



# TEMPLEFIELDS

## MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

### (TMAT)

**ADDENDUM TO TMAT'S SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION  
STATEMENT OF INTENT AND THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES  
APPLYING AT EACH OF TMAT'S ACADEMIES IN THE LIGHT OF  
COVID-19**

**Signature:**

*Andrew Sentance*

**Date: April 2020**

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**CHAIR OF TRUST**

## **1.CONTEXT**

On 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the Government announced its plans to reduce the spread of Covid-19 virus by asking parents to keep their children at home from 20<sup>th</sup> March wherever possible but asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. This guidance to schools was updated on 24<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> March and is likely to be updated on a regular basis in the future. At 27<sup>th</sup> March, schools have been asked to add an Addendum to their existing Safeguarding/Child Protection Policies to take account of this present crisis, how they are managing the partial closure arrangements and in particular how they are meeting the Safeguarding/Child Protection needs of their pupils on & off site, attending & not attending and especially vulnerable pupils needs. This Addendum will be regularly updated to reflect changing Government/Public Health England/Local Authority/ESCB guidance or statutory requirements under emergency legislation.

## **2.CHILDREN OF CRITICAL WORKERS**

Our academies are providing on site for the children of those defined by Government as critical workers, where these children meet the eligibility criteria and their parents are unable to safely care for them at home and wish them to attend.

## **3.VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

Our academies are providing for children defined by the Government as Vulnerable. This includes children who have a social worker and a Child Protection Plan, those who are looked after by the local authority (LA), those who have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 and those with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) where their parents/carers wish them to attend.

Our academies are fully aware of those children who meet the precise Government definition of "vulnerable children" but also of those children who fall outside the strict definition but may otherwise be deemed as vulnerable by our academies. This latter group are also being offered on site provision where appropriate and where parents/carers wish to take up the offer.

All such vulnerable children have been risk assessed in consultation with parents, social workers & LA as appropriate to decide whether they can safely have their needs met at home or need to be offered on site provision.

Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) is not of itself a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

The Trust & its academies will follow the guidance” COVID-19 Children and Young People(CYP) Response Plan for Educational settings—Summer 2020” issued by ECC (attached)

#### **4.SELF-ISOLATION**

Where children of critical workers or vulnerable children develop symptoms of Covid-19 or are in families where a member develops symptoms then they must self-isolate then they must self-isolate in line with Public Health England (PHE) guidance and not attend their academies.

The same rule applies to TMAT employees who may have volunteered to attend for work on site.

#### **5.EMPLOYEES & STAFFING**

The on-site provision for the groups outlined above is dependent on the ability of each academy to provide appropriate levels of staffing to safely manage those children attending & keeping them safe on site.

In order to comply with Government guidance, wherever possible, employees have been asked to work remotely from home, including those who themselves come into any of the higher risk categories.

Staffing on site is on a volunteer basis, proportionate to the number & nature of the children attending on a daily basis and in line with Safeguarding & Health & Safety requirements. Staffing rotas, which minimise the demands on those available to volunteer, have been organised but need to be flexible to take account of changing circumstances.

#### **6.DUTY OF CARE TOWARDS CHIDREN & EMPLOYEES ATTENDING ON SITE**

Our academies are fully following all Government & PHE guidance regarding social distancing, the regular washing of hands with soap, limiting the areas of the premises used and the regular cleaning of the premises & equipment used. Despite Trust employees being categorised as critical workers, no personal protection equipment has been made available and the Trust is unable to source this independently.

#### **7.ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN**

For the period from 20th March 2020 onwards until further notice, normal attendance registration arrangements have been suspended. For administration purposes Code # will be used indicating whole or partial academy closure.

However, each academy is maintaining a daily register of those children attending, under the different categories and submitting a daily return to the DFE & LA.

This will also show those children who were due to attend on any day but didn't and for whom no explanation has been supplied. In these cases, the academies will follow their normal practices of attempting to contact parents/carers to obtain an explanation. Where no explanation is forthcoming, the academies will inform the appropriate authorities. For some vulnerable children this will include contacting social workers informing them of non-attendance where an attendance was expected.

### **8.DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS(DSLs) & DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS (DDSLs)**

All 3 academies have a full complement of DSLs & DDSLs, who are available on site or easily contactable off site. All employees at each academy are informed who the daily Duty DSLs/DDSLs are & how to contact them. The academies have also set up a system by which the DSL/DDSL functions can be covered across the Trust should any of the DSLs/DDSLs become unavailable due to self-isolation or any other reason.

Employees are clear that they need to report any concerns they may have about Child Protection needs in line with the procedures laid down in their Child Protection Policies and where these procedures are not possible to make a verbal (telephone) report & follow this up by an email so there is a recorded paper trail.2 of the academies have an on line Safeguarding reporting/recording system (CPOMS) which can be used remotely.

### **9.SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING**

Normal training will be suspended for this period until further notice.

However, all employees will be kept up to date with the latest Government, PHE & LA guidance on the specifics of how to manage during this emergency situation and academy arrangements.

### **10.SAFER RECRUITMENT/VOLUNTEERS**

Should any new appointments or new volunteers be taken on during this period, all normal Safer Recruitment practices will be followed even if this needs to be done remotely.

### **11.ON LINE SAFETY ON- SITE**

The academies will continue to provide a safe on line environment, including appropriate filtering systems, in line with existing policies & practices for those pupils attending.

The majority of pupils will not be attending & are likely to be spending longer periods of time online, which may increase their vulnerability.

We have provided parents with information on how to keep their children safe online and resources to support them to do this.

Particularly useful websites are CEOP, Childnet, Internet Matters, Net Aware, NSPCC, Parent Info & Safer Internet.

Parents have been asked to contact the academies where they have concerns or need support on this matter.

### **12.DUTY OF CARE FOR THOSE CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL**

The academies have in place systems for regular contact with the parents/carers of all children not attending. These systems vary slightly due to some different circumstances applying in each academy, particularly in the 2 academies which have special units. The children who are normally provided for by these units fit both the strict definition of “vulnerable” and a wider definition based on local knowledge. Risk assessments on all those vulnerable children whose parents/carers have chosen for them not to attend or who for other reasons are unable to access the on- site provision are being contacted on a daily, every other day, weekly basis as appropriate to the risk assessment rating. In addition, the academies are using their attendance officers & counsellors to keep in regular contact with the parents/carers of vulnerable children including where appropriate the children themselves.

Similarly, where there is involvement of Children’s Social Care or other statutory services the academies are liaising with them on a regular basis.

TMAT academies are fully following the latest guidance on this issued by the Local Authority (Safeguarding Briefing for Schools 6<sup>th</sup> April)

Where remote on line learning systems are being used, parents/carers have been advised on how to best manage/supervise on line safety.

None of the academies are using webcams or similar to provide distance learning.

### **13PEER ON PEER ABUSE**

The academies are aware that there is potential for an increase in peer on peer abuse via children’s use of social media whilst they are at home.

Whilst the normal procedures for managing this will largely not be possible, the academies will continue to apply the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping

Children Safe in Education (September 2019) and in their Child Protection Policies as best they can.

Children & their parents/carers experiencing any on line peer abuse have been told that they should report their concerns to the academy and this will be dealt with on a case by case basis and actions appropriately recorded.

#### **14.DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The Trust & its academies are conscious that there is an increased risk of incidents of domestic abuse during this period and will maintain its liaison with ECC's Education Liaison Officer in MARAT in this regard.

#### **15.MENTAL HEALTH & WELL BEING**

The Trust & its academies are conscious of the increased risks for the mental health & well-being of pupils, their families and employees and are making use of the guidance & resources which have been made available by ECC on this. Government advice on this has been passed on to parents.

#### **16.ESSEX CHILD & FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE(ECFWS)**

The academies will continue to liaise with ECFWS.

Parents have been informed that ECFWS continues to operate and provided with their contact details if they wish to contact them direct.

#### **17.FREE SCHOOLS MEALS(FSM)**

All 3 academies have been providing FSMs by one means or another to all eligible children and have moved to use the new national FSM voucher scheme.

#### **18.BEREAVEMENT**

The Trust & its academies are conscious that unfortunately dealing with bereavement & supporting those dealing with bereavement may be necessary and are putting in place procedures to try to best manage this and liaising with appropriate agencies who may be able to support this.

#### **19.LEARNING**

All duties on schools to deliver the National Curriculum have been suspended as has the 5 hours a day of on-site provision requirement.

For those attending on-site, learning is planned on a daily basis according to the number/nature of those attending. Learning packages, both hard copy & on line have been made available & parents/carers given advice on how to use these. The academies are in regular communication with parents/carers about

these matters and are dealing with telephone/email queries from parents/carers on a daily basis.

## **20.HOME WORKING BY EMPLOYEES**

All employees working from home have been supplied with advice from ECC's commissioned HR's service (attached pages 8-10).

## **21.HUB PROVISION**

Some MATs have moved to only using one or more school sites within their group to provide on-site provision. Presently the Trust has no such plans but will keep this under review.

## Covid-19 – HR Guidance

### Working from Home

During the pandemic period, many staff will be working from home as schools need less staff in school to maintain provision for attending pupils and some staff are in self-isolation.

This guidance sets out the key considerations for managers and staff.

(Schools could adapt and/or include arrangements and requirements specific to their school and share this document with staff)

### Policies

All staff must continue to have full regard to all school policies and procedures, particularly

- Computer, Phone, Email and Internet Policy and/or Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Policy

### IT

Wherever possible, those working at home should have equipment (laptops/mobile phones) provided by the school and use secure school networks. Schools may need to arrange reasonable additional equipment and technical support and advice e.g. on use of remote communication systems.

Where such equipment is not available, staff should exercise sensible judgement, but schools will need to set clear parameters for use of personal equipment, which is normally prohibited i.e.:

- Phones
  - withholding phone number when ringing out on school business
  - not giving out personal number, especially to pupils and parents/carers
- Other devices
  - minimizing storage of sensitive personal data
  - ensuring files are encrypted
  - ensuring virus/malware protection is up to date

Schools will need to be very clear about any arrangements and specific rules around remote learning for, and with, students. Schools should set this out in a separate policy / agreement as part of home-working arrangements – signed by staff as best practice.

### “Home office”

Not everyone will have an ideal workspace at home. However, wherever possible individuals should;

- try and keep their working area separate, so that work does not overtake the home
- clear work things away at the end of the day so it's clear that working time has ended
- try to minimise distractions from others in the household, if possible, shutting the door during periods of work or asking others to respect working time.

### Confidentiality

The rules on confidentiality are set out in the Code of Conduct and Data Protection Policy. Specifically, those working at home must ensure that others in their household do not:

- have access to school records – paper or electronic including emails
- overhear conversations relating to staff, parents or children, or other sensitive matters



## **Hours of work**

In the extraordinary context of the pandemic, it is recognised that individuals are facing personal as well as work challenges and a certain degree of flexibility is required. A regular 'routine' is recommended to provide effective separation from personal and work life to maintain wellbeing. It is

accepted that a 'day's work' may be done at home in an irregular pattern, sometimes around other responsibilities such as childcare, but it is important that "off duty" times are clearly defined.

Staff working from home should be available for contact with colleagues, managers and students as required, but otherwise be trusted to do what needs to get done without overly rigid structures.

## Rest breaks

It is essential that those working at home take regular breaks, as they would at the workplace. It is important to have breaks from VDU use and for overall wellbeing.

## **Communication**

Communication is crucial to help overcome feelings of isolation which can lead to poor mental health.

Regular contact times should be arranged between colleagues and between staff and their managers. Line managers should take responsibility for ensuring frequent contact with their staff both individually and via team meetings, to inform, update and check on wellbeing. All staff should be proactive in engaging with each other to support work collaboration and morale.

Preferred and consistent communication methods should be agreed so that individuals are not excluded. It is recommended that at least some contact is undertaken via video link, as this can be more beneficial to wellbeing than just email or telephone contact.

NB social media should not be used for school business but can be useful for informal contact between colleagues.

## Changes in circumstances

It is essential that staff keep line managers informed, in line with normal reporting procedures, of any changes to their personal circumstances, for example if they fall ill for any reason or need to go into self-isolation so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place and support provided as necessary.

## **Personal Wellbeing**

With so much uncertainty and the change to normal work patterns, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour. There are simple things that everyone can do to stay mentally and physically healthy during this time such as:

- take some form of physical activity (either at home or in the fresh air if able)
- spend time doing things for pleasure
- eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, and try to avoid smoking and alcohol
- keep in regular contact with friends and family

It is the responsibility of individuals to contact managers if there are emerging concerns about their health and wellbeing, so that managers can provide/signpost appropriate support.

## Personal Support

- CIPD Working from home advice:  
Top Tips: [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/working-remotely-top-tips-uk-v2\\_tcm18-73295.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/working-remotely-top-tips-uk-v2_tcm18-73295.pdf)  
Managing teams remotely: [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/remote-teams-top-tips-uk\\_tcm18-73358.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/remote-teams-top-tips-uk_tcm18-73358.pdf)

Healthy remote working: [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/healthy-work-uk-v2\\_tcm18-73600.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/healthy-work-uk-v2_tcm18-73600.pdf)

Effective on-line meetings: [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/online-meetings-ie\\_tcm18-73400.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/online-meetings-ie_tcm18-73400.pdf)

- Mind Infoline 0300 123 3393 9.00 – 18.00 M-Fri, Advice and information on mental health
- Saneline 0300 304 7000 [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk) 18.00 – 23.00 7 days Emotional support, information and guidance