

Addendum 1
COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection at Gothic Mede Academy



Contents

Context.....	2
Vulnerable children.....	3
Attendance monitoring.....	4
Designated Safeguarding Lead.....	4
Reporting a concern.....	5
Safeguarding Training and induction	5
Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff	6
Online safety in schools and colleges	6
Children and online safety away from school and college	6
Supporting children not in school.....	7
Encountering difficulties when contacting the parents of children not in school.....	8
Supporting children in school	8
Peer on Peer Abuse.....	9

Context

From the start of the spring term in 2021, 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 - 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.

This addendum of the Gothic Mede Academy Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the areas named in the contents page.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead/Principal	Thomas Clarke	01462 732002	GMA-Office@bestacademies.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jennie Milligan	01462 732002	As above
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Nicola Davis	01462 732002	As above
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Alison Sugden	01462 732002	As above
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Michael Warlow	01462 732002	As above
Chair of Governors	Joanne Graves		jgraves@bestacademies.org.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 (EHC) plans.

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 EHC plan 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 EHC plans 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 deputies) 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.

Gothic Mede Academy 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: Thomas Clarke for all children with an allocated social worker and Michael Warlow for all looked-after and previously looked after children.

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 Gothic Mede Academy will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Gothic Mede Academy will share the names of those attending with allocated social workers to discuss their views on attendance/non-attendance.

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

Gothic Mede Academy will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a 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.

Gothic Mede Academy and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Gothic Mede Academy will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. All children with an allocated social worker will be contacted by members of the safeguarding team to inform of attendance. The DSL or a DDSL will update social workers of any changes.

To support the above, Gothic Mede Academy 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, Gothic Mede Academy will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Gothic Mede Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and 3 Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Thomas Clarke

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Jennie Milligan, Nicola Davis, Alison Sugden and Michael Warlow

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 coordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to 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.

It is important that all Gothic Mede 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 and safeguarding team will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, 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 DSL and DDSL. 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 they should continue to follow the academy policy.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Jo Graves

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 Gothic Mede Academy, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. This may be conducted remotely.

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 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, Gothic Mede Academy 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 Gothic Mede Academy 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.

Gothic Mede Academy 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.

Gothic Mede Academy 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 or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Gothic Mede Academy 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

Gothic Mede Academy will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

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 Policy* and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles.

Gothic Mede Academy will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

All usernames and passwords for online resources available to pupils will be shared with parents to allow parental oversight.

Lessons are to be delivered through the medium of *Google Classroom* and other online resources such as *MyMaths*, *Espresso*, *Nessy* and *Purple Mash*. Lessons are not delivered 'live.' Where video messages, lessons or resources are created and shared, the following should be considered:

These videos should not include features of the house which would reveal its location, any content which would be inconsistent with the Academy or Trust's values, aims and ethos, any content which could bring the school's name into disrepute

Staff are to be mindful of noise and sounds in the background when making recording or streaming live sessions. Staff should aim to select a time and place when and where their household is quiet.

Google Classroom allows communication between pupils and between staff and pupils. Staff comments will be seen by all users and must be professional in nature. If any concerns regarding a pupil's comments should arise, staff are able to 'mute' that pupil and if this is the case, should record this on CPOMs. A member of the safeguarding team will make a decision about whether it is necessary to contact parents, and who should contact them.

Supporting children not in school

Gothic Mede Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

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.

The communication plan (pupil check-ins Google Doc) is shared with all relevant staff and is updated on a regular basis. All contact made is RAG'd by the DSL and DDSL to understand patterns of concern. The pupil check-ins frequency and method is confirmed with pupil and parent. Those flagging as a concern is discussed in the remote safeguarding meeting, where next steps are planned. Pupils are considered "red" if contact has not been able to be made or if the pupil is struggling with the current situation. If a safeguarding concern is raised, this is to be logged on CPOMs in line with the school's child protection policy.

The check-ins can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits (in line with social distancing). Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded in discussion with the DSL and DDSL

Gothic Mede Academy and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

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

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website, through Parentmail and through the daily bulletin with staff.

Gothic Mede Academy 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 Gothic Mede Academy need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Gothic Mede Academy 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.

Encountering difficulties when contacting the parents of children not in school

1. Make two attempts to contact both parents on the first day, not one immediately after the other (or within 24 hours if you are making the call at the end of the working day). Make a record of attempts. Leave voicemails if possible.
2. Try both parents twice on the second day. Make a record of attempts.
3. If you have been unable to reach either parent, ask Lisa Glindon to contact the parents via Parentmail requesting that the parents either call or email school to arrange a time for you to call them.
4. If there is no response to the Parentmail within one working day please inform a safeguarding lead and make a CPOMS record of your attempted phone calls and email. Please log the CPOMS as safeguarding.
5. Contact the emergency contacts listed on Integris
6. Home visit by two members of staff.

Supporting children in school

Gothic Mede Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

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

Gothic Mede Academy 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.

Gothic Mede Academy 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 CPOMS.

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

Peer on Peer Abuse

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

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 multi- agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

Addendum added: 31st March 2020

Reviewed: 11th January 2021

Author: Thomas Clarke (DSL)