

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Eastgate Academy



Eastgate Academy:

Policy owner: - Linda Hothersall

Date: 1 September 2021

Date shared with staff: 2 September 2021

1. 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.

This addendum to Eastgate Academy Child Protection Procedures sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

It contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kerensa Healy	01553 773088	Linda.hothersall@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Ben Paull	01553 773088	ben.paull@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk
	Carole Walker	01553 773088	carole.walker@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk
Principal	Linda Hothersall	01553 773088	linda.hothersall@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk
Trust Lead on Safeguarding	Mark Cresswell	01553 779685	mark.cresswell@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk
Trust Director of Education	Mark Cresswell	01553 779685	mark.cresswell@ega.eastern-mat.co.uk
Chair of Academy Council	Louise Gayton	01553 773088	louise.gayton@eastern-mat.co.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Louise Gayton	01553773088	Louise.gayton@eastern-mat.co.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Julie Perry		julie.perry@eastern-mat.co.uk

Mobile numbers for the DSL and deputies can be found on the staff mobile list which was emailed to Eastgate staff.

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. It also includes Young Carers.

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 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 (and any 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.

Eastgate Academy 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: **Linda Hothersall**.

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 increased risk. 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 our safeguarding team will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Eastgate Academy or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Eastgate Academy will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend 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.

If Eastgate Academy has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE and notify the Local Authority.

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

How will this look in your school?

To support the above, Eastgate Academy 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, Eastgate Academy will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Eastgate Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least one Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Linda Hothersall

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Ben Paull, Andrew Stratton and Carole Walker.

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 video call - 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, paper records, MyConcern, 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.

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

The DSL 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 Trust's safeguarding policy and the school's child protection procedures, this includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their MyConcern from home, they should contact the DSL (or one of the deputy DSLs). If they are unable to contact the DSL (or one of the deputy DSLs), they should contact the Principal. If they are unable to contact the Principal, they should contact the Trust Lead on Safeguarding.

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

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Principal. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal.

Concerns about the Principal should be directed to the relevant Trust Director of Education: Paul Shanks.

Email: mark.cresswell@eastern-mat.co.uk

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

Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

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 cannot attend refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). 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 Eastgate Academy, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, 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 on going disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the sending school/HR team that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving school's child protection procedures (including this addendum), confirmation of local processes and confirmation of 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, Eastgate Academy 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.

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- 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 on going disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Where Eastgate Academy 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.

Eastgate Academy 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.

Eastgate Academy 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: referring a case' [guidance](#).

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 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, Eastgate 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

Eastgate Academy 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 Child Protection Procedures 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 Trust's code of conduct and acceptable use of ICT policy.

Eastgate 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 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 the Trust's Head of IT to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Eastgate Academy will ensure children who are being asked to work online know how they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to the school, age appropriate practical support is available from:

- [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 carers 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

Supporting children not in school

Eastgate Academy 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, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of the plan should be recorded, as should a record of contacts made.

The communication plans may include remote contact, phone contact and door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

If staff have to use their own phone, they should withhold their number (e.g. dialling 141 before the number they are calling). The outgoing numbers must be deleted from the phone's call log, once they are no longer needed.

Eastgate Academy and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

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

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Eastgate Academy recognises that school 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 at Eastgate Academy will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Eastgate Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils/students.

Eastgate Academy will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Eastgate 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.

Eastgate Academy 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 MyConcern).

Where Eastgate Academy has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Trust.

Peer on Peer abuse

Eastgate Academy recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any reports of peer on peer abuse and supporting victims.

Where Eastgate Academy receives a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and those outlined within the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures.

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

Concerns and actions must be recorded (on MyConcern) or with the DSL and appropriate referrals made.

Support from the Eastern Multi Academy Trust

The Trust Lead on Safeguarding will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

The Trust will also provide regular information to the DSL's as the Covid 19 epidemic progresses. This may take the form of an online meeting or distribution of information. It will also include a weekly monitoring document produced by the DSL's.



If you have any concerns about a child at Eastgate Academy, please report these to the Designated Safeguarding Team



Mrs Healy (DS) Mrs Walker (DS) Mr Paul (DS) Mrs Hetherall (DS) Mr Green (MPS)

If you are unable to locate Mrs Healy, concerns should be taken to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers

Young people can be abused in a number of ways and it is the responsibility of all members of Eastgate Academy community, namely staff, students, parents and visitors to report any concerns that they may have concerning the welfare of our students.

Physical Abuse	Physical abuse is the deliberate hurting of a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.
Emotional Abuse	Children who are emotionally abused suffer emotional maltreatment or neglect. It is sometimes called psychological abuse and can cause children serious harm.
Neglect	Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs. It is dangerous and children can suffer.
Domestic Abuse	Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and children can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.
Sexual Abuse	A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This does not have to be physical contact and can happen online.
Female Genital Mutilation	Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.
Extremism and Radicalisation	Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

What if a child wants to tell me something? If a child begins to tell you about something that is happening to them, you should:

- Tell them you will have to pass on what they tell you to help keep them safe.
- Listen carefully and do not ask questions.
- Record what you have been told immediately and give to one of the people above.

Remember: Never promise to keep a secret. Maintain confidentiality