

TEFAT Additional Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection Update For Phased Return to School

This document forms version 2.0 of the annex TEFAT Additional Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection During Covid-19 School Closures and is in addition to the TEFAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, September 2019. It provides updated guidance which is operational from 8th June 2020, in preparation for the phased return to school of more children. It is available on the TEFAT and academy website and will be disseminated to all staff via email.

Context

From 1st June 2020 schools have been directed by the Government to begin to phase in a return to attendance at school for pupils from reception, year 1 and year 6. These are in addition to the children of identified critical key workers and vulnerable children already supported to attend throughout the pandemic.

The Elliot Foundation is the responsible body and the employer of all the staff across the Trust. Our primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of all of our children and all of our staff. The Trust uses a risk based framework which allows each of the schools to prioritise the year groups with the greatest need in their respective reopening plans. The Elliot Foundation expects that where these year groups vary from government guidance, decisions are explained to the parent body. The Trust acknowledges the reasons for the variance are multiple and are dependent on the number of appropriately qualified staff available to return to work, the physical nature of the school buildings, and the incidence of social, educational, economic and emotional need in each group. The nature of these reasons is fluid and subject to regular school and Trust review. There is no obligation on all schools to open in the same manner or in the same order and as such there is variance across the Trust schools as there is across the country.

Preparation

As part of the TEFAT risk based framework, all academies will complete a Safeguarding Checklist to confirm statutory compliance and relevant changes to processes prior to reopening.

In addition to the school has also:

- Ensured all staff have read and understood the updated safeguarding Covid-19 guidance and changes to policy shared during school closure and in preparation for reopening
- Liaised with social workers for any vulnerable pupils who have not been taking up the offer of a place in school - the expectation is that all these children will return to attendance at school (unless it is agreed by their social worker in collaboration with the school that there are exceptional circumstances preventing this)
- Completed and regularly reviewed individual risk assessments where a vulnerable pupil is not attending school, and conducted regular safe and well checks, ensuring all concerns are shared with the allocated social worker in a timely manner
- Reported any children missing in education (CME) to the Local Authority in line with statutory guidance
- Carried out individual risk assessments for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) – the expectation is that attendance is expected for all these pupils provided that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment

- Considered the well-being of staff members, made arrangements for continued working from home for those staff who have agreed that they will not return to school at this time based on their individual health and/or circumstances
- Ensured that additional support is available for any staff members who require it e.g. through well being hangouts, group or 121 supervision or the Trust Employee Assist Programme
- Reminded all staff members of safeguarding processes and procedures and what to do if they have concerns about a pupil or about a member of staff
- Informed parents of the arrangements made, including when their child can return, their child's timetable, any specific requirements around drop off and pick up times
- Ensured the school has a minimum of 2, ideally 3 up to date emergency contact numbers should the child become unwell and display Covid-19 symptoms whilst at school

When Pupils Return

The Trust and the school recognises that many pupils will have been affected by aspects of the pandemic and the lockdown and many will require additional support. Some pupils may have experienced bereavements of close family members, others may have suffered abuse or neglect which they have not been able to disclose. Some pupils may have experienced anxiety or distress due to the overall situation, things they have seen on social media or been told, been impacted on by difficulties their families have experienced in relation to financial matters or other family issues. Some pupils may find it difficult to settle back into the academic structure of school or feel anxious regarding the physical changes to classrooms and routines. Children may experience difficulties with peer relationships after a lengthy period of isolation from others their own age.

All staff will be alert to signs of stress in pupils and enable pupils to talk about how they are feeling. Schools have considered transition resources and adaptations to their locally owned curriculum plans to support children at this time. Any safeguarding concerns will be passed to the DSL (or deputy DSLs) promptly and any necessary referrals made to the relevant agencies or services. Additional support will be provided for DSLs through the Trust Safeguarding Group and for pupils in school where appropriate,

All parents / carers will be asked to inform the school if their child has experienced any key family changes (e.g. bereavements, changes in contact with key adults, significant events, health difficulties etc) so that school staff can ensure they can be effectively supported. The Trust has provided guidance for staff and parents regarding bereavement support for themselves and children in their care entitled [Bereavement Guidance and Resources Pack](#).

Any emerging concerns will be discussed with parents in the usual way, unless the information known leads the DSL to believe this could place a pupil at risk of immediate and further harm, in which case a referral will be made to MASH without delay in the usual manner.

Pupils remaining at home

- Pupils who are not returning to school initially will continue to be offered access to online learning or home learning packs as previously provided
- Staff will monitor and track pupil engagement daily through various means of communication to ensure that all children not in school are safe and well such as: the online classroom, food delivery/provision, communication from other external services and school initiated safe and well checks
- Safeguarding measures as detailed in previous policy documents will be maintained for this group of pupils
- Online safety guidance is available on the home learning site and additional [TEFAT guidance for keeping safe online](#) has been provided for staff and pupils