

# The Four Stones Multi Academy Trust

## Safeguarding Children (including Child Protection)

### Policy: Key COVID-19 related changes

#### Version Control

**Policy author:** Nicola Stanfield  
**Policy approved by:** Trust Board  
**Next policy review date:** Summer 2022

Version	Date	Details
1.0	18 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021	Addendum written as a MAT policy

#### Context

From the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 all students returned to school following the closure of all schools on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the schools remain fully open we will follow our 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)'. However, the safeguarding arrangements in this addendum of the 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)' will be used if there is a local or national lockdown whereby all or some parents/carers are asked to keep their children at home. Certain parts of the safeguarding arrangements in this addendum will also be used when the schools are open for all students but some have to self-isolate.

This addendum is subject to change based on the most up to date Government guidance.

#### Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- 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

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents/carers, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

The schools will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be the designated teacher for looked after children in each school.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and the schools will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer.

Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, the schools or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. The schools will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school.

### **Attendance monitoring**

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day to day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

The schools and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. The schools will then follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The schools will also follow up with any parent/carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, the schools will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, we will notify their social worker and record their non-attendance accordingly.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

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 - for example when working from home.

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. This might include updating and managing access to the child protection online management system (CPOMS), liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments.

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.

The DSL (or deputy) will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which may be done remotely.

### **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)', this includes making a report via CPOMS.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads. They can also use the designated telephone number that has been shared with staff. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff have a concern about an adult working with children in the schools, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)'. If there is a requirement to make a notification whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email.

### **Safeguarding Training and Induction**

For the period where 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.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the schools they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education, or children's workforce setting to the schools, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability of DBS as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual.

Upon arrival, they will be directed to a copy of our 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)' which includes the confirmation of local processes and DSL arrangements.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

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, the schools will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) (KCSIE). 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.

Where the schools are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 287 to 289 of KCSiE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The schools will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found in KCSiE 2021.

The schools will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 384 of KCSiE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral'.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school 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, the schools keep their single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 252 to 254 of KCSiE.

### **Children moving schools and establishments**

Following the announcement of a further lockdown offsite providers will be open to those students who are children of critical workers or vulnerable. A small number of our students attend an offsite provider as part of their curriculum. We visit all offsite providers before we refer our students to them to ensure the provision is suitable and complete an initial offsite visit checklist. This includes looking at their site risk assessment to check all of the measures are in place to ensure the safety of the students. The provider confirms the names of their members of staff along with their DBS numbers/issue dates and that the providers have carried out all of the necessary pre-employment checks and confirmation is received by email and recorded on our Single Central record. Relevant safeguarding records are shared, where there is a need to do so.

The attendance officer makes daily calls to check students have arrived at their placement. Half termly visits are made by staff to offsite providers and students (COVID-19 rules allowing) whilst they are at their placement and to discuss: achievement, behaviour, attendance, wellbeing and any action points and the 'Staff Visit to Offsite Provider' form is completed and filed appropriately. Our visiting staff meet with the DSL at the offsite provision to discuss individual students where necessary and should if required attend reintegration meetings after any fixed term exclusion from off-site providers. During any periods of national lockdown we will be in contact with our alternative providers and will make phone calls to the relevant families to check on the students' well-being and access to remote education.

In preparation for students leaving the schools, will do whatever we reasonably can to provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information. Also, in preparation for students joining us we will ask their previous schools to provide essential information. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable. For looked-after children, any change in school should be led and managed by the VSH with responsibility for the child. The receiving school should be aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum the receiving school should, as appropriate, have access to a vulnerable child's EHC plan/child in need plan/child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is). This should ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy DSL) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators for children with EHC plans.

## **Online safety in schools**

The schools will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

## **Children and online safety away from school**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)' and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT's code of conduct.

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

## **Live Learning**

Where children and young people are being asked to learn online at home the Department has provided advice to support schools and colleges do so safely: safeguarding in schools colleges and other providers and safeguarding and remote education. The NSPCC and PSHE Association also provide helpful advice:

- NSPCC Learning - Undertaking remote teaching safely during school closures
- PSHE - PSHE Association coronavirus hub

The schools will refer to these documents where necessary.

Using online platforms that enable live and/ instructed learning is a good way to help students continue to study with their teachers when it is not possible to attend school. Although it is not the same as face-to-face lessons, it is still very effective for learning. These lessons and tutorials will be recorded and made available so that any students who may be unwell can access them at a later date. These videos can also be referred to by students who were present for the live delivery for clarification of concepts and embedding of learning.

The schools have the following protocols to safeguard the staff and students when delivering and participating in live online lessons.

- Parents/carers will be made aware of the times and dates of the online lesson.
- Students and parents/carers will have to sign the online teaching agreement as detailed below.
- The schools expects appropriate boundaries to be set and for staff and students to maintain the same professional standards as they would at school. This includes wearing suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- The staff member's computer should be located in an appropriate area in the home if they cannot deliver from the school premises, for example not in a bedroom, and ensure the background blurring/replacement facility has been used.
- Live online lessons should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- The school expects staff to be mindful of what is on their desktop/screen when screen sharing or displaying a file.
- The schools expects that all language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by the school to communicate with students (eg Microsoft Teams).
- Staff should not use a personal account to communicate with the students on any platform.

- Staff are not to share personal information such as private email addresses, phone numbers etc.
- The schools expect that staff and/or students should not invite other people from outside the network onto the platform for an online lesson.
- Staff will record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.
- Staff will record the lesson and save on the shared area in the online lessons folder.
- Staff will never make inappropriate jokes or comments online.
- Where possible, staff will invite another member of staff to the online lesson for monitoring purposes.

### **Online Teaching Agreement**

We are asking you to sign an online lessons code of conduct agreement, which is a document that outlines how we expect you to behave when you are learning online. School systems and users are protected and monitored by security and filtering services to provide safe access to digital technologies. This means anything you do on a school device or using school networks, platforms and internet may be viewed by one of the staff members who are here to keep you safe. You should not behave any differently when you are out of school or using your own device or home network.

1. To ensure that my studies are not disrupted because I am temporarily working away from school, I give permission for my school email to be used by my teachers for teaching and learning purposes.
2. I will treat myself and others with respect at all times; when I am online or using a device, I will treat everyone as if I were talking to them face to face in a classroom.
3. I will ensure my parent/carer is aware of when the online lessons are taking place.
4. The messages I send, or information I upload, will always be polite and sensible. I understand that all messages I send reflect on me and the relevant school.
5. I will choose a sensible place to work from – ideally a living room - and I will dress appropriately for my lessons as I would do at school.
6. I will make sure that I have all the tools and resources I need in advance, so that I do not have to leave my desk and interrupt the flow of the lesson.
7. I will be at my online lesson on time.
8. I will complete exercises as directed by my teacher and upload completed work to meet the deadlines set by my teacher.
9. I understand that my online lessons may be monitored by senior leaders from the school.
10. I understand that Microsoft Teams is a closed school system open to me through the school's network and is limited to me, the staff and my fellow students. I should not invite any guests from outside the school to join the system through the use of my login details.
11. I will not under any circumstances provide my login details to anyone else. The system is fully secured and my activity on the system can be monitored.
12. I will be careful when opening and sharing files and attachments, checking for viruses etc. If I am unsure I will never open a file, hyperlink or any other attachment.
13. I will not share my or others' personal information that can be used to identify me, other students or my teachers on any online space, unless a trusted adult has given permission or reviewed the site.
14. I will never take secret photos, recordings or videos of teachers or other students.
15. I will join the lessons at the times I have been given and if I am unable to join the session for any reason e.g. through ill health, I will let my teacher know in advance.
16. I understand that a transcript of each lesson can be accessed to keep myself and others self.
17. I understand that if I have any concerns I can contact the school and ask my parents/carers for help with this.
18. I agree that if I don't sign and return this form I will not be able to access online learning via Microsoft Teams.

Signed (student):

Signed (Parent/Carer):

Date:

Date:

### **Supporting children not in school**

The schools are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that students are part of the relevant checklist with at least weekly contact recorded on the tracker.

Details of this plan must be recorded, as should a record of contact made.

The tracker will include; phone contact details or if required door-step visits and the member of staff responsible. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

The schools and its DSL (or deputy) will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of the tracker. Any concerns will be recorded on CPOMS or/and reported to the DSL directly.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The schools will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages. The schools recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work when they are working at home.

The schools will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS, when appropriate.

### **Supporting children in school**

The schools are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteachers will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to student ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The schools 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.

The schools will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS when appropriate.

Where the schools have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the SLT.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

The schools recognise that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in Part 5 of KCSiE and those outlined in the 'Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection)'.

The schools will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner(s) required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions must be recorded, and appropriate referrals made.

## Key Contacts

### Haybridge High School and Sixth Form

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<b>Prevent Lead:</b>	Chris Gibson	As above
<b>CSE Lead:</b>	Chris Gibson	As above
<b>Online safety coordinator:</b>	Chris Gibson	As above
<b>Designated Teacher for Children in care/previously in care (LAC/PLAC):</b>	Julie Morgan	As above

### The De Montfort School

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