

COVID-19 School closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Date: 30th March 2020

To be reviewed as necessary

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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 - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of students who are vulnerable or whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Alison Vigor	07495 357162	avigor1@maldenoaks.rbksch.org
Deputy DSL Tuition	Louise Barnes	07496341457	abarne10@maldenoaks.rbksch.org
Deputy DSL KS3	Ayse Osman	07415125559	aosman17@maldenoaks.rbksch.org
Headteacher	Samantha Axbey	07495 357162	sam.axbey@maldenoaks.rbksch.org
Safeguarding Management Committee Member	Claire Knight		cknigh5@coombe.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Robert Green		rjgreen.ditton@googlemail.com
AfC Education Safeguarding Adviser	Linda Sheehan	07774686362	linda.sheehan@achievingforstudents.org.uk
AfC Adviser for Online Services and Safety	Peter Cowley	07595173975	peter.cowley@achievingforstudents.org.uk
AfC Virtual School Headteacher	Suzanne Parrott	07827895894	suzanne.parrott@achievingforstudents.org.uk

SPA: 020 8547 5008 **Out of Hours:** 020 8770 5000

LADO: 020 8891 7370
07774332675
lado@achievingforstudents.org.uk

Vulnerable students

Vulnerable students include those who have a social worker and those students and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include students who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A student 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 Childrens 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 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 students 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 students are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving child social care support.

Malden Oaks will continue to work with and support student's social workers to help protect vulnerable students. This includes working with and supporting student's social workers, the local authority and Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) for students looked-after and previously looked-after. The lead person for this will be Alison Vigor.

There is an expectation that vulnerable students 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 send their student to an education setting, and their student is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Malden Oaks will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Malden Oaks will encourage our vulnerable students and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed and where appropriate.

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.

Malden Oaks and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether students in need should be attending school – Malden Oaks will then follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

To support the above, Malden Oaks will, when communicating with parents/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 student does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Malden Oaks will notify their social worker.

Malden Oaks will complete the Government's [daily online attendance form](#) and supply any information regarding attendance requested by Achieving for Children.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Malden Oaks has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and 2 Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Alison Vigor

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Tuition): Louise Barnes

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (KS3): Ayse Osman

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 student protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with students' social workers where they require access to students in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

It is important that all Malden Oaks staff 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 DSL 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 student, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with students in the school, they should report the concern to the Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.

Concerns regarding the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Robert Green.

Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID19 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 Students Safe in Education (2019). The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a student.

Where new staff are recruited to Malden Oaks, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

Safer recruitment and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the school workforce or gain access to students. When recruiting new staff, Malden Oaks will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Students Safe in Education (2019).

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.

Malden Oaks will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a student or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of Keeping Students Safe in Education (2019).

Malden Oaks will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of Keeping Students Safe in Education (2019) 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 will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Malden Oaks will continue to ensure that all staff, and essential visitors sign in and out of the premises and will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in Keeping Students Safe in Education (2019).

Online safety

Malden Oaks' Online Safety Lead is Laura Dandy. If the Online Safety Lead is unavailable, advice can be sought from the Headteacher or from Peter Cowley (AfC Adviser for Online Services and Safety).

Malden Oaks will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect students when they are online on the school's IT systems or recommended resources.

It is important that all staff who interact with students, including online, continue to look out for signs a student may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

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

Malden Oaks staff will not deliver live streaming virtual lessons. If any recorded videos are shared with students, the following must apply:

- Staff must wear suitable clothing.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- Language must be professional and appropriate.
- No family or other household members should appear in the video.

Supporting students not in school

Malden Oaks is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

A robust communication plan is in place for all of our students:

- All students and parents will receive phone contact from their assigned tutor/key worker twice a week in term time and once a week in holiday time.
- The member of staff will speak to the parent and then ask to speak to the student
- The contact will be sent to the SLT/DSL lead for the cohort who will arrange for admin support to log the contact on the SIMS system.
- If contact cannot be made at least weekly, the social worker will be informed by the SLT/DSL for the cohort. If the student does not have a social worker, other services will be informed as appropriate to the level of concern: EWS, police or our youth worker (who can make a doorstep visit).

This plan will be reviewed weekly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and any communications to families.

Malden Oaks recognises that school is a protective factor for students and that the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers at Malden Oaks will take this into consideration when setting expectations of students' work while they are at home.

Supporting students in school

Malden Oaks is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. Malden Oaks will continue to be a safe space for all students to attend and flourish.

The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to student ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Malden Oaks 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.

Malden Oaks will ensure that where we care for students of critical workers and vulnerable students on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each student.

Where Malden Oaks has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with our School Improvement Partner (SIP)/Link Adviser.

Students moving schools

Given the current situation, Malden Oaks will not be enrolling any new students nor facilitating the transition to another school; mainstream or specialist, until the school has fully reopened. This includes tuition students.

Mental health

Malden Oaks is aware that negative experiences and distressing life events such as the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents.

Malden Oaks will ensure that appropriate support is in place for the students of critical workers and vulnerable students whilst on site.

Malden Oaks will continue to offer support to students who are not on site, this will take the form of twice weekly welfare check phone calls.

Malden Oaks will ensure that all students have contact details for appropriate support services. The following details have been shared with all students and their families :

- Kooth - <https://www.kooth.com>
- Samaritans - <https://www.samaritans.org/> - call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org 24 hours Samaritans offer emotional support for anyone struggling to cope.
- Shout - It is powered by a team of Crisis Volunteers, who are at the heart of the service. Anyone who needs immediate support can connect with the service by texting the word BlueBook to 85258. You can find out more about 'Shout' here: <https://www.giveusashout.org/>
- Compassionate Neighbours Compassionate Neighbours are trained volunteers offering friendship and listening. Website gives information on worldwide compassionate action in the present coronavirus climate and ways to get in touch for connecting and friendship.
- Family Lives Family lives have a free help line that offers support and advice on any aspect of parenting and family life
 - they have volunteers working from home 9am-9pm Mon-Fri and 10am-3pm Sat/Sun 0800 800 2222
- Student Line Studentline - Comforts, advises and protects students 24 hours a day and offers free confidential counselling.
- Phone 0800 1111 (24 hours) Chat 1-2-1 with a counsellor online
- Kingston Foodbanks 5 local sites offering food every weekday. Telephone 0208 391 1100
- Young Minds Online and helpline support for anyone worried about the emotional wellbeing or mental health of a young person aged 0-25

Peer on peer abuse

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

Malden Oaks will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of Keeping Students Safe in Education (2019) and our Safeguarding and Student 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 using the school's procedure and appropriate referrals made.