East Midlands Academy Trust

COVID-19
School arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection

'Every child deserves to be the best they can be'

Scope: East Midlands Academy Trust & Academies within the Trust	
Version: V4	**Filename:** COVID-19 School arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection
Approval: April 2020 **Reviewed: 8th March 2021**	**Next Review:** Not Applicable
Owner: East Midlands Academy Trust Board of Trustees	**Union Status:** Not Applicable
Policy type:	
Statutory	To be read alongside current Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Note: **Linked with re-opening, there are some elements of risk-minimisation which need to be considered.** **The Trust has conducted a COVID-19 Risk Assessment across the MAT and each school has adapted the document to suit their own unique circumstances.** **The Risk Assessment will be kept under constant review during the duration of the crisis.**	

Revision History

RevisionDate	Revisor	Description of Revision
March 2021– v4	M Juan	Updates to reflect return to school for all pupils: • **Previous Addendum replaced by new Appendix to add to the existing safeguarding and child protection policy.**
January 2021 – v3	M Juan	Updates to reflect partial school closure: • online safety procedures and safeguarding guidance for Remote and Live learning amended to reflectcurrent practice • contact plans amended for children during further lockdown.
September 2020 – v2	M Juan	Updates to reflect return of pupils to school: • attendance monitoring guidance • online safety procedures and safeguarding guidance for Remote and Live learning • introduction contact plans where isolating or in the event of a full/partial lockdown.
April 2020 – v1	M Juan	Addendum to current Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

1 Context

1.1 This appendix has been added to the school safeguarding policy following the period of partial closure between January 5th 2021 and March 8th 2021. From the 8th March 2021 all children, except those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and have been directed to shield at home, are expected to attend school.

1.2 This appendix has been added to provide all stakeholders with additional information about the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements from the 8th March 2021.

2 Guidance

2.1 The school continues to comply with all statutory safeguarding and child protection guidance during this time, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)[1].

2.2 The school is currently operating under the latest Covid-19 guidance from the Department from Education, 'Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (February 2021)' and 'Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (February 2021)

3   What to do if you have a concern about a child

3.1 A trained Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be available at all times during school hours *(including during breakfast club)*

3.2 Wherever possible, a trained DSL (or deputy DSL) will be available on site. Where this is not possible due to staff self-isolation, a trained DSL (or deputy DSL) will be available to be contacted via phone or videoconferencing provided by Microsoft Teams In this instance an appropriate senior leader will take responsibility for safeguarding on site.

3.3 Any changes in arrangements for contacting the DSL/DDSLs will be shared with staff before 9am each day, as well as any relevant safeguarding and child protection updates and training.

3.4 If the school becomes aware that a child is suffering, has suffered, or is at risk of suffering harm or abuse, this will be managed in line with procedures outlined in the main body of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

Attendance

4.1 In line with government guidance, we expect all children to attend school unless they are self-isolating or shielding. The school is responsible for recording attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the local authority.

4.2 Parents or carers should contact the school on the first day of absence and inform the school of the reason why the child is not in attendance. Parents should inform the school of any COVID-19 tests that have been carried out and continue to keep the school informed of reasons for absence, as appropriate.

---

[1] This document was last updated in January 2021, to reflect arrangements following the UK's departure from the European Union. However, it is still referred to as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)'.

4.3 From 8th March 2021, we will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) for all pupils.

4.4 In accordance with the 'Remote Education Temporary Continuity Direction', the school will provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government COVID-19 guidance or legislation. We will keep a record of remote education delivered.

4.5 Absence information will be recorded in the register using the appropriate codes. Information about school attendance codes can be found in:
- School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2020)
- Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance

4.6 Where pupils are not able to attend school, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.

4.7 We understand that some parents, carers and children may be anxious about children returning to school. We will work closely with families who are finding the transition more challenging to ensure that children are attending regularly.

4.8 We will work with other agencies (e.g. health and other education professionals) to support school attendance if this is required. We will continue to notify the pupil's social worker (if they have one) of any non-attendance.

5 Supporting children who are learning at home

5.1 In the event that children are required to shield or to self-isolate, the school will continue to provide remote education and pastoral support.

5.2 We will do this by providing 'live' lessons through Teams. See Remote learning document on website. Parents will be sent the expectations for remote learning including how to stay safe online.

5.3 In the event that a member of our school community (a child or a member of their family, for example) need to seek safeguarding or wellbeing support, they should contact the school and speak to a DSL.

5.4 Vulnerable children

5.4.1   If pupils who are self-isolating or shielding are within the government definition of 'vulnerable', we will keep in regular contact with them by weekly phone calls. Hardingstone Academy will provide welfare checks. These will be carried out via teams as part of remote learning and home visits as necessary.

5.4.2   When a vulnerable pupil is required to self-isolate, we will:
- notify their social worker (if they have one);

- agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support;
- check if a vulnerable pupil is able to access remote education support;
- support them to access it (as far as possible); and
- regularly check if they are accessing remote education.

5.4.3   The government considers children to be vulnerable if they
- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation
  - those who are young carers
  - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
  - care leavers
  - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

5.5 We recognise that provision for pupils who have SEND may have been disrupted during the period of restrictions on attendance. We will work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure the services and support are in place for a smooth return to schools for pupils.

5.6 Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) children
5.6.1   Children who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable and have received a shielding letter should not attend school until they have been removed from the shielding patient list. Hardingstone Academy will support these children by providing remote learning as outlined in our remote learning document. We will also complete weekly welfare check ins via Teams as part of remote learning, phone calls home and home visits.

5.6.2   The school may request to see a copy of the child's shielding letter.

6 Supporting children on site

6.1 Hardingstone Academy 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 COVID-19.

6.2 COVID-19 testing for all members of staff consists of self-testing at home twice weekly. Recording information on government website and on school Microsoft Form system to ensure that everyone is kept as safe as possible.

6.3 Hardingstone Academy understands that some children will find the transition back into school challenging and will need pastoral and nurture support. Through our bereavement trained teacher and mental health first aiders and pastoral lead we will provide nurture group sessions, art therapy and 1:1 as necessary.

6.4 Hardingstone Academy works with our school nurse to:

- ensure delivery of the healthy child programme (which includes immunisation)
- identify health and wellbeing needs
- provider support for resilience, mental health and wellbeing including anxiety, bereavement and sleep issues
- support pupils with additional and complex health needs.

There are monthly meetings with the school nurse to discuss concerns and access support.

7 Children attending Alternative Provision

Where a pupil routinely attends more than one setting on a part time basis, for example because they are dual registered at a mainstream school and a special setting, Hardingstone Academy will work through the system of controls collaboratively, enabling us to address any risks identified and allowing them to jointly deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupil. Pupils will be able to continue attending both settings. While some adjustment to arrangements may be required, pupils in this situation should not be isolated as a solution to the risk of greater contact except when required by specific public health advice.

8 Safer recruitment of staff and volunteers

8.1 The school continues to adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and all relevant legislation relating to safer recruitment.

8.2 The school will adhere to all government guidance in relation to checking identification for the purposes of obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service checks and when conducting interviews.

8.3 Where Hardingstone Academy is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

8.4 Hardingstone Academy will continue to update the single central record and will log details of any risk assessment carried out on volunteers and any temporary staff from other educational institutions.

9 Online safety and remote learning

9.1 The school recognises that children both on-site and off-site are vulnerable to abuse and radicalisation online. Children who are at home because they are self-isolating or shielding may be spending more time online and this increases their vulnerability.

9.2 Hardingstone Academy recognises that additional safeguarding arrangements are required to ensure that children are safe online at this time.

9.3 All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk online and will report and respond to concerns in line with this policy.

9.4 Hardingstone Academy will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Below are some things to consider if there are virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.

- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

9.5 Hardingstone Academy is legally required to provide suitable remote learning for children whilst they are out of school. We are using technology to deliver learning to pupils who are at home.

9.6 In order to ensure that children are safe when learning online, parents/carers should supervise children regularly. We will support parents being providing information in the weekly newsletter, expectations document will be sent to parents which included keeping

safe on line. Where we are alerted to any online concerns we will work with those pupils involved and inform parents.

Support for children and parents

• Internet Matters (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online – www.internetmatters.org

• London Grid for Learning (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) – www.lgfl.net/online-safety/

• Net-aware (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC) – www.net-aware.org.uk

• Parent info (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) – www.parentinfo.org

• Thinkuknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online) – www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

• UK Safer Internet Centre (advice for parents and carers) - https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers

9.7 All communication with learners and parents/carers will take place using school/college provided or approved communication channels.

9.8 Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.

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

9.10 Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our behaviour policy and staff code of conduct.

9.11 When delivering remote learning, staff at Hardingstone Academy will:

• Only use online tools that have been evaluated and agreed by leadership.

• Ensure remote learning activities are planned in accordance with our curriculum policies, taking learner needs and technology access into account.

• Where possible, pre-record content.

9.12 If remote learning is taking place 'live' using webcams or chat facilities, staff and learners will ensure a professional environment is maintained. This means:

• Staff will record the length, time, date and attendance of any online lessons/contact held or made.

• Live sessions will involve at least two members of staff where possible.

• Sessions will not be delivered in any 1:1 situation, unless pre-approval has been given by the DSL and/or Headteacher and the session is auditable.

• Staff will record any online lessons so they can be audited or accessed later if required; learners and staff should be made aware that lessons are being recorded.

• Staff will agree online behaviour expectations with learners at the start of lessons.

• Staff will revisit our Acceptable use of Technology Policy with learners as necessary.

- All participants will wear suitable dress, use professional language, and ensure backgrounds of videos (live or pre-recorded) are neutral and appropriate.
- Staff and learners should ensure personal information and/or, inappropriate or unsuitable personal items are not visible.
- Where possible, other household members should not be in the background or in shot; if this unavoidable, they should follow appropriate language and behaviour expectations.
- If live streaming, staff will mute and/or disable learners' videos and microphones, as required.

9.13   Learners are encouraged to report concerns to a member of staff or a trusted adult at home. Where this is not possible, additional support can be accessed online via:

- Childline: **www.childline.org.uk**

- UK Safer Internet Centre's 'Report Harmful Content': **https://reportharmfulcontent.com**

- National Crime Agency Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (NCA-CEOP)**: www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre**

9.14   Staff have received updated safeguarding training to ensure that they are equipped with the skills to keep children safe when using technology for remote learning.

9.15   Use of staff and learner personal devices, including mobile phones, will be managed in line with our existing Acceptable Usage policy and Online Policy.

10 Contingency Planning

10.1   In the event that restrictions in schools are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, we will refer to the contingency framework[2], which has been updated and outlines how schools should operate in the event of any restrictions. We will always ensure that safeguarding children is our priority and work within restrictions to keep children safe.

11 Review

11.1   This appendix will be reviewed, updated and re-issued as necessary, to reflect government guidance. All staff will be made aware of any changes.

---

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities