



Addendum COVID 19

January 2021

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Addendum: National Lockdown January 2021

With effect from 11th January 2021

Document Provenance

This COVID-19 Addendum to our E-ACT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2020 was approved by the Executive Leadership Team on 08/01/21.

It provides updated guidance in response to the Government and Department for Education (DfE) requirements in relation to COVID-19, found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/950510/School_national_restrictions_guidance.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/950219/Education_Act_1996_-_school_attendance_offence_disapplication_notice_January_2021.pdf

This Addendum document is **to be used with immediate effect** as it sets out our systems and processes pertaining to safeguarding children under the current COVID-19 national lockdown.

The Executive Leadership Team will review this Addendum and we will reissue as needed in response to further updates from the DfE.

NOTE: This addendum encompasses the trust update to the E-ACT Attendance for Learning Policy 2019 in line with DfE requirements in relation to COVID-19.

Local Circumstances

All E-ACT academies will liaise closely with the three local safeguarding partners to ensure we are fully aware of the latest updates and advice to support our pupils and parents/carers. Specifically within the Local Authority this includes: Social Care, the Virtual School, the Local Authority Designated Officer, and Education Welfare. Any changes to the reporting mechanism or thresholds for support will be communicated between academies (Headteachers/DSLs/all staff) and the Regional Safeguarding Leads with escalation considered on a case by case basis by Headteachers/DSLs as appropriate.

Safeguarding Leadership/Referrals

If the DSL or DDSLs are not able to be on site then other members of the safeguarding team (or the most senior member of staff on site) must be contacted for any safeguarding concerns and a DSL or DDSL will be contactable via phone at all times. All staff are informed of the lead member of staff on site each day. If no DSL or DDSL will be available via telephone then the Regional Safeguarding Lead will coordinate for a DSL or DDSL from another local E-ACT academy to be available via telephone. In addition to this, the Regional Safeguarding Lead can be contacted via telephone to discuss any specific safeguarding concerns.

The process for reporting any safeguarding concerns has not changed and all staff will record concerns on CPOMS and liaise directly with the DSL or DDSL if they have an urgent concern. CPOMS can be accessed remotely from any device connected to the internet. The process for safeguarding referrals to Social Care has not changed and as identified above, any changes to this mechanism or threshold will be communicated as appropriate.

Child Reporting Mechanism

If a child is worried or has a concern, they can access support on site with a member of staff or a member of the safeguarding team. If a child is not attending on site, they can access support via the 'Pupil Concern' link on the academy website. Staff will remind all children during virtual sessions and the welfare checks where they can find this link. This is also accessible for parents/carers to raise a concern.

All E-ACT academy websites also contain relevant contact numbers, signposting and links to support for children and families with mental health, online safety and safeguarding concerns.

Staffing/Staff Training

Headteachers (or relevant deputies) will coordinate the staff rota to ensure all ratios are adhered to. This will include consideration for all statutory training requirements:

- DSL Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Paediatric First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Specific medical needs (e.g. blood glucose monitoring)
- AEDs
- Fire Marshall

This is reviewed on a daily basis and back-up staff are identified for all roles to ensure that any unavoidable absence does not impact upon the required coverage to ensure all children are safe.

E-ACT staff receive all appropriate training to ensure the safety of our pupils. However, it is recognised that under the current government lockdown in place as a result of COVID-19, face to face training through external organisations has been reduced or suspended, which includes training for DSL safeguarding. In line with the DfE requirements, for the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or DDSL) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or DDSL) even if they miss their refresher training. Each academy is in regular communication with LAs to ascertain opportunities for online training to provide appropriate updates where possible. In addition, E-ACT utilises EduCare (online training package) for various aspects of safeguarding (e.g. FGM).

Vulnerable Children

The safety and wellbeing of all children on our roll is our biggest priority. All E-ACT academies identify children who may be more vulnerable to harm in order to ensure that the support offered meets their individual needs and is in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

In line with DfE guidance (link above), vulnerable children include those who:

1. 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
2. have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
3. 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

All E-ACT academies will offer on site provision to vulnerable children identified within criterion 1, 2 and 3 (see additional note below RE: criterion 3). There will be direct communication between the academy, the child, parents/carers and any relevant external agencies. If this is not deemed to be the best provision for the child at the current time then a risk assessment will be completed to ensure that the child can safely have their needs met at home or in alternative provision. Consideration will be given to potential health risks/impact upon wellbeing for any change in routine/ability to apply any existing EHCP, safety plan or existing risk assessment based on resources. This risk assessment will be completed using the 'Rationale/Justification' category on CPOMS. The risk assessment will also consider how the academy and relevant external agencies will communicate with one another and the family for both welfare checks and any formal meetings/reviews. Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly in conjunction with all relevant parties and based on changes in circumstance (i.e. if a vulnerable child has to stop attending due to COVID-19).

Each academy Headteacher/DSL will determine which children apply within criterion 3 where this is not already clear (i.e. for those with difficulty engaging with remote education and those with risks to their mental health) and offer on site provision to these children.

In line with DfE guidance (link above), children of critical workers will be offered on site provision. However, parents/carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.

Safer Recruitment

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed access to the site or to children.

All E-ACT academies will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes in line with the E-ACT Safeguarding and CP Policy 2020 and the E-ACT SCR, Personnel Files and Safer Recruitment Policy 2020.

The SCR will continue to be updated and checked for compliance as per policy. If staff are utilised from another E-ACT academy to support on site then they must show their E-ACT ID badge with green lanyard in order to access the site. The Regional People Lead has remote access to academy SCRs within the region and can verify that the member of staff has all appropriate checks in place. Any volunteers, agency staff or contractors will continue to receive all appropriate checks prior to receiving access to the site or to children.

Personal Development/Mental Health

We acknowledge that the impact of a national lockdown on mental health and wellbeing is significant. We will continue our focus on supporting children, parents/carers and staff with their mental health.

Children who are accessing on site provision will continue to receive the personal development curriculum in line with statutory expectations.

Children who are not on site will receive the personal development curriculum as part of remote learning through a combination of live sessions and content added online.

In addition to this, we will provide support by:

- Daily check-ins with pupils accessing on site provision
- Welfare checks with pupils at home to include a discussion around wellbeing and further signposting as necessary
- Support from specialist staff (e.g. pastoral leads/mental health leads/play therapists/educational psychologists/counsellors)
- Delivery of wellbeing activities (in line with the E-ACT Mental Health curriculum)
- Signposting to mental health resources available online
- Referrals to external agencies where there are greater concerns around the wellbeing of a pupil (i.e. CAMHS)

Support for staff around their wellbeing is also essential and this will be coordinated in line with the E-ACT Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. This includes through effective line management and accessing the employee assistance programme.

Attendance/Registration

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, they will not be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). We will encourage vulnerable children to attend but if the parent/carer of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent from school, the parent/carer should let the school know that the child will not be attending. We will grant such applications for leave given the exceptional circumstances. This will be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

As with vulnerable children, critical worker parents/carers should let schools know if their child will not be attending and, if not, we will grant a leave of absence (code C) given the exceptional circumstances.

All children who are not expected to be in school will be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

Attendance recording and interventions will include:

- Recording attendance (both on site and virtually) through SIMS and remote learning academy log
- All absences (both on site and virtually) will be followed up and communication with other professionals as appropriate
- Daily live virtual AM registration session for each class/tutor group
- First day absence checks for all children who are expected to attend on site
- First day absence checks for all children who are expected to attend a virtual session

- Emergency home visits for any child where appropriate contact cannot be made in a reasonable timeframe (if authorised by ELT with requests going via Regional Safeguarding Leads)
- Requests to Police for any emergency home visits due to lack of contact with a child
- Children missing education referrals
- Regularly reviewing any barriers to non-attendance for vulnerable children within criterion 1, 2 and 3 – This includes any risk assessment reviews
- Continuing the trust priority around mental health and wellbeing
- All children accessing alternative provision will be regarded as vulnerable – They will also receive a rationale/justification on CPOMS

In line with DfE guidance (link above), we will immediately offer access to remote education if a child is not attending due to circumstances related to COVID-19.

In line with DfE guidance (link above), the disapplication of section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996 means that absence will not be penalised at present.

Remote Learning/Online Safety

The academy will continue to prioritise the safety of all our pupils online. All E-ACT academies will follow the trust 'Remote Learning Safeguarding Guidance'. This sets out the expectations on all staff in relation to content added online and live sessions. This includes an acceptable use agreement for children and parents/carers to adhere to.

All E-ACT academies have a remote learning academy log where content added online and live sessions are recorded including the quality assurance that each academy SLT completes to ensure the trust safeguarding guidance is adhered to.

Absence from planned virtual sessions will be followed up in line with absences for children attending on site (and as identified above within 'Attendance/Registration'). All E-ACT academies will record attendance of children in virtual sessions. AM virtual registration must be recorded on the remote learning academy log. If a child is not accessing virtual sessions then they will, by definition, become vulnerable and be expected to attend the academy on site.

To support continued online safety:

- All children have received preventative guidance from their academy around how to stay safe online
- All children will receive signposting to the 'Pupil Concerns' reporting tool during live virtual registration sessions
- All pupils will receive a discussion around online safety during welfare checks (including signposting to additional guidance from academy websites and online (i.e. NSPCC, Childline, UK Safer Internet Centre, CEOP, SWGfL)

Parents/carers will be informed of content added online and planned virtual sessions including the lead member of staff for those sessions. This will be achieved through regular updates from the academy in a variety of formats (e.g. academy websites, social media updates, bulletins or newsletters etc).

Parents/carers will also be informed of the requirement to update the academy if their child will be absent from a planned virtual session.

Welfare Checks

There will be daily check-ins with pupils accessing on site provision.

Any child who is not attending the academy will receive welfare checks in line with our duty of care. These checks will be completed predominantly by the pastoral team, the safeguarding team, or SLT.

1. Child vulnerability assessed (RAG) based on safeguarding/pastoral risk factors
2. Red = Daily welfare check completed by the academy and recorded on welfare check template
3. Amber = Twice-weekly welfare check completed and recorded on welfare check template
4. Green = Once-weekly welfare check completed and recorded on welfare check template
5. This must be recorded on the academy welfare check template and shared with RED/Regional Safeguarding Lead

If a child is in regular attendance to virtual sessions (i.e. registration sessions/live lessons) then the frequency of welfare checks will be adapted as below:

1. Red = Weekly welfare check completed by the academy and recorded on welfare check template
2. Amber = Weekly welfare check completed and recorded on welfare check template
3. Green = Fortnightly welfare check completed and recorded on welfare check template

If there are any concerns in relation to the safety of a child following a welfare check then this will be recorded on CPOMS and the E-ACT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2020 followed.

Within the welfare check template, if there is no contact for a welfare check then the record must be shaded as 'red'. If there is only contact with the parent/carer and not the child then the record must be shaded as 'amber'.

Where contact is unsuccessful with a child and parent/carer then all reasonable enquiries will be completed to obtain contact. This includes:

- Utilising text system
- Utilising email contact and all emergency contacts
- Utilising remote learning platforms
- Liaising with sibling schools
- Liaising with any external agencies who are involved (i.e. Social Care/Education Welfare etc)
- Checking school to school (S2S) system
- Requesting that local Police services support with a welfare check if there are concerns over no contact

Following this, a request will be made to the Regional Safeguarding Lead via email for a home visit to be carried out by the academy. This will include the context for the concerns and the reasonable enquiries completed. The Regional Safeguarding Lead will then liaise with ELT for authorisation. There is no criteria for when a home visit request should be made and this will be addressed on a case by case basis. However, 5 unsuccessful contacts (i.e. 1 week for a red child) should not be exceeded.

During each daily virtual registration session, the member of staff will issue a reminder about the academy website 'Pupil Concerns' reporting tool.