
COVID-19 Lockdown Safeguarding Policy

ORCHARDSIDE SCHOOL



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Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked 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, and to those children who fall into the "vulnerable" category i.e. allocated social workers - who absolutely need to attend.

The way Orchardside is currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. **If children can stay safely at home, they must, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.**

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

It is important to underline that schools, remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Schools are therefore being asked to continue 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.

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

It is important for Orchardside that we also remain committed to supporting our other young people who may be facing social difficulties during this unprecedented time.

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. Those parents working in these sectors who can ensure their child is kept at home must ensure that their child can be safely cared for whilst at home.

Orchardside is following these key principles outlined in the most recent government advice:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they must be.
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents must also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They must observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

If a parent or carer's work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or they work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and they cannot keep their child safe at home then their children will be prioritised for education provision:

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes childcare, support and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response, or delivering essential public services, such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arm's length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

If workers think they fall within the critical categories above, they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

This addendum of the Orchardside School’s Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

COVID 19 Checklist - Interim DfE Safeguarding Guidance: Actions required

Activity	Staff Responsible
Ensure that someone is responsible for ensuring these actions are completed	NP/DR
Ensure governors are aware of the Government's interim safeguarding guidance	NP
Ensure that someone is responsible for continuity in safeguarding leadership	CF/NP
Ensure DSL is available, in-person, by phone or video link	CF/NP/DR
Nominate a senior leader to be the onsite safeguarding lead	SLT rotation
Create a Coronavirus Outbreak addendum to your child protection policy to include the specific issues for these circumstances	NP
Ensure staff know the new arrangements for DSLs and reporting concerns	NP
Understand what changes there may be for contacting the LADO	CF
Understand what changes there may be for contacting the MASH team or other 'front door' services	CF/NP
Understand what changes there may be for contacting social workers	CF/NP
Know which children have social workers and how to contact them	CF/NP/DR
Know which children are LAC/PLAC, who their Virtual School Head is and how to contact them	NP
Know which children should be in school and follow up where they do not attend	COVID-19 Safeguarding Team
Ensure that emergency numbers and alternatives are kept up to date	Live document kept up to date with contact details

Ensure that there are safeguarding induction processes for new staff, staff relocated to the school, and volunteers	NP
Ensure that new staff, staff relocated to the school, and volunteers understand the staff code of conduct	NP
Ensure that any volunteers have been individually risk-assessed	JH
Ensure that each vulnerable child has an easily transferable record of why they are vulnerable, a copy of the EHCP and/or CIN or CP Plan, the name of their social worker and contact details, for LAC children the name of the relevant Virtual School Head	Live Vulnerable Learners Document
Ensure there is a record of which staff are onsite daily	CF/CM
Ensure that the SCR is up to date with any relocated staff or volunteers and the checks that have been made	JH
Ensure that your safer recruitment processes are clear and adhered to, for example, be aware of anyone unknown to the school offering themselves as a volunteer	JH
Ensure that staff are aware that there may be an impact of the mental health of pupils, parents and staff or volunteers; and what support may be available	DR
Consider what to do if there are no IT staff available	The Vulnerable Learners List is a standalone Google Document
Ensure that the school has an online teaching and learning policy which considers safeguarding risks	CM/NSH
Ensure that pupils, parents and staff know how to raise any safeguarding issues that may arise during any online learning	NP/DR
Ensure that SLT has a plan for how any bereavements may be handled, including obtaining any support services (not otherwise shared) [See charity websites, for example, Winston's Wish, Grief Encounter, Childhood Bereavement Network or Hope Encounter.	NP/DR

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Niki Panayiodou	020 8353 4270	niki.panayiodou@orchardside.school
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deborah Roberts	020 8353 4270	deborah.roberts@orchardside.school
Headteacher	Celeste Fay	020 8353 4270	Celeste.fay@orchardside.school
Chair of Governors	Del Goddard		delgoddard@btinternet.com
Safeguarding Governor	Catherine Goodwin		cgoodwin@westleaschool.co.uk

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 Plans (EHCP).

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 EHCP will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college 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 EHCP's can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the 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.

Orchardside 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 and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Niki Panayiodou

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 Orchardside School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Orchardside School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Orchardside School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend 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.

Orchardside School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending Orchardside School and will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Orchardside 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.

To support the above, Orchardside School will, when communicating with parents 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, Orchardside School will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Orchardside School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Niki Panayiodou

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Deborah Roberts

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 email, phone or online video - for example when working from home.

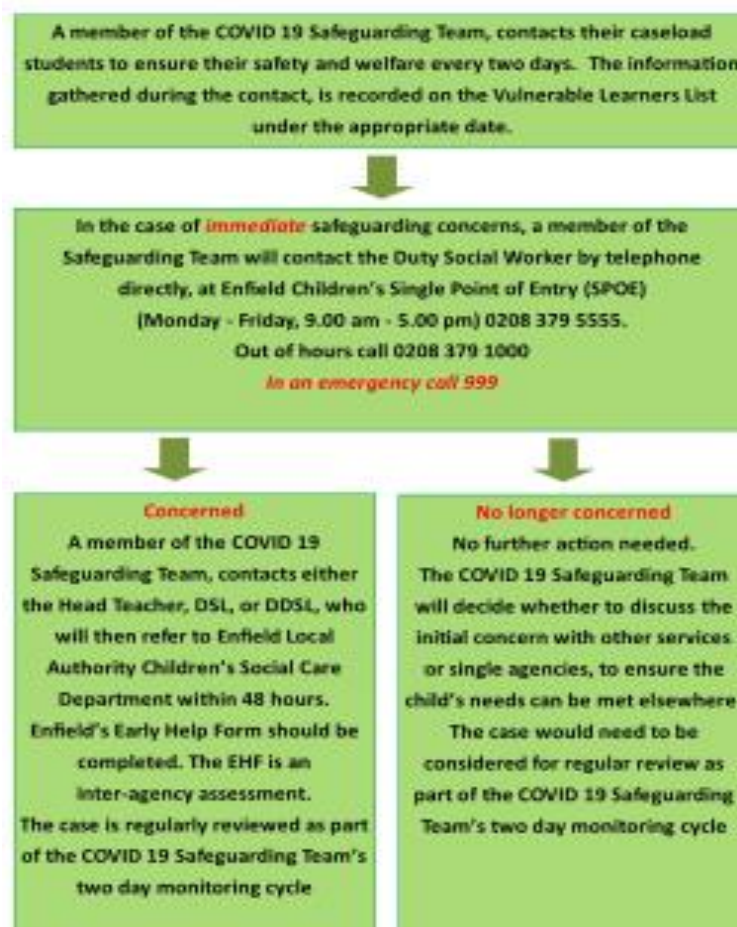
Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to the child protection online management system, EdAware 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.

It is important that all Orchardside School, staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). 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.

Orchardside's COVID 19 Safeguarding Strategy



COVID-19 Safeguarding Team members must ensure that their caseload learners are contacted **EVERY TWO DAYS**. Record keeping of communication with parents and carers must be kept up-to-date in a live google document named 'Vulnerable Learners List'. This spread sheet captures information about all learners on Orchardside's roll in order to effectively safeguard them during the pandemic. It has been RAG rated according to the degree of vulnerability. The RAG rating is determined during dynamic risk assessments of each individual learner. The level of vulnerability of each learner is constantly monitored and reviewed by the DSL, DDSL and Headteacher.

Our Vulnerable Learners List captures the following information

- Column A: name of learner and Red Amber Green (RAG) rating
- Column B: decision made by Headteacher and DSL about eligibility to attend school according to the government's guidelines
- Column C: parents/carer's contact details
- Column D: nominated keyworker allocated to the family
- Column E: key worker status of parent or carer according to the government's guidelines
- Column F: social care threshold
- Column G and H: name and contact details of allocated social worker
- Column I and J: name and contact details of any other professionals working with the family
- All other columns are arranged by order of calendar dates for day to day record keeping made during regular communication with parents/carers

We have shortened the length of our safeguarding monitoring cycle during this pandemic to **two days** in order to enhance our early response to safeguarding matters should they arise.

The Vulnerable Learners List is used to inform our daily dynamic risk assessment of learners. We use known and historical information of our learners and information we have captured during the closure, to make constant assessments about appropriate next steps in order to effectively safeguard and support our student population.

These steps could be:

- Monitoring and supporting food poverty
- Offering mental health support for learners, parents/carers
- Liaising with social workers and any other professionals working with the family
- Initiating home visits
- Referrals to social care
- Multiagency information sharing
- Supporting parents in understanding the virus and identifying harmful misinformation
- Supporting parents with online safety

- Signposting parents to reputable resources and platforms that ensure that the young person can keep safe on line
- Ensuring students are able to access online learning via google classroom
- Ensuring students have access to resources and material that will enable them to access education at home

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in Orchardside's Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via EdAware which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their EdAware from home, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or the 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 this to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Del Goddard.

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 (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 Orchardside School, 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 Disclosure and Barring Service (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

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, Orchardside 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 (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.

Where Orchardside School 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.

Orchardside 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. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

Orchardside School 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity.

As such, Orchardside School 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

Orchardside 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.

Children and online safety away from school and college

Orchardside is in regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications also aim to reinforce the importance of our young people being safe online. We also emphasise the importance for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they are accessing and to be clear who their child is going to be interacting with online.

Our calls to every learner on our roll also acts as our safeguarding reporting route back to Orchardside. Parents, Carers and our young people are able to report any safeguarding concerns to the COVID-19 Safeguarding Team during these very frequent and regular calls.

Please see Orchardside's Remote Learning Policy around safeguarding and on line learning.

We have ensured that any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

We have also signposted our learners to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse
- [NSPCC](#) - The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Our parents and carers may choose to supplement Orchardside's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In our communications with parents we emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individuals who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

Orchardside has signposted the organisations below to support our parents and carers to keep their young person safe online:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
- [NSPCC](#) - The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Orchardside mental health strategy during COVID-19 outbreak

During this time supporting the mental health and well-being of our learners, staff and our local community is more important than ever. Many of our families are facing financial hardship, isolation in difficult circumstances, and also new feelings of anxiety and fear.

Our school therapist and mental health lead along with the safeguarding team are making regular phone calls to all of our learners who we know suffer with mental health issues, and also the ones who may not have had difficulties in the past but may be struggling emotionally now due to the exceptional circumstances we have been forced to live in.

We are also ensuring that parents and carers are coping with the situation and that they are looking after their own mental health. We encourage parents to stick to routines and also get some fresh air and exercise daily. Parents and carers whose mental health needs become a concern are offered access to weekly telephone sessions with our school's therapist and also the CAMHS therapist that is allocated to our school. Parents are also being signposted to websites and organisations that can support them with their mental health needs for both themselves and their young person.

Staff members have access to our Employee Assistance Programme. In addition, Orchardside's Emotional Wellbeing Therapist is offering therapy sessions weekly to support staff's mental health during this time

Supporting children not in school

Orchardside School 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 the Vulnerable Learner's List along with a record of contact that has been made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

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

This plan will be reviewed every two days and where concerns arise, the DSL, DDSL and Headteacher will consider any next steps or referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages in our regular phone calls, on our website, Twitter Account and in direct text communication with parents.

Orchardside 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 Orchardside School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work when they are at home.

Orchardside School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will also ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on the Vulnerable Learners List where necessary.

Supporting children in school

Orchardside School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Orchardside School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Orchardside School 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 COVID-19.

Orchardside School 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 the Vulnerable Learners List.

Where Orchardside School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – the Headteacher will take action accordingly

Peer on peer abuse

Orchardside School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

In this circumstance our calls to every learner on our roll acts as our safeguarding reporting route back to Orchardside for cases of peer on peer abuse. Parents, Carers and our young people are able to report any safeguarding concerns to the Covid-19 Safeguarding Team during these very frequent and regular calls.

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 the Child Protection Policy.

The school 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 the Vulnerable Learners List and appropriate referrals made.