



## COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

School Name: Smallthorne Primary Academy

Policy owner: Nathan Legg

Date: 04.01.2021

## 1. Context

This guidance has been updated to reflect the announcement on 30 December to extend the phased return to face-to-face education for secondary-age students and the immediate re-opening of primary-age student on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January. The major changes are that:

- **Primary schools** are open for **all students** in all year groups week commencing the **4<sup>th</sup> of January 2021**
- in the week **commencing 4 January**, secondary schools should only provide on-site education to **vulnerable children** (see DfE definition below) and children of critical workers, and prioritise remote education to those in exam years
- in the week **commencing 11 January**, secondary schools should provide on-site education to vulnerable children, children of critical workers and those in **exam years**, and **provide remote education to all other students**.
- **Unless otherwise directed by the UK Government**, from **18 January**, all **secondary-aged / post-16 students** should return to on-site education.

## 2. Key Contacts

<u>Role</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Contact Number</u>	<u>Email</u>
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jenna McCaffery	01782 235265	<a href="mailto:jmccaffery@citylearningtrust.org">jmccaffery@citylearningtrust.org</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Abby Goodwin / Nathan Legg	01782 234466	<a href="mailto:agoodwin@clt.smallthorne.coop">agoodwin@clt.smallthorne.coop</a>
Trust Director of Inclusion and SEND	Nathan Legg	01782 853535	<a href="mailto:nlegg@citylearningtrust.org">nlegg@citylearningtrust.org</a>

## 3. Vulnerable children

The DfE defines vulnerable children as students:

- 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 children
- 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
- 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
- other children and young people at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

The Academy will provide face-to-face education for students who are defined as vulnerable. Students for whom on-site provision is being provided will be recorded in line with the **normal school attendance requirements**.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at the Academy or the place discontinues, the Academy will notify any agencies (including a social worker, if the family have one). A member of the Academy staff at least once per week will make safe and well telephone calls for all vulnerable students.

#### **4. Attendance monitoring**

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

It is vital for all children to attend school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks students falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance has therefore been mandatory from the beginning of the spring term for primary students and from the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2021 for Secondary students. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's attendance regularly at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age)
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

#### **5. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Jenna McCaffery

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Abby Goodwin / Nathan Legg.

The Trust leads for Safeguarding are: Nathan Legg and Marie Faichney.

A member of the Academy or Trust Safeguarding team 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 child protection online management system, CPOMS 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 Academy staff and volunteers have access to a DSL, Deputy DSL or senior Academy or Trust leader responsible for safeguarding. On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them. The DSL 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 Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the DSL, DDSL and the Principal / Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received. 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 Headteacher / Principal. In the case where the concern is related to the Headteacher / Principal, this should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

The City Learning Trust (CLT) will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

### **6. 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 miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). 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 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 ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

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

## **7. 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 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 (2020) (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 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.

The 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.

The 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 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 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, the Academy will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

The Trust are currently reviewing its procedures regarding safer recruitment and the ramifications of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union. The Trust will update its full policies accordingly.

## **8. Online safety for pupils in school**

Online safety in schools and colleges school name 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.

## **9. Children and online safety away from school and college**

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 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 CLT policy.

The Academy will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements **and in line with the Curriculum, Blended Learning and Online Communications Policy suite.**

Below are some things to consider when delivering 'virtual lessons', especially where webcams are involved. Any 'virtual lessons' will need to be approved by the Academy Headteacher / Principal before going ahead and must follow the following:

- 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 approved by the CLT to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

## **10. Supporting children not in school**

The 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 this plan must be recorded on a central spreadsheet and, where appropriate, CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made. The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Where door-step visits are deemed the most appropriate method, staff members will not do this alone, will inform the Headteacher / Principal of the intended addresses of the visits. Staff members should always adhere to the 'social distancing' guidance issued by the UK Government.

The Academy and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate. The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

The 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 the Academy need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

The 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 CPOMS.

### **Supporting children in school**

The Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

The Academy will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

The Headteacher / Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The 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 COVID19.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

The Academy recognises 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 of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy. The Academy will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

**This addendum will be reviewed in line with UK government changes.**