

# Addendum to Ebor Academy Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Covid19 Guidance and response



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PRIMARY ACADEMY

With effect from 01/06/2020

**For the immediate attention of all staff and Governors**

**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 27/03/20

## **Context**

**In response to COVID guidance 27/03/20 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.

**1. Updated advice from the local safeguarding partners or MAT (include contact numbers and referral procedures if different to your usual reporting arrangements)**

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 co-ordinated 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 assimilated a central register of all children in its schools identified as critically vulnerable. 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.

**2. Updated advice received from local authorities regarding 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 school closures. In mutual agreement with the school leadership and parent, 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.

2.2 Robert Wilkinson Primary Academy is ensuring that a member of the SEND team will act as a key worker for each EHCP child by making weekly contact and make every effort to support or suggest adaptations to the work set on the google classroom.

2.3 Children identified as vulnerable and who have a social worker have a school place allocated should they wish to access it. However, each school's leadership team is 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.

2.4 Children identified as critically vulnerable have access to the school WEB team who act as key workers for the pupils. They will have a weekly check in and will be supported through the google classroom

2.5 The DSL/DDSL is still attending all meetings that are required for children who are S47 or S17. On the rare occurrence due to the COVID19 position that the school does not have capacity to fulfil its duty to attend statutory meetings, the Trust Safeguarding Lead or Executive Headteacher is able to represent the school and ensure all information is shared and assimilated.

### **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. Should this change then the school will ensure the volunteer adheres to all the usual policies and procedures that are in place to work safely and safeguard children and staff.
- 3.2 If staff have a concern about a child who is in the emergency 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 Staff have been split into 3 weekly rotas to maintain a healthy balance of staff from each area of school life. This ensures that staff are away from the school setting for decent periods of time (approximately the length of self-isolation), which increases the chance of adequate staffing throughout the prolonged period. Each set of teachers from each year group can monitor each other's classes and can report concerns about a child or a family in the usual ways via referral on the internal school recording system to the School DSL.
- 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 engaged online resources and the Google Classroom. Staff will also make keeping in touch emails and phone calls with families and children where needed. The steps that count as 'engagement' are any of the following:

- Completion of the Emotional Check-In sent out each Monday morning
- Pupil's undertaking activities set on the Google Classroom
- Response to a direct message to the pupil (e.g. SeeSaw, Google Docs. Email)
- A response to a Parent Hub communication
- A response to an email communication set via the admin account
- A phone call home and confirmation that child is well

4.2 If staff are still not able to get in contact with the family by the end of school on Wednesday, phone contact will be then be made during the following day by staff on site or by members of staff using soft phones at home.

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. Key Safeguarding leads: contact details and contingency arrangements.**

- 5.1 **DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) – Rebecca McGuinn** [slt.rws@ebor.academy](mailto:slt.rws@ebor.academy)
- 5.2 **Deputy DSL - Chris Evans** [slt.rws@ebor.academy](mailto:slt.rws@ebor.academy)
- 5.3 **Head of School - Chris Evans** [slt.rws@ebor.academy](mailto:slt.rws@ebor.academy)
- 5.4 **Safeguarding Governor Kelsey Clarke Davies** [k.clark-davies@ebor.academy](mailto:k.clark-davies@ebor.academy)
- 5.5 **The Trust DSL - Rebecca McGuinn** [slt.rws@ebor.academy](mailto:slt.rws@ebor.academy)
- 5.6 **Executive Headteacher Gail Brown** [slt.rws@ebor.academy](mailto:slt.rws@ebor.academy)

**6. 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 looked-after and previously looked-after children.**

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

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

6.3 We also keep in contact with the LAC if they are not already in school and do regular keeping in touch calls and emails.

6.4 We will attend all child protection meetings, core groups, MARACS, and strategy meetings remotely.

**7. 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).**

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

7.2 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.

7.2 Parents are fully informed about the trust's policy for online safety and are regularly sent resources which support wellbeing. Eg timetables, check in methods, positivity games etc Teaching staff and the WEB team have many wellbeing resources they can access to support pupils who check in with a wide variety of concerns.

**8. 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).**

8.1 Staff will continue to follow our school safeguarding policy and whistleblowing policy

8.2 We have received advice from Rebecca McGuinn on how staff should keep themselves safe when contacting parents and families as well as suggested prompts, guides and scripts for engaging with families throughout COVID19

8.3 Each member of each year group team have access to each other's online classrooms and can monitor work provided and what staff and children are saying to each other through this platform.

**9. Arrangements to support children the school are concerned about, who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition and therefore are not attending the provision.**

9.1 Children that are known to be vulnerable but do not meet the criteria will all be contacted in order to establish that they are safe whilst off the school site.

9.2 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.

9.3 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

9.4 Risk assessments are in place and specific plans overseen and managed by the Wellbeing team are in place to support specific children's wellbeing on a remote basis through a nurture based google classroom

9.5 The Trust welfare response team meet 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.

9.6 Where children are not attending the setting 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.

**10. The school's arrangements to ensure online safety for the staff who are working via online platforms as a means of teaching and learning or establishing welfare checks. Ensuring the online safety of children who may have access to school's technology such as a Chromebook.**

10.1 We will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of online filtering & blocking of inappropriate material and interactions and constant monitoring by staff of children's online activity. We are not delivering live video streaming to pupils in the form of live lessons. Where it is appropriate we may access some video conferencing provided this is always done on the school site, linked to the school network and there are always two adults present. This will only ever be done on the direction and prior knowledge of SLT.

10.2 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 Child Protection procedures as above and where appropriate referrals will be made to Children's Social Care.

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

10.4 We will maintain communication with parents and ensure that they are signposted via the school website to sources of advice particularly in respect of online safety at this time of increased use to support learning and social interaction.

**11. Arrangements for supporting pupils and staff welfare as more children return into the setting on the 1st June 2020. Giving due consideration to the fact staff will be encountering some children who have not seen a 'safe' adult for some time. The school Addendum to Ebor Academy Trust Safeguarding and Child protection policy Covid19 Guidance and response has clear systems, policies and procedures so that children can speak freely and share their worries or concerns. All children's mental health and emotional state will need to be given regular and due consideration.**

11.1 Schools consider what their internal mechanisms are for sharing and passing information to the relevant people onsite if they have a concern about a child's safety.

The process for sharing and recording safeguarding concerns is set out below;

- In the first instance any concerns must be passed verbally to the DSL or DDSL.
- The concern will be documented on a google document so the DSL can screen at what level this concern is.
- If it is a child protection concern the DSL will take advice involving communication with parent/carer and contact with children's social care.
- IF the concern requires more information that process will begin.
- Any concern that is safeguarding will be logged on CPOMS and all appropriate follow up actions will be taken and recorded.
- The person raising the concern will be guided and directed by the DSL. In the absence of the DSL the DDSL will be available to support.
- Close by to all class bubbles a walkie talkie and ICT is available so that immediate advice and guidance can be sought, and recording can be done in a timely manner.

11.2 There are suitable internal communication systems so that staff are regularly updated on any key issues affecting children in their care, following children have been away from the setting for a long period of time. Systems are in place to make sure that we hold current up to date and accurate records over where a child resides or their current welfare status. This is stored and maintained on CPOMS, integris and centrally in the Trust vulnerability register.

11.3 Regular staff briefings are held, these may be done remotely so that critical information in relation to a child's safety and welfare can be shared with all relevant adults, especially if this may impact on the practice and provision that is required.

11.4 We have key trained designated staff in school, who can be available to those children who may need to be supported through a disclosure. Staff recognise that some children could require designated time, to manage any emotions or anxieties that they now feel due to being back in the school building. Staff have an awareness of how to respond to children who may be experiencing separation anxiety from their family members, or are struggling with the adjustments to the current structure of the school that for some may not be providing the familiarity they were once used to.

11.5 The MATs welfare and wellbeing teams will continue to operate and supply school's with support and specialist resources to address the emotional recovery and reintegration for pupils back into the school setting.

11.6 Where it is required we have staff who are able to maintain and support the welfare and wellbeing strategy for the home learners, especially those that have been identified as vulnerable by the SLT.

11.7 Support, guidance and reassurance is provided to help children with the concept of social distancing. The school has systems in place to minimise the damage on pupils mental health and wellbeing due to not being able to interact as normal with their peers and staff members

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11.8 Whole school consideration is being given to all children's mental health and wellbeing, the focus work that is being done in the setting is allowing children time to talk and express their emotions offering them a chance to share the experiences they have had whilst they have been away from the school.

11.9 Staff are able to speak to key members of staff about any worries that they may have in relation to their own personal safety and wellbeing. Those staff who are working with the critically vulnerable children, or children who demonstrate complex behaviours or physical needs have undertaken a risk assessment and are able to access regular reviews and debriefs to support their working practice.

**12. From the 1st of June all school's within the MAT will resume taking their daily register, children who are deemed to be accessing a place will need to be accounted for on a daily basis. It is the school's responsibility to follow up on any non attendance in line with the school's attendance and absence policy.**

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

12.2 The school will follow up with parents and carers on a daily basis where a child is expected to attend but doesn't.

12.3 The school will take every opportunity when speaking to the parents/carers of the children due to attend the school from the 1st June 2020 to ensure all emergency contacts and home addresses are current and up to date.

**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.