



**COVID-19 KET school closure arrangements  
for Safeguarding and Child Protection**

**Oakgrove School**

**Kents Hill Park School**

**Middleton Primary**

**Monkston Primary**



## 1. Context

From 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 during the period of national lockdown, schools should allow only vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers to attend. All other pupils and students should not attend and should learn remotely until February half term.

Early Years provision should continue to remain open and should continue to allow all children to attend full time or their usual timetable hours. This includes nursery classes in schools and other pre-reception provision on school sites. Only vulnerable children and children of critical workers should attend on-site reception classes. This is the default position for all areas irrespective of national lockdown restrictions.

This addendum of the KET Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of the Trust's safeguarding arrangements.

It should be noted that Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 is the statutory safeguarding guidance that schools should continue to have regard to as required by legislation.

Each Trust school has conducted an extensive review of its procedures for the school day to ensure the safety of all pupils, staff, parents and carers and visitors on site. The plans vary between the Trust schools based on the school's foot print and the number of pupils on role. The necessary Trust-wide, individual school and subject based risk assessments have been completed and embedded into the whole school plans.

Each Trust school's plans have been approved by the Local Governing Board and the Board of Trustees. These plans have been published to all parents and carers.

Plans and procedures are subject to regular review and change to reflect the most recent government guidance.

## 2. Key Contacts

Remain as per the School Safeguarding Policy.

## 3. 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 (CIN), a child protection plan (CP) or who are a looked-after child (CLA);
- 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

(Addendum to KET Safeguarding and Child Protection policy)

- 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) 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.

Each Trust school 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. 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 the Trust School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Each Trust School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

#### **4. Critical workers**

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and other key sectors.

#### **5. Minimising risks to COVID-19.**

The Trust schools all comply with the health and safety law, which requires them to assess risks and put in place proportionate control measures. Essential measures include:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene (hand washing and sanitising and 'catch it, bin it, kill it')
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise the potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable
- grouping children together
- avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

- the use of face coverings in school

## 6. Attendance Monitoring

Pupils who are not expected to be in school should be recorded as 'code X'.

Children for whom on-site provision is being provided should be recorded in line with the normal school attendance requirements.

Shielding advice is currently in place in tier 4 areas, and so all children still deemed clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school.

The Trust Schools and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – the Trust School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The Trust School 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. Phone calls will be made to the parents/carers in these circumstances.

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

## 7. Face Coverings

The government is recommending universal use of face coverings in all schools. The Trust schools that teach children in years 7 and above and which are not under specific local restriction measures will have the discretion to require face coverings for pupils, staff and visitors in areas outside the classroom where social distancing cannot easily be maintained, such as corridors and communal areas and it has been deemed appropriate in those circumstances. Primary school children will not need to wear a face covering. The Trust schools will adhere to any government policy recommendations and changes.

## 8. Safeguarding training and induction

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 a Trust School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. 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.

## **9. 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 Trust School 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).

Each Trust School 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. Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the pandemic, 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, each Trust School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **10. Pupil wellbeing and support**

Pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and current lockdown, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker and young carers. It is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation. Some may need support to re-adjust to school, others may have enjoyed being at home and be reluctant to return, a few may be showing signs of more severe anxiety or depression. Others will not be experiencing any challenges and will be keen and ready to return to school.

If a member of staff is concerned about a child's welfare then they will report this to the DSL using MyConcern and follow the usual KET Safeguarding and Child Protection policy procedures. Any referrals to outside agency support will continue in the usual way. Meetings in school with outside agency staff may differ across the Trust Schools based on the nature and urgency of the meeting, Trust staff involved, the agency's current protocols and the number of people who may be involved. Such meetings will be conducted either face-to-face (adhering to all government guidelines) or remotely.

## **11. Online safety in schools and colleges**

Each Trust school 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.

## **12. 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 KET safeguarding and 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 KET Code of Conduct policy.

Each Trust School 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 IF there are 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 with appropriate neutral backgrounds.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, to allow transition between lessons.
- Language must be professional and appropriate.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by the school's IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils

Kingsbridge Educational Trust

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