

COVID-19 addendum to Safeguarding Policy

(amended 21st May 2020)

Procedure Originator:	Brian Duffy
Approved By:	
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1. Introduction

Since 20th March, schools were directed to close except for identified children. Parents have been encouraged to keep children at home. Only children identified as being vulnerable and those of key workers have been offered a place at school. Both categories have been open to slight variations in understanding and all academies in our Trust have done their very best to support families most in need, but also ensure that the numbers of children and parents/carers travelling to and from school is as low as can be to help protect public health.

Numbers of pupils attending schools has generally reduced since Monday 23rd March, the first day of partial closure, and schools have tended to rotate staffing to ensure the number of children are looked after in school but that excess staff were not travelling to and from home each day. Our academy will ensure that all pupils on site are cared for using advice on managing Covid-19, e.g. social distancing and handwashing, and staff-pupil ratios are adequate to safeguard all pupils.

This document is an addendum for the Safeguarding Policy of each academy within the Shaw Education Trust and initially effective as of Monday 1st June 2020. It is important to note that as Government guidance changes, so must this document to reflect any changes. See below.

'[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019](#)' remains the key document for safeguarding children and this document supports KCSiE for the current unprecedented events which are occurring.

This document has been produced in consultation with [government guidance for parents/carers](#) updated on 20th May 2020 and [government guidance on safeguarding for schools and colleges](#) issued on 20th May 2020.

On 14th May the government published [Guidance on preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1st June](#), expecting educational settings to be able to welcome back more children to early years, school and further education settings. See guidance on [actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#) for more details. The department has also published guidance on [implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#) to support this.

Guidance states that each school and college's circumstances will be slightly different. Any school or college that cannot achieve the small groups necessary at any point should discuss options with their local authority or trust. This might be because there are not enough classrooms/spaces available in the setting or because they do not have enough available teachers/staff to supervise the groups. To that extent we have produced a plan for phased return of some of our students when safe and appropriate to do so under the guidance of The Shaw Education Trust in consultation with our Academy Council.

Our Safeguarding measures need to reflect this also and risk assessments are on place for wider opening, linking Health & Safety practices and our Safeguarding Policy.

Thus this policy has been updated to reflect these changes in government policy around safeguarding children, and added/changed text is highlighted in yellow, including a new section on Child Protection Referrals (21)

2. Categories of vulnerable children as defined by Department for Education

[Vulnerable children](#) include:

- Those who have a social worker including children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- Those who have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in

section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

- Young carers
- Disabled children
- Those that schools and other education providers may identify as 'vulnerable', e.g. previously looked after children, those who have recently had safeguarding issues not yet processed by social care, some SEN K children.
- This might include adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Our academy will continue to work with social care and other agencies to ensure any recognised vulnerable child is supported throughout this time.

3. Key workers as identified by Government

[Key workers](#) have been identified as those who work in the areas of:

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare
- Key public services
- Local and national government
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public safety and national security
- Transport
- Utilities, communication and financial services

4. Attendance Procedures

Academies will not be completing the usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Instead academies should be completing a [daily online attendance form](#).

Academies will liaise with social care and families about pupil attendance. Those children on the identified list who are not attending school will be monitored using '**Guidance for Safeguarding Vulnerable children during prolonged school closure**', which has been communicated to all academies.

Our Academy will encourage our vulnerable children to attend school, **where appropriate**, as we recognise the benefits being in school will have for them. As stated in our 'Guidance for Safeguarding Vulnerable Children during prolonged school closure' document, we will continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend and continue to keep in contact any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't.

Staff attendance – it is imperative that a full register of staff is taken each day so that it is known who is on the academy site. Returns must be submitted to CEO daily- including staff available to work even if not on site.

5. Key personnel in Academy, including DSL arrangements (insert information below)

Role	Name	Contact (School hours)	Contact details (Out of schools hours)
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Diane Ahearn	01782 973500	07511392846

Deputy(s) Designated Safeguarding Leads	Dawn Jackson	01782 973 500	07395916571
Relevant Senior Leadership Team staff	Rachael Watkin Ann Marie Bennion	01782 973 500	NA

The academy will attempt to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site every day during school hours when children are present.

In the event this cannot be achieved, the DSL/Deputy DSL can be contacted via phone or online video. See contact details above.

If this is not possible due to illness etc. our academy will contact SET central team who will put the school in touch with another DSL to be available.

In addition, a member of the senior leadership team with responsibility for safeguarding to support the DSL, should always try to be on site and/or available on the phone if not on site.

It is acknowledged that DSL training is very unlikely to take place during this period (although the option of online training can be explored). 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.

Academies may wish to use table below as a template for DSL/DDSL/SLT on site:

	DSL/DDSL	SLT link
Monday	Mrs Diane Ahearn Miss Dawn Jackson	Rachael Watkin Ann Marie Bennion
Tuesday	Mrs Diane Ahearn Miss Dawn Jackson	Rachael Watkin Ann Marie Bennion
Wednesday	Mrs Diane Ahearn Miss Dawn Jackson	Rachael Watkin Ann Marie Bennion
Thursday	Mrs Diane Ahearn Miss Dawn Jackson	Rachael Watkin Ann Marie Bennion
Friday	Mrs Diane Ahearn Miss Dawn Jackson	Rachael Watkin Ann Marie Bennion

6. Updated advice from academy's local 3 safeguarding partners (insert information below)

Insert here any relevant advice/communication from your local Safeguarding Partnership.

Contact person at SG Partnership	Contact details
First Response	0800 1313 126
Safeguarding SoT	01782 235100 after 5pm 234234
Cheshire East	03001235012

7. Updated advice from academy's local authority regarding children with EHCP (insert information below)

Insert here any relevant advice/communication from your local authority SEND department.

Contact person at LA SEND dept.	Contact details
SENMAS Stoke on Trent	01782 231924
SEND Staffordshire	01782 297524
SEND Cheshire East	01625 378042
SEND Shropshire	01743 254563

8. Updated advice from academy's local authority designated officer (LADO) (insert information below)

Insert here any relevant advice/communication from your local designated officer (Principals may have received this information)

LADO name	Contact details
Julie Astel	08001313126/ 08456042886

9. Updated advice from academy's local children's social care department, i.e. MASH (insert information below)

Insert here any relevant advice/communication from your local Safeguarding Partnership.

Contact person at MASH	Contact details
Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Referral Team (Children)	01782 235100
Staffordshire First Response Team (Children)	0800 1313126
Staffordshire Police MASH Team (Professionals only)	01785 235350
Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust	01785 89563

10. Communication procedures between school staff and virtual school head (LAC) (insert information below)

Virtual school headteacher	Contact details
Staffordshire – Virtual school Head	sarah.rivers@staffordshire.gov.uk 01782 297524
Stoke Virtual School Diane Crook - ePEP and Pupil Premium enquiries Stoke	Phone: 01782 237948 E-mail: diane.crook@stoke.gov.uk
Cheshire East Laura Rogerson – Head of SEND & Virtual School	laura.rogerson@cheshireeast.gov.uk 07971 063606 or 01606 288075
Derby Graeme Ferguson Headteacher of the Virtual School	Telephone 07812301044 graeme.ferguson@derby.gov.uk

Our academy will ensure that any 'looked after child' is supported as with all vulnerable children and that there will be clear lines of communication between the school and the VSH team, both inside and outside school hours.

11. Arrangements for reporting a concern ensuring urgency of actions

It is imperative that during this period of uncertainty that all staff ensure that any concerns are acted on as quickly as possible. For the most part, reporting procedures will remain as they are during normal school procedures as stated in our academy's Safeguarding Policy, e.g. contact DSL/DDSL, and log on relevant system, e.g. My Concern. This can of course be done remotely if need be.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access the relevant information system, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance. If urgent, then a phone call should be made followed up with an email to the DSL and the Principal/Headteacher. If deemed 'non-urgent', and just in need of recording and informing the DSL, an email should be sent asap to again, both the DSL and Principal/Headteacher.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should 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, e.g. phone call, and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of the Academy Council. Staff may also contact SET central team if need be at any time concerning any worries about reporting a concern.

12. Vigilance regarding peer-on-peer abuse

Staff should be aware that certain issues may arise at this time which are more difficult to detect than when all children are in school. Behaviours linked to online issues may cause some cases of peer on peer abuse (see section 18). Part Five of [KCSiE 2019](#) outlines these concerns. It is important that where staff suspect peer-on-peer abuse, that they follow the reporting guidelines of the academy, including recording the issue on the appropriate system.

13. Reporting concerns about an adult

All staff must be vigilant to adults seeking to take advantage of these extraordinary times. Reports have been across the media of incidents of attempted fraud, and there will be those who will see this as an opportunity to possibly gain access to vulnerable children online. All school staff must be as vigilant as possible and reinforce the message of online safety in all communications with parents/carers who are home schooling.

In addition, where any staff is concerned about the behaviour of any adult, they should report using procedures as soon as possible.

14. Supporting school identified 'vulnerable' children who are not attending school

As mentioned in the introduction to this document, schools have been able to identify 'vulnerable' children who may not automatically appear on any of the identified lists. In this case, academies should include these children in regards to all actions and ensure that whether the child is in school or not, that they are supported. If the child is not in school, the '**Guidance for Safeguarding Vulnerable children during prolonged school closure**' should be used (Annex B). It is important that lines of communication with social care and external agencies are clear.

15. Moving to a hub – things to consider

If the academy moves to a cluster/hub model for supporting pupils, the following aspects will be put in place in addition to the procedures already in place:

- Appropriate information is transferred by DSL/SENCo staff or relevant senior leaders, to the appropriate member of staff who may assume responsibility for the pupil if this is not one of our academy staff. This information will outline how best to support the relevant pupil, e.g. EHCP, name of social worker etc.
- Any transfer of a LAC will be under the direction of the relevant virtual school headteacher.
- All information will be transferred in the strictest confidence complying with GDPR guidance.
- All parents/carers and relevant external agencies will be notified prior to the transfer.
- The 'cluster' DSL will ensure that safeguarding processes in the new setting will be to the same high standards of our own academy and liaise daily with the 'home school' DSL.

16. Safer Recruitment and movement of staff - ensuring safeguarding standards

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

Clusters/Hubs - Where staff are moving between academies within SET, there is an expectation that all have had adequate safeguarding training, including having signed Part One of [KCSiE 2019](#). This can be verified by DSLs.

A designated senior leader will communicate to host school via written confirmation, e.g. email, that all staff moving to a cluster have been adequately checked by their academy, i.e. satisfy the requirements of the single central record.

The important thing for any staff who may be, for example moving to support a cluster/hub, that they be aware of the local arrangements around safeguarding and what to do if concerned about a child, i.e. are in receipt of relevant safeguarding policies/procedures.

The respective DSLs will ensure that safeguarding induction information is communicated to all 'new staff' in this situation. It will be for the receiving school to ensure adequate induction is completed and assessed on a case by case basis. There is no expectation that a new DBS check should be obtained where that member of the workforce temporarily moves to another academy to support the care of children

Staff Recruitment - Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the academy, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction as with normal procedure.

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.

There is no requirement to obtain a new DBS check for returning staff who have continued to be employed but have not been working in regulated activity during partial school closures. If for any reason we have concerns about the individual, we may obtain a new check in the usual way.

If volunteers are used, the academy 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 academy will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date, and ensure a full register of adults on site each day is maintained. Referrals of concerns will be carried out in the normal method.

17. Online Safety for children on and off site

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE TRUST'S DIRECTIVE IS THAT THERE IS TO BE NO STREAMED, OR RECORDED MATERIAL, DELIVERED BY ANY SCHOOL STAFF. THIS INCLUDES MATERIAL DEEMED TO FACILITATE DISTANCE LEARNING. THIS INCLUDES ALL PLATFORMS AND SOCIAL MEDIA. THIS IS IN LINE WITH UNION ADVICE AND TO PROTECT STAFF. ALL THE USUAL SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOLS MUST BE OBSERVED.

As the majority of education for pupils off-site may be online, it is vital that the academy protects all pupils as best it can during this period. On site IT safety systems should operate as best they can during this period. The following aspects of online safety should be in place in our academy:

- Communication to parents/carers will include, periodically, information about online safety and signpost relevant resources.
- The academy will continue to ensure monitoring and filtering mechanisms are in place.
- IT support will be available on-site or remotely at all times. (A back-up plan will be in place where IT support staff become unavailable).
- Staff must be vigilant around online safety as much as possible when checking-in with pupils not in school. This will be difficult as monitoring their online activity will be responsibility of parents/carers but if in doubt staff should investigate as best they can.

Academies should continue to use available resources to encourage safe online use. Updated [Government guidance](#) to parents/carers highlights in section 6.3:

There is a lot of support available to keep children safe online for parents/carers. Below are

some useful links to help parents/carers:

- [Thinkyouknow](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- [Internet matters](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [Parent info](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [LGfL](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [Net-aware](#) (support for parents and careers from the NSPCC)

18. Mental Health considerations

We are aware at our academy that this current situation can bring many anxieties for both pupils and staff. Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Where staff are concerned for their own or a pupil's mental health they should seek support as appropriate.

Staff wishing to learn more about mental health and mental health of young people can access a [Flick](#) module and also refer to Government [mental health guidance](#).

Staff will be especially vigilant when more pupils come back to our Academy around this aspect. Many children will have experienced some form of difficulty during lockdown ranging from simply missing friends and relatives to those who may have had a death in the immediate family. For those pupils who may have experienced a death or a relative or close friend we have a Bereavement Policy which assists us in supporting these young people and their families.

Staff who have concerns regarding the mental health of any pupil returning to school or those who we are in contact with at home, will report to relevant colleagues in school as stated in our normal procedures. We will endeavour to support these young people within our Academy and refer to external agencies, e.g. CAMHS, when appropriate.

We will continue to have regard for the mental well-being of those students at home who work is being set for and ensure that we encourage a balance in their daily activity which should not be solely around academic work to ensure their well-being is supported.

19. Domestic Violence

The government and various charities acknowledge that recent measures announced to tackle coronavirus (COVID-19), such as self-isolating, social distancing and spending much more time at home can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk. Some families might need extra support with parenting. And if a child is experiencing abuse, there aren't as many opportunities for adults to spot the signs and help.

[Government guidance](#) and [NSPCC guidance](#) have been produced in support of families and professionals at this time and how various agencies are ensuring that relevant support services remain open during this challenging time. Academy staff will as always remain vigilant to any signs of possible domestic violence and report accordingly. This includes children who are currently in school and those at home considered vulnerable.

Reporting any concern will be done following each academy's reporting systems asap and in addition our DSL may wish to seek guidance from the NSPCC who can be contacted on 0800 800 5000 by phone or email at help@nspcc.org.uk. Promotion of support organisations is important to all our community in addition to those mentioned of DfE and NSPCC. [Childline](#) can be used by children directly.

Spotting the [signs of abuse](#) might be more difficult and it can be difficult to know for certain if

something is wrong. During visits and 'check-ins', it is important to be able to physically see a child you are visiting and if on the phone, speak to them directly.

Think about questions you could ask that will help you see what life's like for them. Ask open-ended questions like, "tell me about your day", "what are some good things that have happened today", "tell me about some sad things that have happened this week" and "what's life at home like". It's okay to ask similar questions - it can sometimes take time for a child to open up about what's happening.

Give children and young people the opportunity to talk about what's going on for them. It may take time for them to feel comfortable talking over the phone or on their doorstep, so staff may need to keep in touch more regularly than stated in our guidance document. Talking about things like what they're watching, reading or playing, or what they've had for dinner, may help them feel more comfortable.

It's also important to support parents and carers. Ask them about how they're coping and any worries and concerns they have. Let them know you're there to support them if they need help.

Certain children are more vulnerable to domestic abuse, e.g. SEND & disabled children, so it's important to make a greater effort to keep in touch.

Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation, no matter what stresses anyone is under.

20. Communication of this document with all staff

Lead staff should ensure that this document is circulated to all staff as appropriate.

22. Child Protection Referrals

Child Protection referrals have fallen during lockdown across the country, in some places by more than 50%. raising concerns about the welfare of vulnerable children during the coronavirus outbreak. Referrals are usually made by schools and health professionals, so with schools closed to most children, they are not coming into contact with the professionals who normally raise protection concerns.

Therefore, we are aware that with the possible reopening of our Academy over the coming period, it may be after 'assessment' of some of our pupils, that we deem a referral to social care may be appropriate, which may ultimately result in a Child Protection Plan. WE have secure procedures in place already which assess and refers pupils an this will continue but we must be vigilant and prepared that an increase in referrals is likely. Relevant staff will be supported to ensure this can occur.



Procedure Originator:	BRIAN DUFFY
Approved By:	

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Guidance for Safeguarding Vulnerable children during prolonged school closure



Introduction

The duty to safeguard all pupils is of course the responsibility of all of us across the Multi Academy Trust and we have systems in place to do so. This includes working alongside other agencies including as part of the new multi-agency partnerships in each local authority.

It is obvious that whilst many of our safeguard 'actions' take place during school hours and term time, there is a moral duty of care to at least be aware and possibly take some action on any issues that may occur at other times when school is not in session, whether this be in evenings, weekends and of course holiday periods. These 'actions' may usually be in the form of communication with children and families, local authority and other external agencies as well as possibly the police, but may require more face-to face 'actions', such as attending emergency meetings or even visiting a child's home.

There may be unique circumstances which dictate that a school needs to be closed for a prolonged period of time during what would have been term time. Where during evenings, weekends and holiday period, responsibility for the closer 'supervision' of children would lie with other adults, there may be a 'grey area' when we think about our most vulnerable children during these times and also during prolonged, maybe unforeseen, closures.

The planning for prolonged closures is more straightforward in regards to academic education, to an extent in regards to pupils carrying on with subject specific tasks, whether that be; by sending work home with children prior to closure, signposting online resources, making available via a school's VLE (or alternative) worksheets etc., and/or even recorded lessons which pupils can view and work through at home.

It would be assumed where a child has not been identified as 'vulnerable' that they are being adequately cared for by parents/carers or other systems in place. However, where a school has identified a pupil as being 'vulnerable', clearly there needs to be some extended support when not in school.

Vulnerable children

At a time of prolonged closure practical issues come into play in regards to 'how many' children a safeguarding team can 'monitor'. It will be up to each school how they put together their list of vulnerable children but it is suggested the following **should** be included:

Child Protection / Child in Need / Looked After Children / Young Carers / Early Help Assessments plus any other significant recent referrals made, e.g. Channel, CAMHS, private fostering etc.

In addition, it is up to a school to determine its capacity to include other children, e.g. FSM / Persistent absentees / EHCP / Fixed excluded / Permanent excluded (within 15 days). However, it may well be that the first list includes some of these children and the degree of vulnerability must be assessed by DSL team in determining if checking on a child during a prolonged closure is needed.

Actions to consider

The table below sets out some actions recommended to Safeguarding teams to undertake prior to and during prolonged school closure. This is guidance from a combination of other documents including Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and some school systems.

Action	Notes	Lead	Done
Identify your vulnerable groups of children.	Include priority list, i.e. whether a weekly or two-weekly check is needed and what kind of check it needs to be, e.g. phone call, email, visit and by whom . Allocate staff to each child (use DSL, pastoral team, form tutors, SLT etc. and as many as needed).		
Home visits*	On the very rare occasion you deem that a child must be seen , have a system of referral to social care		

	and/or police ready for allocated staff. The HT/Principal MUST be informed of any visit. Only go in pairs. Risk assess as appropriate, e.g. if family/child is isolating because of coronavirus; context of family; time of visit; location of visit. Should you feel there is a risk to yourselves, or others, attend with the police.		
DSL Meetings	Make arrangements to touch base each week with all staff on any issue. If staff not in school, use emails, Skype etc. Decision on a case by case nature may need to be made. (see next box).		
Record-keeping	When staff check-in, use of My Concern / CPOMs (other) to record check been made and whether 'all is well' or concerns exist. DSL should then monitor system. If anything urgent, consider if police should be contacted.		
Communication method for staff team.	Set up clear addresses/numbers for email, online, phone calls (always use school mobiles if off site to contact families). If staff do not have a school phone they must ensure they withhold their number. There should be no contacting children via social media.		
Inform Social Care for those in CP & CIN.	Inform all social workers that are involved with a child what your plan is on checking-in. If they are making regular checks maybe they can inform you.		
CIN/CP Meetings	Depends on reason for school closure. If advice is not to travel then do not attend and ask for alternative methods of communicating, e.g. online, or send in a report to relevant social worker.		
Phone number/email for families to contact	Communicate a relevant email address, phone number or other method where a family can contact DSL (or maybe allocated staff member) if there is an issue they need help with.		
GDPR	Just be aware when dealing with sensitive data outside school but remember that safeguarding the child is the priority. If in doubt about any aspect check with SET Operations team.		
FSM	Please liaise with Gavin Lawrie via email Gavin.Lawrie@shaw-education.org.uk		
Communicate to all relevant adults and children above actions	Dependent on action and child, communicate to school staff and parents what proposed actions will be prior to closure or asap if closure unexpected. Keep website updated.		

***'Attend' advice for schools using their services**

If children are off school and parents are saying that they are self- isolating then staff do not need to visit and schools are to use the Y code.

If, schools are to be closed, we will continue to work.

Our offer to schools is to carry out Safe and Well checks on any children that have been identified as being particularly vulnerable e.g. Safeguarding concerns.

If schools could identify these vulnerable pupils and inform us in the normal way.

Check-ins

When contacting a family, useful to have a script ready such as...

“Hi, it’s Mr X from X Academy. Just calling for my weekly check in with *pupil X*. Everything ok and anything I can do to help?”

(Try to speak briefly with child if possible.)

Useful numbers:

Use this section to put in contact details relevant to your local authority support such as:

(not an exhaustive list, add as appropriate)

LA first response number:

Local Education Safeguarding Partnership:

DSL email address and school mobile:

Police non-emergency number:

SET Safeguarding contact: Brian Duffy brian.duffy@shaw-education.org.uk



We believe, you achieve

The Lodge
Wolstanton High School
Milehouse Lane
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 9JU

Twitter: @shaweduTrust
Tel: 01782 742910
Email: info@shaw-education.org.uk
Online: www.shaw-education.org.uk

