



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

School Name: Orchard Mead Academy
Policy owner: Katie Lowe
Date: 230th March 2020
Date shared with staff: 30th March 2020
Updated: 26th May 2020

1. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked by the government 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 15th June 2020, schools were asked to widen this provision to include students in Year 10.

This addendum of the Orchard Mead Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Charlie Rose	01162413371 07840 588148	crose@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Patricia Loveday	0116 2413371 07858 133234	ploveday@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Molly Lowe-Spicer	0116 2413371 07596 478107	MLoweSpicer@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Vicki Hill	0116 2413371 07763 657208	vhill@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Ryan Jarvis	0116 2413371 07933 937047	rjarvis@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Adilson Evora	0116 2413371 07840 588213	AHEvora@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Billy Blythin	0116 2413371 07933 937051	bblythin@orchard-tmet.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Sensi Walters	0116 2413371 07933 937046	swalters@orchard-tmet.uk
Principal	Rita Hindocha	01162413371	rhindocha@orchard-tmet.uk
Trust Safeguarding Manager	Mark Oldman	01162143148	info@tmet.uk
Chair of Academy Council	Elaine Taylor	01162143148	info@tmet.uk
Safeguarding Governor / Trustee	Gemma Bhagalia	01162143148	info@tmet.uk

Additional individual school contacts:

Michelle Wren, Operations Manager. Tele: 01162413371

Dan Bonsall, Site Manager. Tele: 0116 2413371

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 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 will not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (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.

Orchard Mead 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: Katie Lowe**

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 Orchard Mead will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Orchard Mead or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Orchard Mead will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

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 Orchard Mead 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, Orchard Mead will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

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

What does this look like at Orchard Mead?

To support the above, Orchard Mead 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. Orchard Mead will do all we reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Orchard Mead will notify their social worker.

For students in Year 10, Orchard Mead will be alert to new safeguarding concerns which may arise as a result of returning to school. Orchard Mead will do all that it reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Orchard Mead school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Katie Lowe**

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

- Charlie Rose
- Patricia Loveday
- Molly Lowe-Spicer
- Vicki Hill
- Ryan Jarvis
- Adilson Evora
- Billy Blythin
- Sensi Walters
- Bali Rai

A trained DSL (or deputy) is available on site during school hours each day.

It is important that all Orchard Mead 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 will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

In **exceptional circumstances** where the DSL or deputy could not be on site, 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 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.

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 **our safeguarding alert form**, located on the desktop and emailed to safeguarding@orchard-tmet.uk which **can be done remotely**.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their desktop or email from home, **they should telephone the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal and the Trust Safeguarding Manager. 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, Rita Hindocha**. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally by telephone and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the CEO: Carolyn Robson

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

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place 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 (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 Orchard Mead, 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 the TMET HR Manager, Isobel Farley 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.

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, Orchard Mead 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
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Where Orchard Mead 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.

Orchard Mead 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.

Orchard Mead 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 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, Orchard Mead 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

Orchard Mead 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.

Where staff become aware of a concern regarding the conduct of students online, including bullying, they should report this without delay.

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 MAT code of conduct**.

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

Currently, Orchard Mead staff do not deliver virtual lessons. However, should permission be granted for this in the future, we will follow the below guidance:

- 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.

Supporting children not in school

Orchard Mead 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, including on 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.

Orchard Mead 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.

From June 2020, a Home Learning team will ensure weekly telephone contact with all students who are not already receiving contact as a result of them being part of an identified vulnerable group.

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

Orchard Mead 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 Orchard Mead need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Orchard Mead is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Orchard Mead 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.

Orchard Mead 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.

Orchard Mead 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.

Where Orchard Mead has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the trust.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Orchard Mead 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 school 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 CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

Mental health and wellbeing

Staff should be aware that current event can have a negative impact on the mental health of children and their parents.

Staff are asked to identify and support young people in school, referring to a DSL as appropriate. Staff are provided with training, including bereavement training and trauma informed practice, alongside a reading library.

Teachers are to be aware of the impact of the current circumstances on mental health of those children who are at home when setting expectations of children's work support may be offered by telephone or via support from specialist services

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

TMET Central Safeguarding Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

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

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