and often very specific challenges. We are aware that for many of our families school provides a respite provision that is not available elsewhere. It also provides a structure and routine which our children use to regulate themselves. When this is removed we know that this can create significant additional pressures at home for everyone's mental and emotional well being.

We expect a full return to school for all children 8th March with the exception of a very small number who need to shield or those required to self-isolate.

Supporting children in school

The Orchards is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. With most children expected to return to learning on site, there may be an initial increase in causes for concern or referrals. We will be sensitive to children's needs and concerns.

The Orchards will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Head of school will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The Orchards 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 The Orchards has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the trust and Local Authority.

Support for staff wellbeing

The significant societal changes that we are experiencing may have a negative impact on some people's mental and physical health and well-being. The Bright Future Trust has published regular advice and guidance on support for well-being and mental health developed by colleagues in the Greater Manchester Mentally Healthy Schools Team and our own educational psychologists. These materials are published on the Alliance for Learning website (link given below).

Teaching staff have been encouraged to join the Teach Together service from the Chartered College and all staff have been provided with the employee assistance number information.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) 0800 882 4102 that is available 24/7.
Alternatively:

- visit www.pamassist.co.uk
- or download the app by searching for PAM Assist in the app store

Username: TRAFwell Password: TRAFwell

Lateral Flow Testing in Schools

All school staff have access to regular Lateral Flow Testing. Staff are required to inform school of the results of these tests via the google form link https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1FzbSVlpQOe4vs5nWC9rJo6xkGnPh3FyK6ongVoJ7vr8/viewform?edit_requested=true

Covid Vaccination in Schools

All school staff have been offered the vaccination via Trafford CCG.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Bright Future Trust will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

Useful links

Government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

Safeguarding network advice on COVID-19 implications: <https://safeguarding.network/covid-19/>

NSPCC Home Page: [HERE](#)

Children’s Commissioner website including COVID-19 advice: [COMMISSIONER](#)

Alliance for Learning useful resources: [TEACHING SCHOOL](#)

Bright Futures’ Safe and Fairer Recruitment policy

[Safe-and-Fair-recruitment policy](#)