



COVID-19 academy closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Author:	The Director for Safeguarding
Approval needed by:	The Trust Board
Consultation required:	N/A
Adopted (date):	23 rd April 2020
Reviewed:	January 2021
Date of next review:	As and when required

1. Context

This is a de Ferrers Trust Policy addendum which supports the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. There are references to both Derbyshire and Staffordshire services within this document to make it relevant to all schools within the Trust.

From 20th March 2020 and again from the 5th January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools/academies 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.

The school acknowledges the importance of remaining a safe place for children; however, the fewer the children making the journey to school, and the fewer the children in education settings, will protect the NHS and save lives by reducing the risk of spreading the virus.

This addendum applies during the periods of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners, Staffordshire and Derbyshire. It sets out the changes to our normal Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance for COVID-19 but does not replace our normal Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, instead sits alongside it.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings

And specifically

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers

This addendum contains details of our collective safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1.Context	1
2.Contacts	3
3. Vulnerable children	4
4. Attendance monitoring	5
5. Designated Safeguarding Lead	6
6. Reporting a concern	7
7. Safeguarding Training and induction	10

8. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff.....	10
9. Online safety in schools and colleges.....	11
10. Children and online safety away from school and college.....	12
11. Supporting children not in school.....	12
12. Supporting children in school.....	14
13. Peer on Peer Abuse, domestic abuse.....	14
14. Working with parents/carers.....	16
15. Support from the Multi-Academy Trust.....	17

2. Key contacts

School	Principal/ DSL	Contact number	Email
de Ferrers	Kathy Hardy/	01283 247703	khardy@deferrers.com
	Kate Priestnall	07395 281892	kpriestnall@deferrerstrust.com
Granville	Michelle Oliphant/ Gemma Lowe	01283 216765	moliphant.granville@deferrerstrust.com
			glowe.granville@deferrerstrust.com
Pingle	Vivien Sharples/ Simon Waller	01283 216837	vsharples.pingle@deferrerstrust.com
			swaller.pingle@deferrerstrust.com
Lansdowne & Eton Park	Helen Phillips	01283 247920/247910	hphillips@deferrers.com
Horninglow	Becci Breedon	01283 247618	breedon@deferrers.com
Richard Wakefield	Simon Webster	01283 247535	swebster.richardwakefield@deferrerstrust.com

TRUST			
Chief Executive	Ian McNeilly		imcneilly@deferrerstrust.com
Chair of Trustees	Claire Shaw		cshaw@deferrerstrust.com
Director of Safeguarding	Kate Priestnall		kpriestnall@deferrerstrust.com
Safeguarding Trustee	F. Stagg		fstagg@deferrerstrust.com

3. Vulnerable children

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of vulnerable children can be found here www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people

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, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- 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

- 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 is not to be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, and the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) (and deputy's) 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.

All the schools in the de Ferrers Trust 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 designated teacher for looked after children is identified on each school's annex.

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 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 school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

The schools will encourage all our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely.

4. 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.

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

To support the above, The schools 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.

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

The schools will use the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending and the DSL/Senior Leader will return the vulnerable survey weekly as requested.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Each school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL. The names of these staff are on the safeguarding annex for each school.

The Director of Safeguarding for the Trust is Kate Priestnall
kpriestnall@deferrerstrust.com

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 the 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.

The de Ferrers Trust staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

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

6. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Trust Safeguarding Policy and Annex, 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal and the Trust Safeguarding Director. 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 Principal.

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to any of the following, the Director of Safeguarding/Chair of Governors/Chair of Trustees.

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

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Meetings

As from the 18th March 2020 all meetings (for example: Looked After Reviews, Child Protection Conferences, Children in Need Reviews) will take place virtually and no face to face conference/meetings will currently take place. This practice has continued and also applies to the second period of lockdown which began on the 5th January 2021.

All attendees of meetings will be notified of how they will contribute the meeting and the schools will take steps to ensure that they are able to comply with these arrangements.

As there will be delays in circulating the records of such meetings, the school representative will take notes of recommended actions.

For these statutory meetings to go ahead it is equally important that all professionals and especially the allocated Social Workers provide updated reports, care plans and review of arrangements, to these meetings. The schools will ensure this is a priority. All reports will be emailed using the current arrangements for these meetings taking place.

For Initial Child Protection Case Conferences and Review Conferences, partners will be expected to be available so that the Child Protection Managers (CPMs) can call them to discuss the children and issues of risk, enabling partners to contribute to the plan that the CPM will build based on information shared from all parties.

Derbyshire Community Response Unit

As people become ill with COVID-19 and need to self-isolate their personal circumstances may mean they need some additional help.

The Community Response Unit (CRU) is for people who have no one else to support them. The CRU will be helping people to access food banks or shopping depending on their financial resources; they will help people access support for prescriptions; they will be signposting people to financial advice; and will be offering support for those in social isolation such as telephone befriending. This will be delivered by the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS).

As CRU requests for help are triaged, if any children are identified as being vulnerable the CRU hub will liaise directly with Children's 'Starting Point' to support the triage of the children's needs.

The CRU is not a service as such it is an enabler to help people who have no other support to be able to access local support through the CVS network. The CRU has linked up with District/Borough Councils, locality CVS's and key voluntary sector organisations who are coordinating voluntary support within communities.

Anyone who requires support can use the online form:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/health-protection/disease-control/coronavirus/community-response-unit/if-you-need-help/if-you-need-help.aspx> or telephone 01629 535091.

Derbyshire Early Help in communities is supported by the Early Help Transition Team

The Derbyshire Early Help Transition Team will continue to support partner agencies with information, advice and guidance in Early Help. We will stay in contact with our local teams who can assist us and early help, this includes:

- Collating a list of local voluntary services in each community; e.g. Foodbanks, CAB sessions and family support voluntary organisations.
- Contact details for a wide range of validated national organisations has been compiled for partners; including the full range of parenting support and mental health support services.
- Early Help Advisors continue to provide support for partners online and have produced bitesize support sessions that partners can use online with children and families.
- Early Help Advisors maintain links with School Early Help leads.

- Children Centres: provide online support for 0-5 year olds and have posted on their Facebook pages updated information advice and guidance for parents including signposting to key support agencies.

Locality Early Help Teams (0-19yrs) Providing Targeted Support Including Childrens Centres

All the schools will continue to make the appropriate referrals for targeted Early Help support for our children and families. The Locality Early Help teams are receiving referrals from Starting Point/First Response and these will be allocated at virtual VCM meetings. They will have close liaison with the Mental Health preventative services, and these teams are now completing Team Around the Family in a virtual meeting with families and professionals.

All the schools are aware that there is continued targeted Early Help across the County(s). Community based groups in centres and youth groups are now closed in accordance with COVID-19 guidance. Contact with Children, Young People and Families has therefore, moved to using technology to provide online contact.

These practitioners have developed creative solutions to maintain engagement and also provide interactive resources for children and families to use. Regular appointments are made to continue the family support work and the video conferencing and FaceTime facilities enable a tour around the home to support with maintaining family routines.

Practitioners are converting many evidence based tools into online interactive resources and finding new ways to deliver programmes such as:

- ECAT: Every Child A Talker, speech and language development.
- School Readiness programmes
- Solihull Parenting Approach.
- Stronger Families Safer Children: Systemic approach.

A range of Mental Health resources have been made available to the Early Help teams to provide guidance to parents and carers on managing the anxiety and family dynamics of social distancing and self-isolation. These resources will become good guides for practitioners and parents if families begin to experience inter-parental conflict or conflict with children.

Childrens Services has clear guidance on home visit arrangements and if a family does require home visits, then practitioners will undertake these where appropriate based on COVID-19 guidance at the time.

Young Carers

We are aware that vulnerable children as defined, include children who are young carers. Derbyshire Carers Association, commissioned via DCC, will be continuing to provide support for young carers and their families during the coronavirus pandemic. They will offer advice to any new referrals. 01773 833833 or email: youngcarers@derbyshirecarers.co.uk

In Staffordshire Young carers are supported by

<https://www.thecarershub.co.uk/>

7. 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 will 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 any of our schools, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

For staff movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the DSL at the sending school 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.

8. 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, all the schools within 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 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.

When validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, the academy will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at the academy.

Where volunteers are being utilised, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 – 188 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

All the schools in the de Ferrers 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 179 – 180 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE).

All the schools in the de Ferrers Trust will continue to consider and make referrals to the Trust HR who will make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 142-143, 182 & 261 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, our academy will be aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the academy and that appropriate checks will have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, all the schools in The de Ferrers Trust will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164 – 171 in KCSIE 2020.

9. Online safety in schools and colleges

All the schools in the de Ferrers Trust 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.

The schools will follow the DfE guidance on remote education.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

10. 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 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals will 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.

All the schools in the de Ferrers Trust will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/UK GDPR requirements.

11. Supporting children not in school

All the schools in the de Ferrers Trust are 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 will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have been made and the staff member making the contact.

If a child has a Social Worker they will be informed of this plan and will be informed whether or not the child is attending school and any reasons given for non-attendance.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits (where permitted). Other individualised contact methods will be considered and recorded.

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

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

If the member of staff is unable to make contact and has exhausted all means available to them then they will contact the child's Social worker, if they have one, Children's Social care and/or contact the Police.

The de Ferrers Trust 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. All Teachers at all the schools within The de Ferrers Trust will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Where possible the schools will continue to offer support for our student's mental health. This will be in the form of phone calls home from key staff to check on well-being and signposting to applicable resources, many of which are now posted on The de Ferrers Trust website under safeguarding. This page will be updated with any resources that both parents and children may find helpful as they become known to us.

<https://www.deferrerstrust.com/page/?title=Safeguarding&pid=202>

The Early Help Teams in both Staffordshire and Derbyshire are closely aligned with the Mental Health Specialist Community Advisers and will work together to provide the most appropriate support to children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resources are available by following the links below.

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing-health-protection/disease-control/coronavirus/schools/schools-parents.aspx>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org/media/1960/coronavirus-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876989/Easy_read_looking_after_your_feelings_and_body.pdf

Website and Social Media

The schools will share safeguarding messages on their websites and social media pages.

The de Ferrers Trust now has a dedicated safeguarding page for the COVID-19 response which has details of all supporting resources as we become aware of them.

<https://www.deferrerstrust.com/page/?title=Safeguarding&pid=202>

12. Supporting children whilst in the academy

All the schools within the de Ferrers Trust are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all their students.

All the schools within The de Ferrers Trust will continue to be a safe space for those children that need to attend. The Principal of each school will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

All the school's within the de Ferrers 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.

All the schools within the de Ferrers Trust 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.

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

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, the sending school will ensure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, the academy DSL or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (Senco) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them.
- The child's EHC Plan, Child in Need Plan or Personal Education Plan.
- Details of the child's Social Worker.
- Details of the Virtual School Head.
- Where the DSL or Senco is unable to share this information, the senior leaders, identified as key contacts will do this.

The sending school will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

13. Peer on Peer Abuse

All the schools within the de Ferrers Trust recognise that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where the school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE 2020 and of those outlined within the Child Protection Policy.

All the schools within the Trust 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.

Domestic Abuse

The current COVID-19 measures being taken are likely to increase the stress on family life and it is expected that domestic abuse incidents are likely to rise as a result.

In Derbyshire all schools/academies will continue to receive notifications via the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT) initiative as well as Children's Social Care. Notifications will continue to be recorded in the child's safeguarding file. The police are providing the existing responses and there is no change to practice.

If the child is expected to attend the academy the usual checks will be made on their welfare.

- What is known about the child when they arrived (or not) at the academy today?
- Who in the academy needs to be informed?
- What 'checks' need to be carried out and how best can these be achieved?
- Are they in the academy today? How are they presenting physically and emotionally? Are there any changes in their behaviour?

When a child is not at expected to attend the academy there will be consideration about how best the academy can seek assurance on their welfare and what checks can be made.

In all cases the academy will make general enquires with the child about how they are. The Domestic Abuse Notification should not be referred to unless it is directly mentioned by the child or where the parent/carer raises the issue.

If the DSL/Deputy DSL identifies any child protection concerns they will refer to Children's Social Care.

Children's Social Care will also review the incident and will liaise with the academy where there are Child Protection concerns about the safety of the child.

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 the academy, they will ensure that a robust contact plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan will be recorded on CPOMS, as with the record of contacts that have been made. This plan and any risk assessments will be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Other supporting agencies also available on the Trust website.

New Era

New Era is a holistic domestic abuse service operating across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. Offering help to all those affected by domestic abuse in Staffordshire or Stoke-on-Trent, New Era provides free and confidential support for victims, perpetrators and their families.

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/support-near-you/west-midlands/new-era>

National Centre for Domestic Violence

The National Centre for Domestic Violence provides a free, fast emergency injunction service to survivors of domestic violence regardless of their financial circumstances, race, gender or sexual orientation.

<https://www.ncdv.org.uk/>

Claire's Law – Domestic Violence disclosure scheme

A Domestic Violence Disclosure scheme allowing police forces to disclose to individuals details of their partners' abusive pasts was extended to all police forces across England and Wales from March 2014. The scheme is commonly known as Clare's Law after Clare Wood, who was killed in 2009 by an ex-partner who unknown to her had been violent to previous partners.

Anyone can make a request to the police including the person in the relationship however the information will only be shared with the person who potentially could be at risk. The request can be made via visiting a local police station or calling 101.

Women's Aid

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/downloads-and-resources/children-young-people/>

14. Working with parents and carers

The schools will ensure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online.
- Are aware of what the school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school.

- Are aware that parents/carers should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources the academy provides.
- Know additional resources that are available for support to keep their children safe online through regular communications from the school/updates to the schools and Trust websites.

The schools will work within any further local guidelines issued to Education settings around Video Conferencing and Remote Learning (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams) during the COVID-19 Outbreak.

15. Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

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.

The Director of Safeguarding will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions as required. These may take the form of an online meeting.