

Addendum to Ebor Academy Trust Safeguarding and Child protection policy Covid19 Guidance and response

With effect from 5th January 2021.

For the immediate attention of all staff and Governors

Braeburn Primary and Nursery Academy

This addendum specifies our academy response to Covid-19 and our additional measures that have been put into practice to safeguard our children.

'Schools and colleges should, as far as is reasonably possible, take a whole institution approach to safeguarding. This will allow them to satisfy themselves that any new policies and processes in response to COVID-19 are not weakening their approach to safeguarding or undermining their child protection policy.'

'It is important schools and colleges (led by a DSL or deputy, wherever possible) review and revise their child protection policy and keep it under review as circumstances continue to evolve. In some cases, a COVID-19 annex/addendum that summarises any key COVID-19 related changes might be more effective than re-writing and re-issuing the whole policy'

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers DfE January 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/950510/School_national_restrictions_guidance.pdf

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Context

In response to COVID guidance January 21 the specific contingency plans and awareness raising measures are outlined in this addendum to the existing school Child Protection and Safeguarding (CP&S) arrangements. As such, these contingency arrangements are obligatory and must be followed by all staff. We all have a shared responsibility for CP&S.

Whilst the Child Protection & Safeguarding arrangements and responsibilities outlined in the Ebor Academy Trust strategic policy remain in place, in the current context, specific and vital additional strategies are required to be implemented to ensure continuity of support for vulnerable children and others attending school at this time.

We will endeavour to do all that we can to continue to provide a safe and caring environment for all children and staff attending school and to support children not attending as much as practicably possible.

We recognise that some of the children attending school are our most vulnerable and may be at even greater risk or stress at this time due to family problems or mental health concerns or other issues.

Staff are aware through this time of national crisis and school closures of the potential significant impacts on a child/young person's mental health and wellbeing. Staff are ensuring that if they have such concerns about a child, be that child attending the provision or otherwise, they are able to gather all concerns/disclosures and record and report them through the usual channels. Any indicators that a child is potentially at risk or vulnerable, through disclosures or behaviours presented through online classrooms and remote teaching tools, must still be collated and reported in the usual manner. Where schools are operating rotating leadership teams or remote DSL support then all staff should be clear on who they report disclosures and concerns to on a daily basis.

The leadership team and governors also are aware and sensitive to the pressures that staff, including themselves, are under at this time and recognise that they require support in order to be able to support the children they care for at school. This is particularly the case for staff such as DSLs, SENDCO, pastoral teams and Designated LAC teachers who have such an important role to play in supporting our most vulnerable children.

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Key contacts:

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1. Updated advice from the local safeguarding partners or MAT

1.1 Due to COVID19 the Ebor Academy Trust has assigned the strategic responsibility for safeguarding to the Trust Safeguarding Lead who can act, where needed, as a remote DSL for schools.

1.2 The Trust Safeguarding Lead and Executive Headteacher for each school are also available to support with complex cases and offer extra balances and checks in relation to the safety of all pupils.

1.3 Within each local authority area, a number of school based staff are working as part of a coordinated response team under the guidance of the Trust Safeguarding Lead, offering the MAT schools in the locality additional advice and capacity to ensure all safeguarding arrangements remain compliant and operational. The Trust has updated its central register of all children in its schools identified as vulnerable, under the January 21 guidance for vulnerable pupils. This is only accessed by the Trust Safeguarding lead and the CEO. This includes a child on a child protection plan, child in need, child looked after, or a child with an EHCP. This allows for contingencies to be made if ever a school does not have its DSL or DDSL for a short period of time.

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2. Updated advice received from local authorities regarding Vulnerable children, children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

2.1 Children with an EHCP plan have been offered a place in school in line with the government stipulations on provision for vulnerable pupils

2.2 Where an EHCP child is not attending onsite due to parental preference this needs to be clearly documented within CPOMS and the reasons as to why the place is not being accessed.

2.3 Where it is deemed too high risk for an EHCP child to be onsite full time then a risk assessment needs to be completed and full cooperation and consent from the parent needs to be sought to reach an appropriate agreement around the child's provision. This must only be for exceptional circumstances. EHCP children are entitled to full time school based education.

2.4 Children with an EHCP plan have been offered a place in school in line with the government stipulations on school closures. In mutual agreement with the school leadership and parent/carer, the child is only accessing the provision if it is decided that it is the right thing for that child's welfare and wellbeing to attend the setting.

2.5 A number of children are offered 1:1 support where it is felt appropriate and beneficial. Children who are currently on the SEND register have key workers who adapt and create differentiated provision for home learning to accompany /compliment the class teachers work. Children who are currently under assessment in preparation for an EHCAR are invited into school to work 1:1 with an SEN AT. This provides individual support , supporting children with their home learning tasks and bridging gaps in education identified before lockdown.

2.6 Children identified as critically vulnerable (those with a social worker) should be accessing full-time school and therefore should have a place allocated for the duration of the closure. Regular liaison with Children's Social Care must be in position for these children.

2.7 In line with the guidance around vulnerable groups these children must be prioritised as having a place at school. If the parent does not consent to send them then they still need to remain as part of the onsite roll in order to be closely tracked and monitored.

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2.9 Each school's leadership team is required to oversee the welfare of all children classed as vulnerable. Ensuring that the appropriate number of welfare phone calls/pavement home visits/and liaison with the family are made. Where it is needed, alternative and bespoke provision is being put in place for these children and they are constantly being monitored. Regular liaison with Children's Social Care is in position for these children.

2.10 The WEB (Well-being and Behaviour) Team in school will continue to work with children on their caseload on a 1:1 basis where practicable. Staff will also work closely with the children in their classes in order to support them to work in small groups, building resilience, confidence and self-esteem.

The WEB Team will make regular contact with children through WEB Google classroom and monitor their engagement and interactions. This information is shared with the class teacher. Weekly activities will be posted to support the mental well being of the children. All children are invited, selected children are given individual invitations; those who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, have previously required the support of the WEB team, and those identified by others. The WEB team will work together and create a newsletter, offering guidance and support to parents and children, which will be shared half termly to the whole school via Class dojo.

For those children working with Early Help, we will ensure that their Family Support Worker (FSW) can access school site whilst complying with the schools risk assessment and our Protocols for other Professionals. Members of the WEB team will continue to liaise with FSW's and parents on a regular basis.

2.11 The DSL or DDSL will attend all meetings that are required for children who are S47 or S17. On the rare occurrence due to the COVID-19 position that the school does not have capacity to fulfil its duty to attend statutory meetings, the Trust Safeguarding Lead is able to represent the school and ensure all information is shared and assimilated.

2.12 The DSL needs to regularly review its vulnerability register weekly ensuring that all these children are regularly being seen on the remote platforms. The recommended practice for all children not onsite is to be checked on twice per week.

2.13 Where a vulnerable child is entitled to a FSM this will be provided in the form of a meal at school and a voucher to the family. Any FSM children not taking up a place at the school provision will receive a voucher for the allowance of their FSM entitlement.

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3. Revised procedures for staff and volunteers if they have any concerns about a child.

3.1. In order to minimise the risk of the spread of infection, protecting the children, its staff and the local community through the period of school closures, the MAT does not foresee that volunteers will be coming onto the school site.

3.2 If staff have a concern about a child who is in the onsite provision, or is accessing through the remote online platforms, then the school's usual systems are in place for reporting concerns. Depending on the nature of the concern, DSL will make contact with the family if appropriate.

3.3 SLT are in school daily to ensure protocols are adhered to. Currently, in school all children are working with staff with whom they are familiar. It is our aim that wherever practicable that children will have their own teachers and assistant teachers.

In order to track all children's welfare, irrespective of them attending school or learning remotely, we have a Class Monitoring Log (CML) where teachers record the levels of engagement for every child on a daily basis. Additionally, the CML highlights which children have 'checked-in' with their teachers. If there has been no response from the child by the end of Wednesday each week, teachers will make a telephone call to parents/carers to establish the reason why. During this phone call staff will attempt to ascertain any barriers to learning and offer suitable suggestions to enable their child to engage purposefully.

If there is still no response on a Thursday each week members of SLT or the WEB team will make additional welfare calls to parents/carers, this could result in a pavement visit to the family home to ensure the health and safety of children.

3.4 If the concern raised seems to meet the threshold, the DSL will make a referral to Early Help or Social Services following the normal channels.

4. Emphasising the continued importance of all staff acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns.

4.1 Staff will monitor which children are accessing online resources and the Google Classroom. Staff will also make Keeping in touch emails and phone calls with families and children.

4.2 If staff are still not able to get in contact with the family over a pre agreed period of time then staff will inform the designated adult who works closely with the family. This could be a WEB practitioner, SEND practitioner, SENDCo, DSL, DDSL or a member of the SLT.

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4.3 If there is a continued failure to make contact with the family, the SLT/DSL will make contact at the house following social distancing procedures. Staff will never attend alone, nor will staff travel together in the same car. Where a child or family has become unobtainable and there are either identified previously known risks, or a prolonged period of absence from the online portals, the DSL will make a decision to refer in to social care if they feel it meets the threshold. We will also involve other agencies such as PCSOs if it's felt appropriate to make welfare checks.

5. The continued importance for school and college staff to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for Children Looked After (CLA) and those who were previously CLA.

5.1 CLA will have a place at school and will be encouraged to access this place.

5.2 We will keep in regular contact with Social workers and the virtual school through email.

5.3 CLA reviews and any paperwork that needs to be completed will be done digitally or over the phone.

5.4 We also keep in contact with the CLA if they are not already in school and will keep in regular touch through phone calls and emails.

6. Peer on peer abuse - given the very different circumstances schools and colleges are operating in, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Through the period of the school closure the school staff will remain vigilant for all external factors that could be impacting on a pupil's emotional health (the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE should continue to inform any revised approach).

6.1 Staff will be closely monitoring any online interactions that they are having with children.

6.2 Schools will be building online and remote systems for carrying out emotional check ins and trying to assess a child's welfare through keeping in touch phone calls and messages through each school's online management information system for parental communication.

6.3 The WEB team have identified children requiring additional support for their mental health and wellbeing . Designated workers will contact children on a weekly basis and offer them a 15 minute appointment. In addition, there will be online communication available via a WEB Google Classroom where SEMH support activities will be posted. Where felt necessary, children will be invited into school for 1:1 sessions adhering to School's Covid Risk Assessment.

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7. What staff should do if they have concerns about a staff member who may pose a safeguarding risk to children (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how a school or college responds to any such concerns).

7.1 Staff will continue to follow our school safeguarding policy and whistleblowing policy. Staff have been briefed on the additions of the Covid addendum

7.2 We have clear internal protocols around how staff engage with parents and children remotely.

7.3 All google classrooms will have a member of SLT attached

7.4 Where possible we won't lone work with a vulnerable family

7.5 If we are making a video call to a parent or child this will be carried out on site, with the knowledge of the DSL and always with a second person present

8. Arrangements to support children the school is concerned about who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition therefore are not attending the provision.

8.1 Children that are known to be school vulnerable but do not meet the criteria will be placed on a Vulnerable Children's Register (VCR). As part of the VCR there will be weekly contact by a member of SLT and/or WEB team to support children and their families. Additional provision is available on an individual basis through discussions with parents, carers, children, SENDCo and other wider professionals.

8.2 The SLT and Pastoral team will meet weekly (remotely or otherwise) to review the vulnerable register and ensure that the correct children are still being targeted for welfare calls or pavement visits.

8.3 Class teachers have a system to ensure they are checking in with each child remotely at least once a week and those who are classed as vulnerable have a key worker.

8.4 Case loads are in place and specific plans overseen and managed by the Wellbeing team to support specific children's wellbeing on a remote basis through a nurture based google classroom.

8.5 The Trust welfare response team meets weekly with the Trust Safeguarding Lead to review any complex cases across the Trust, and to ensure systems continue to be reviewed, scrutinised and reflected upon.

8.6 Where children are not attending school parents of the school have a clear understanding of how they can report any worries, concerns or potential safeguarding incidents during school hours. This for example may be an email address, or a contact number for the local children's services.

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9. The school's arrangements to ensure online safety for the staff who are working to provide remote teaching and learning. Ensuring the online safety of children who may have access to school's technology such as a Chromebook.

9.1 We will continue to provide a safe learning environment through the means of online portals. This includes the use of online filtering & blocking of inappropriate material and interactions and constant monitoring by staff of children's online activity.

9.2 Online teaching will follow the same strict professional protocols as it would if that teaching was being done face to face.

9.3 Staff will remain strictly in adherence to the code of conduct and will always uphold the values and ethos of the school when delivering learning online.

9.4 Where live streaming of lessons is being delivered this will always be done with two adults present within the classroom.

9.5 Where live learning is decided as the best means to teach a lesson the DSL will be aware of how this is being carried out and have clear internal protocols in place to protect the safety and welfare of all the children accessing the lesson.

9.6 Where live learning from a member of staff's home wishes to be considered this must be referred to the MAT for approval and risk assessing.

9.7 All staff who interact with children, including online, will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with following the usual Child Protection procedures as above and where appropriate referrals will be made to Children's Social Care by the DSL

10. The school will take a daily register for all the children who are planned and expected to be onsite. The school's responsibility for ensuring these children attend every day and are safely accounted for remains a legal responsibility.

10.1 The school will make sure that they notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend.

10.2 The school will follow up with parents and carers on a daily basis where a child is expected to attend but does not inform the school of their absence.

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10.3 The school will carry out doorstep visits where a child's whereabouts is in question and concerns for their safety have been highlighted.

10.4 Vulnerable children will be coded on the register as a C (circumstances) if they don't attend.

10.5 Children of critical workers who do not attend and have informed the school of this non attendance will be coded as an X (covid related)

10.6 The usual codes for sickness and illness remain in place for all children attending the school.

Review of policy Addendum:

We will constantly review the operation of this addendum and make adjustments if identified and on receipt of further Government, DfE, LA or other advice and updates. We also remain compliant with all local authority reporting arrangements, and multi-agency safeguarding hubs.