COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

June 2020 – Review 1

WEBSITE VERSION

Approved by:	Senior Leadership Teams	Date:
	Werneth	2/4/20
	Hathershaw	2/4/20
	OSFC	2/4/20
	Trust Board (via Chair and Safeguarding Lead)	2/4/20
Last reviewed on:	15/6/2020	
Next review due by:	1/4/21 (or as required by national guidance)	

Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

From the 15th June 2020 PLT Academies will be opening to a wider number of children as part of the Government's response to get children back to school.

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. Many young people are still at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, each PLT academy's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure**.

This addendum of each PLT academy's Safeguarding & Child Protection policy is in response to the Government guidance here: [Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#) and contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

<u>**Contents**</u>

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	**Werneth** Katie Malley **Hathershaw** Ashley Travis **OSFC** Alexa George	During school opening hours, please use the main contact number for the required academy:
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	**Werneth** Jackie Hodgkiss Katy Gregory **Hathershaw** Martina Hutton **OSFC** Jenny King	**Telephone Number:** Werneth: 0161 770 5333 Hathershaw: 0161 770 8555
Principal	**Werneth** Simon Whittaker **Hathershaw** Mark Giles **OSFC** Peter Roberts	OSFC: 0161 287 8000 **Email:**
Executive Principal	Jayne Clarke	Werneth: support@wernethprimary.org.uk
Chair of Governors	**Werneth** Suzannah Reeves **Hathershaw** Ateeque Ur-Rehman **OSFC** Irene Howard	Hathershaw: support@hathershaw.org.uk OSFC: support@osfc.ac.uk
Chair of Trust Board	Andrew Kilburn	
Trust Board safeguarding lead	Dave McEntee	

Local Authority Designated Officer	Colette Morris	07583 101863	Colette.morris@oldham.gov.uk

Emergency/ Out of Hours Contacts	Contact Details
Police	101 Non-Emergency 999 Emergency
Oldham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	0161 770 7777 child.mash@oldham.gov.uk MASH, Level 9, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UT
The Emergency Duty Team Adults and Children- Out of Hours Social Work Service for People in Crisis: 5.00pm - 9.00am, Monday to Friday- 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays.	0161 770 6936
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk

Worried about a child?	0808 800 5000

Vulnerable Children

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, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college 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. However, in line with the Government's response to get more children back into school and college, PLT academies will encourage parents, where appropriate to do so, to send their children back to school.

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

All PLT academies 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: Werneth: Simon Whittaker (Acting Principal), Hathershaw: Ashley Travis (Vice Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead), Alexa George (Student Welfare Leader/Designated Safeguarding Lead).

In circumstances where a parent does not want to send their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, individual academies will conduct a risk assessment to determine whether the decision is in the child's best interests and ensure that they can be cared for at home.
Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the relevant academy or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Attendance Monitoring

From the 15th June 2020, PLT academies should follow the below guidance:

- Each academy will resume taking an attendance register.
- Each academy will use the codes suggested by the DFE – see below for further guidance.
- Each academy will submit daily attendance figures using the educational setting status form every day.

Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session, i.e., year 10 and year 12 pupils who are not among the quarter of pupils expected in school at a given time.

They should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). In line with Government guidance, temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- Where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating, or the pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus.
- Where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness).
- Where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate

At this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

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

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the relevant academy will notify their social worker, if applicable.

If for any reason whilst making 'safe and well' calls to pupils, staff are unable to get hold of a family on two consecutive attempts, the DSL (or deputy) must be informed and a call to Oldham MASH will be carried out for advice on the best way to proceed to ensure child safety.

For further information please see the full guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings/process-for-recording-attendance-and-using-the-educational-setting-status-form

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Each academy within the Trust has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Katie Malley (Werneth), Ashley Travis (Hathershaw) and Alexa George (OSFC).

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Jackie Hodgkiss & Katy Gregory (Werneth), Martina Hutton (Hathershaw) and Jenny King (OSFC).

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 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 My Concern (Werneth), CPOMS (Hathershaw) or Cedar (OSFC) and 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 at the school or college.

It is important that all Trust staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL & DDSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a Concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy; this includes making a report via My Concern (Werneth), CPOMS (Hathershaw) or Cedar (OSFC), which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their safeguarding reporting package from home, they should email the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead and Principal. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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

COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by staff absence as a direct result of their staff being ill with COVID-19 or needing to self-isolate, and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority.

Oldham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Children's Social Care-MASH) contact details are:

Oldham MASH Team
Level 9 Civic Centre,
West Street,
Oldham,
OL1 1UT
0161 770 7777
https://adt.oldham.gov.uk/mashreferrals/WR00MASH.aspx

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure, available here:
https://www.oldham.gov.uk/lscb/download/downloads/id/18/thresholds_for_assessment

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the relevant Principal. If the Principal is not physically available, for example due to working from home, the report should be done verbally by telephone and followed up with an email to the Principal.

Concerns around any Principal should be directed to the Executive Principal: Jayne Clarke.

The Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Staff Will Be Aware of Increased Risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below).

Colleagues will be mindful that there may be an increase of new concerns and disclosures from children as they return to the academy buildings. For some children, this may be the first time they have had access to a trusted adult since lockdown.

Staff will inform the relevant DSL about any concerns they have regarding any child or the child's parents/ families immediately.

Safeguarding Training and Induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. Each academy DSL should consider whether accessing online training would be beneficial

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, DSLs should continue to make best endeavours to source appropriate online training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date

All existing school/college staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The relevant 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 are employed or deployed by the Trust, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction, which can be facilitated remotely where necessary

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to any of the Trust's academies, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability 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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training from the relevant link named here from the 'home' academy where the 'moving' member of staff is usually based. For example if a member of Werneth staff was asked to move to Hathershaw, then the link person would be Katie Malley, Katie will be able to confirm that staff from Werneth have accessed appropriate safeguarding training.

Relevant Links:
Katie Malley (k.malley@wernethprimary.org.uk) for Werneth staff
Danielle Hunt (dhu@hathershaw.org.uk) for Hathershaw staff
Linda Burrows (lbs@osfc.ac.uk) or any member of the HR team for OSFC staff.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Safer Recruitment/Volunteers and Movement of Staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged- see the 'key contact details' above.

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 Trust 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 (2019) (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.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to any of the Trust's academies, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability 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

Where the Trust is 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.

The Trust 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 at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

The Trust will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 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

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that each academy 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, each academy will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online Safety in Schools and Colleges

The Trust will continue to provide a safe environment. This includes the use of an online filtering system within school/college.

It is not possible for filtering software to operate remotely on devices used outside of the buildings, so it is the responsibility of academies to communicate with young people and parents, for example through email or social media, on how to protect themselves against online risk.

Where students are using computers in any of the academies, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Staff will be mindful that lots of children will have been accessing online platforms and the internet more than usual and therefore may have been at increased risk of online bullying, coercion and possible grooming in relation to CSE, CCE and Radicalisation/ Extremism. As more children return to the academy buildings, it is a good time to recap online safety information and remind children how to report concerns. Staff will also need to communicate this message with those children who are still accessing work from home.

Children and Online Safety Away From Schools and Colleges

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 & Child Protection Policy 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 code of conduct and Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2019.

The Trust 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 when delivering 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.

Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:

- o [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- o [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- o [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- o [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- o [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- o [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

Supporting Children Not In School/College

The Trust is 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/college, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. A record of contact that has been made should be kept on the child's My Concern (Werneth), CPOMS (Hathershaw) or Cedar (OSFC).

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, doorstep visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Each academy and their DSL Team will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication.

The DSL Team will review the process for making contact with families and the outcomes of any resulting conversations regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the relevant DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The Trust schools/colleges will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

The Trust recognises that school/college is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers across the Trust need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

- Werneth class teachers/ support staff will contact their pupils at least once a week via telephone, and conversations will be logged centrally.

- At Hathershaw, contact will be made at least weekly by either the Year Manager/Support staff, the SENCO or HRC Manager, with the outcome of communication recorded centrally. In addition, all students will receive regular contact via email with wellbeing and safeguarding information, advice and guidance.

- At Oldham Sixth Form College, regular contact will be maintained with all students via Google Classroom. Contact with students is reviewed and priorities for contact discussed at all team meetings.

Supporting Children in School/College

The Pinnacle Learning Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children, across all academies.

Each academy will continue to provide a safe space, for children to attend and flourish. Each academy Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The Trust 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 COVID19.

The Trust will ensure that where we have 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.

Where any Principal has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Leads or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the Executive Principal.

Peer on Peer Abuse

The Trust recognises that for those children accessing work from home a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims**.**

Where an academy receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and those outlined within the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

The academy will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on My Concern (Werneth), CPOMS (Hathershaw) or Cedar (OSFC) and appropriate referrals made.

Support from the Trust Executive Team

The Trust Executive Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable each academy's DSL and SLT to carry out their roles effectively.

This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

The Trust will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.