

Ormiston Academies Trust

## Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy COVID-19 Addendum to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

### Policy version control

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Links to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Child Protection &amp; Safeguarding policy</li> <li>▪ Behaviour for Learning policy</li> <li>▪ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) policy</li> <li>▪ E-Safety &amp; E-security policy</li> <li>▪ SEND policy</li> <li>▪ Allegations against staff policy</li> <li>▪ Anti-bullying policy</li> <li>▪ Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and Academy Staff Agreement</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Government Publication Safeguarding in schools COVID-19</a></li> </ul>
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## Context

From 6 January 2021 schools and academies are officially closed, parents are asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, but schools and academies are to remain open and provide places for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers.

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

This sub-section of the OSCA Child Protection and Safeguarding policy contains details of our safeguarding arrangements during this period. It should read alongside the academy Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and will operate alongside advice issued by Central Government, Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Partners.

We will ensure that, where we care for children on site, we have appropriate support in place for them. We will take advice from, and work with, central government and our local safeguarding partners. We will ensure that where children are working from home, a process is in place to enable regular safe and well checks are carried out with those at greater risk of harm being prioritised.

We will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to ensure a Covid secure environment and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England. All necessary risk assessments are in place.

Where we have concerns about the impact of staff absence, such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead, First Aiders or members of the Leadership Team – we will discuss them immediately with the relevant members of our Trust.

It is important to note, that Government policy and advice changes rapidly. Academies will do their best to ensure school policy complies with that advice and guidance.

## 1. Key contacts during this period

(Please see academy rota for day-to-day designated responsibility)

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
OSCA Designated Safeguarding Lead	Gaynor Garner	07719 902202	<a href="mailto:gaynor.garner@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">gaynor.garner@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
OSCA Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)/Safeguarding Team	Andy Morgan	07857 406399	<a href="mailto:Andrew.Morgan1@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">Andrew.Morgan1@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
	Becky Maiden	07719 902191	<a href="mailto:Becky.Maiden@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">Becky.Maiden@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
	Kerry Clair	07719 902189	<a href="mailto:Kerry.Clair@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">Kerry.Clair@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
Wider SLT contacts	Kabir Ahmed	07719 902195	<a href="mailto:Kabir.Ahmed@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">Kabir.Ahmed@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
SENCo	Sarah Dickens	01215525501	<a href="mailto:Sarah.Dickens@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">Sarah.Dickens@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
Principal	Faye Cutler	01215525501	<a href="mailto:Faye.Cutler@ormistonsandwell.org.uk">Faye.Cutler@ormistonsandwell.org.uk</a>
OAT Regional Director	Paula Arrowsmith	07963 321869	<a href="mailto:paula.arrowsmith@ormistonacademies.co.uk">paula.arrowsmith@ormistonacademies.co.uk</a>
OAT Safeguarding Manager	Nikki Cameron	07825838225	<a href="mailto:nikki.cameron@ormistonacademies.co.uk">nikki.cameron@ormistonacademies.co.uk</a>

## 2. Vulnerable Children

2.1. Vulnerable children are identified as: children who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need by the school or local authority or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989. 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 with engaging with remote education at

home, care leavers others, at the school's discretion, including children who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

- 2.2. Attending education settings is known as a protective factor for children receiving the support of a social worker. It is right that we prioritise support for those who will benefit the most. We are balancing this carefully with the urgent need to reduce social contact right across society to support the work to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- 2.3. Leaders, and especially designated safeguarding leads, know their most vulnerable children best and will offer additional places to those on the edges of receiving children's social care support based upon risk assessments and need. Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.
- 2.4. It is important to note that some children that have not been 'at risk' previously become more at risk in this new COVID-19 context; there is an expected rise in domestic violence, and we must respond by considering who should be offered place at the academy provision and keeping in contact with the child's home. Children potentially suffering from Domestic Violence, Neglect, Abuse, Child Criminal Exploitation or Child Sexual Exploitation will be elevated to the daily contact list to ensure that a referral can be made as soon as there is a concern raised.
- 2.5. It should also be noted, that with the return to home schooling, there may be an increase in the number of children not previously been considered 'at risk' and who may now fall into this category. Particularly those with mental ill-health or other social and emotional needs. The safeguarding team are prepared for this and school staff have been asked to be particularly vigilant for signs and indicators that a child may have experienced abuse or neglect or is suffering signs of mental ill-health. School staff have been trained about how to handle a disclosure from a child, and understand that any safeguarding concerns, must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies) in the usual way.

### 3. Do vulnerable children have to continue to go to an education setting?

- 3.1. There is a government expectation that vulnerable children will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. Further to this, schools and social workers should be agreeing with families whether children in need should be attending school—and the school should then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and OSCA will explore the reasons for this, directly with the parent and record the outcome on the child protection online management system (CPOMS).
- 3.2. The academy will ensure that the relevant social worker or virtual head is made aware of any vulnerable child that has chosen not to attend the academy. We will work with social workers and virtual heads as necessary to ensure effective monitoring continues of these children.
- 3.3. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting the virus, the academy and the social worker should talk through these anxieties with the parent following the advice set out by Public Health England.

- 3.4. The academy will consider how to encourage children and young people to attend an education setting where the risk assessment suggests that this is in the best interests of the child. Social workers will remain in contact with vulnerable children and families, including remotely if needed.

## 4. Children with an EHCP

- 4.1. Children with an EHC plan will have been risk assessed in partnership with parents/carers and the local authority to determine whether they would be able to have their needs met at home and be safer there than attending an educational setting. Following these risk assessments some pupils with an EHC plan will have been offered a place in school as it was deemed safe to do so.
- 4.2. Schools should continue to offer places to all children with EHC plans in all year groups **whose risk assessment determined that it was safe to do so.**
- 4.3. The risk assessments of all pupils with EHC plans who remain at home should be kept up to date to reflect any changes in circumstances.
- 4.4. If a pupil with an EHC plan remains at home, it is recommended that the setting and local authority maintains the risk assessment and regularly reviews it in light of changing circumstances to determine whether they can return to school at the appropriate time for them.
- 4.5. Further guidance on updating risk assessment for children and young people with EHC plans can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance#updating-risk-assessments>

## 5. Children Attending Alternative Provision

- 5.1. Where our students are attending an alternative provision the government expectation is that it has remained open. We will continue to record attendance for these children in the same way as children that are attending OSCA during this time. We will follow the same guideline listed above if any of these children are classified as vulnerable or have an EHCP.

## 6. Attendance monitoring

- 6.1. Those children identified as vulnerable are still expected to attend school full time, unless shielding, self-isolating or quarantining.
- 6.2. The academy will make contact with the parent/carer of any vulnerable child who wishes their child to be absent from school to encourage attendance. However, the DfE expects schools to grant leave of absence, given these exceptional circumstances.
- 6.3. Vulnerable children who are absent will be C coded, not X coded, unless another attendance code is more applicable.

- 6.4. Academies do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance unless the child was expected to attend the academy and did not attend. Where this happens, we will phone the relevant parent or carer to establish that the child is safe and well and the reason for non-attendance. Where there are concerns about a child, we will follow our usual referral process.
- 6.5. To ensure the above, we have communicated with parents and carers to re-confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and asked for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.
- 6.6. In all circumstances where a child with a social worker does not take up their place in the academy and was expected to attend, or discontinues after a period of attendance, we will notify their social worker.

## 7. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and Deputies (DDSL)

- 7.1. The DSL (or DDSL) remains responsible for managing safeguarding within the academy and (with the Principal), is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is effective. The DSL will support the Principal in making decisions that will allow the academy to monitor relevant students and ensure that safeguarding is considered as part of any new processes or structures that are introduced to meet the demands during the Covid-19 context.
- 7.2. The DSL (or DDSL) will continue to engage with social workers and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.
- 7.3. The DSL (or DDSL) is responsible for overseeing that pupil attendance is monitored and safe and well checks are in place to allow timely safeguarding referrals to be made or actions taken, should they be required.
- 7.4. The DSL (or DDSL) will ensure that information sharing is effective and timely to ensure that any adults in other educational provisions looking after (academy name)'s children can continue to effectively safeguard them when in that provision.

## 8. Potential Absence of DSL/DDSL

- 8.1. Please refer to section 1 for the names and contacts of relevant safeguarding contacts during the Covid-19 context.
- 8.2. The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL or deputy available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL or deputy will be available to be contacted via phone or online video (for example when they are working from home). Where possible though, the academy will include a DSL/DDSL in each shift in the rota.
- 8.3. Whatever the scenario, it is important that all staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or deputy. On each day, staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them if the DSL or DDSL is not on site.



- 8.4. Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. The senior leader will update and manage access to CPOMS and liaise with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required, liaise with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the academy. The senior leader will also ensure that all the responsibilities of the DSL listed above (section 7) will be met.
- 8.5. If a situation occurs where there is no DSL/DDSL/Member of SLT available for the academy on any particular day (e.g. due to unprecedented levels of illness), the most senior member of staff for that day will contact the Regional Director for the academy and Nikki Cameron to establish who the contactable DSL is for that day to ensure that appropriate referrals are made to relevant agencies in a timely manner. See section 1 for contact details.

## 9. Reporting a Concern

- 9.1. Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school safeguarding policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely if required.
- 9.2. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal (unless they have been informed that other members of SLT are leading the academy due to absence through illness). This will ensure that the concern is received. It is important not to put any identifiable details in emails but to alert the DSL/principal that there is a safeguarding concern and provide contact details so the DSL/Principal can discuss the details of the concerns verbally.
- 9.3. All staff and volunteers are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Disciplinary action will be taken if there is an unreasonable delay making a safeguarding referral to the DSL/DDSL; safeguarding pupils remains our first priority.
- 9.4. See Appendix 1 of the full Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for a flow chart.

## 10. Safeguarding in alternative settings

- 10.1. If in the event that any of OSCA's pupils are attending another educational provision due to:
  - 10.1.1. the academy being temporarily closed due to staff shortages,
  - 10.1.2. the need for a deep clean or
  - 10.1.3. as part of a cluster model
- 10.2. It is the responsibility of the DSL and the Principal to ensure that a sufficiently robust system is set up in advance of this to ensure that relevant information about the child is shared to relevant

safeguarding staff in that setting and that safeguarding referrals can be made and actioned in a timely manner. This is especially important where children are vulnerable.

- 10.3. For looked after children, any change in educational setting should be led by the virtual head with responsibility for that child and the Principal /Leadership of OSCA
- 10.4. OSCA remains responsible for the safeguarding of that child and works with the new setting to ensure that safeguarding is effective.
- 10.5. This will include OSCA's DSL/DDSL contacting the DSL/DDSL at the new setting to share relevant details about vulnerable children pertaining to what makes them vulnerable and what is in place to support that child. Access must be given to Child Protection Plans, Child in Need Plans, ECHPs, or for looked after children their personal education plan and any other formal, relevant information. The name and contact details of the social worker must be provided for every vulnerable child and the name and contact details of the virtual head responsible for any looked after child.

## 11. Concerns about an adult

- 11.1. Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the academy the matter will then follow usual safeguarding procedures. Should there be difficulty in contacting staff members due to absence please contact the appropriate Regional Director and Nikki Cameron
- 11.2. If colleagues are unsatisfied with the response from the person that they referred the concern to, they have a duty to report the concern directly to the Local Authority Designated Office (LADO) that can be contacted at: [Sandwell\\_lado@sandwellchildrenstrust.org](mailto:Sandwell_lado@sandwellchildrenstrust.org) or by telephone on 0121 569 4770

## 12. Safeguarding Training

- 12.1. 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. However, where the training does lapse, the DSL must notify the Principal and Safeguarding Governor as soon as possible. All efforts should be made to secure on-line refresher training from the LA. Or another reliable source such as the NSPCC. DSLs/DDSLs will keep up to date with safeguarding and child protection matters by signing up to update services such as Andrew Hall and NSPCC who offer regular free updates on safeguarding.
- 12.2. All existing staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL will communicate with staff about any new local arrangements and ensure that they know what to do if they are worried about a child. The DSL will remind staff about the signs and indicators of child abuse and neglect and will outline that there may be an increase in safeguarding incidents with the return to home learning. The importance of reporting concerns immediately will be reiterated to school staff, this is particularly crucial where students are not timetabled to attend school every day.

- 12.3. School staff will seek to provide reassurance to students throughout the period of lockdown. They will be briefed about the school day in an age-appropriate manner and staff will acknowledge and listen to pupil anxieties and support children to understand the altered routines.
- 12.4. Staff should be briefed about SEMH issues related to Covid19 that may arise when students are at home and how to identify where students may be struggling with their mental health issues could include anxieties about health and safety, issues relating to bereavement and PTSD. For more information, see section 18.
- 12.5. The existing workforce may move between educational settings on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19. Where OSCA receives staff from another setting (outside of OAT), we will judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. The minimum will include health and safety related to the setting, contacts for the DSL/DDSL and leadership team and how to make a referral.
- 12.6. Relevant information will be provided to staff members on a need-to-know basis about any vulnerable children that they will be in contact with and the support strategies in place for them. This could include bereavement, a relationship breakdown, or an incident of domestic violence.

## 13. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

- 13.1. It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE.
- 13.2. 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. OAT HR will support and advise OSCA on how to keep records of where non-face to face checks have taken place so that they can be followed up when the Covid-19 context is no longer relevant.
- 13.3. Where we are utilising volunteers, we 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.
- 13.4. Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school or college is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, OSCA will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164ff in KCSIE 2020

## 14. Online safety

- 14.1. Where children continue to attend the academy, we will continue to provide a safe environment, including the online environment. This includes the use of online filtering and monitoring systems.
- 14.2. Where pupils are using devices in school, appropriate supervision will be in place and staff and pupils should continue to follow the E-Safety and E-Security policy.
- 14.3. We will regularly remind students to whom to talk if they are worried about their safety and how to stay safe online.

Signposts to age-appropriate practical support include:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
- [Let's Talk About It](#) - advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalization
- [Childnet](#) - a toolkit to support parents and carers to start discussions about their child's online life
- [support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms](#), includes advice about specific harms such as online child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- [support to stay safe online](#) includes security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls

## 15. Interacting with pupils online that are not present in the academy

- 15.1. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that the child may be at risk of harm or experiencing harm. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection policy (see section 9) and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required the police.

- 15.2. Online teaching should follow the same principles as normal and in line with new guidance issued in the Covid-19 context (see [Home Working guidance](#) and [Safeguarding and remote education](#) and [Get help with remote education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)). If staff are unsure, they should seek clarification with the academy leadership before making or responding to any contact from a child.
- 15.3. We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.
- 15.4. When we are in contact with parents and careers, communications will additionally be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the academy their child is going to be interacting with online.

## 16. Supporting pupils who are not attending the academy in the Covid-19 context

- 16.1. We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our students.
- 16.2. The DSL will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for identified at risk students
- 16.3. Details of the communication level for all children identified as vulnerable will be maintained and held in a secure system.
- 16.4. Communications will be logged in CPOMS under the code 'COVID-19' to detail when communication took place, with whom and any outcomes of the conversation.
- 16.5. Where communication yields a safeguarding concern an incident will be logged onto CPOMS or a safeguarding referral form completed and handed to the DSL to ensure that appropriate action is taken
- 16.6. Plans must be reviewed weekly to consider any new information relevant to the level of communication or where concerns arise, the DSL will consider further referrals as appropriate.
- 16.7. A weekly review of the at risk/vulnerable children list should take place and revised or added to as appropriate

## 17. Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

- 17.1. Where we receive a report of child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and Anti-Bullying policy.

- 17.2. We will listen carefully and never dismiss disclosures of bullying or abuse. We will work with the child/ children involved, discuss concerns with their family and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of our pupils.
- 17.3. Concerns and actions will be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

## 18. Mental Health

- 18.1. Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Colleagues are made aware of this when considering the setting and expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. We will follow the DfE's guidance on providing education remotely.
- 18.2. The DfE's guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem. Support for pupils and students in the current circumstances can include a place within the vulnerable child's in-school provision, provision of support via phone or an on-line platform such as Teams or from specialist staff or support services. You can access the guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools for further](#) information.
- 18.3. For wider information about mental health related to the Covid-19 context please see OAT guidance here:

<https://oatoe.sharepoint.com/sites/Covid-19/SitePages/Wellbeing.aspx>

- 18.4. And national guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

- 18.5. If you are unable to access any of the links in this document - please contact Nikki Cameron who will assist.