Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
CORONAVIRUS school closure arrangements for Orchard Vale Community School
APPENDIX 3

Effective 1st February 2021

Date approved by Trustees of Ventrus Multi Academy Trust	**1st February 2021**
Date shared with staff	**2nd February 2021**

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1.0 CONTEXT

This appendix has been developed in response to and aligned to DfE guidance Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools updated 7th January 2021 and the ***Schools Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children during Covid-19*** *updated by Devon LA 12th January 2021.*

From 6th January 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 response** - who absolutely need to attend. In addition, schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children:

- **children who are vulnerable** (see para 2), and
- children whose parents are critical to the COVID response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This appendix of the Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during this period of time and is likely to be reviewed at regular intervals particularly when new advice is released by the LA.

It remains the case that **safeguarding is everybody's responsibility**, therefore this additional information needs to be shared with all staff and volunteers who in turn must read, digest and seek support from their DSL team or school leaders if further clarification is required. All staff should continue to have access to the Child Protection policy, Code of Conduct and KCSiE 2020 where further details and information can be found.

The schools' safeguarding team (DSL, Safeguarding Governor etc) and their contact details can be found in the main body of the Schools Safeguarding Policy. Changes to the DSL and DDSL during these exceptional circumstances can be found in para 3 of this appendix. Any changes will be shared with all staff and volunteers of the school.

2.0 DFE VULNERABLE CHILDREN

As per Dec 31st 2020 - Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation
  - those who are young carers
  - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
  - care leavers
  - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

School leaders must also consider the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and all other children attending the setting. If a child is unwell, or showing the symptoms of Coronavirus (as defined by current government guidelines) or the school has information that parents are not following current government guidelines they will expect the child to remain at home and offer provision and support remotely informing relevant partner agencies. This will include establishing regular contact with the family until such time as they have adhered to guidelines enabling the now well or symptom free child to return to school. Leaders will use their professional discretion, working with any partner agencies and LA officers should other exceptional circumstances exist whereby a child compromises the health, wellbeing or safety of staff or other children.

Orchard Vale Community 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. If current plans and support packages exist for these pupils the school will continue to provide for these as best as possible in conjunction with the relevant agencies. The lead person for this will be: Fiona Pearce.

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 school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting CORONAVIRUS, Orchard Vale Community School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

2.1 Recording attendance

All schools should continue to record attendance in the register. Schools should follow up on absences of the pupils who are expected to be in school, but where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, it is expected that schools will authorise the absence during this national lockdown period. Absence will not be penalised.

Where schools grant a leave of absence to a vulnerable child or young person they should still speak to parents and carers, and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions should focus on the welfare of the child or young person and ensuring that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

2.2 Children deemed vulnerable pupils (Definition)

All schools and colleges are expected to allow and strongly encourage vulnerable children and young people to attend. Parents or carers of vulnerable children and young people are strongly encouraged to take up the place.

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full-time, they should not be marked as Code X unless they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining in accordance with Public Health England / Government advice. If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent should let the school know. It is expected that schools will grant applications for leave of absence given the exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as Code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

If the setting feel that the child is at risk, or other welfare concerns exist, then the school must escalate their concerns appropriately to other agencies.

2.3 Children of critical workers

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in DfE guidance. This group includes pupils where at least one parent or carer is a critical worker and whilst the expectation is that children will be kept

at home if they can, the pupil may go to school or college if required. Schools should speak to parents to identify children of critical workers who need to go to school, and on which day or days a place is needed. Schools should use Code X on days or half days when a place is not required, or on any occasion when the child is self-isolating or quarantining because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

However, where the child of a critical worker is expected to attend a session and does not do so, the school should record the absence as Code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

2.4 Pupils who are not defined as vulnerable or critical worker children as above

All pupils who are not eligible to be in school should be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

Children or young people who are clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school at this time. (Guidance) Pupils following this guidance should receive Code X. However, if it is agreed that a pupil in this category should attend school, then normal attendance and or Code C marks (unless another authorised absence code is more applicable) should be used.

3.0 DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

Orchard Vale Community School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL. During this extra ordinary situation their contact details are as follows:

Role	Name	Contact Number 1	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Fiona Pearce	01271 375074	fpearce@ventrus.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Robinne Lowrey	01271 375074	rlowrey@ventrus.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Caroline Harding	01271 375074	charding@ventrus.org.uk

3.1 DSL cover in school

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 child protection records 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.

3.2 Informing staff

It is important that all school staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy), or the named school leader, Orchard Vale Community School will inform all staff and volunteers of changes to the details above.

Therefore, 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 or seek support and liaise with Early Help professionals.

Any changes to the DSL on duty will also be shared with those staff working from home via email. School will also have a daily information board sharing the DSL and safeguarding contacts for the day for all staff working on site.

Any changes to the Safeguarding team details will also be shared with Babcock LDP and Devon County Council.

4.0 REPORTING A CONCERN

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy which can be done remotely via email or through telephone. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access any electronic system from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher or Safeguarding contact. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. All staff should refresh themselves of the contact details for their local children's social care service 01392 383000.

4.1 Reporting a concern about an adult/the HT

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children 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 immediately.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Director of School Improvement (DOSI) for the school: Claire Bailey cbailey@ventrus.org.uk
Ashley Leeson aleeson@ventrus.org.uk

5.0 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

DSL training will continue to be available virtually, therefore it is important that any staff that are acting within a DSL or DDSL capacity undertakes appropriate level of training.
All school staff must continue to have safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020), DSLs should ensure they communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child. This should be achieved through emails and similar electronic means.

Where new staff or volunteers are recruited they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction as identified in the Ventrus Induction policy.

6.0 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, Orchard Vale Community 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 (2020) (KCSIE).

In response to CORONA VIRUS, 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 Orchard Vale Community School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 -188 of KCSIE. Under **no circumstances** will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Orchard Vale Community 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 179 of KCSIE. Orchard Vale Community School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 182 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral. During the coronavirus 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, Orchard Vale Community School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164 to 173 in KCSIE.

Where staffing requirements within Ventrus requires a member of staff to attend a school that is not their normal place of work, schools should seek assurance from Ventrus HR that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training and all pre-employment safeguarding requirements are in place. This information should be available on SCR Tracker (online) for their 'home' school/base and would not need to be immediately transferred – this should be checked with the school DOSI who can access the information via SCR tracker online and confirm all relevant checks are in place.
On arrival, the staff member must have access to a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements and contact details.

7.0 ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Orchard Vale Community 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.

7.1 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 or suffering abuse. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, to the police. Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the code of conduct.

Orchard Vale Community School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only, unless as a result of risk assessments confirmed with the Headteacher.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas – be mindful of picture in backgrounds.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms agreed by school leaders
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

7.2 Online safety at home

School will continue to support parents, sharing online safety information, websites and resources for them to utilise on the school website and in school communications and updates. E.g. links to CEOPs, ThinkUKnow.

8.0 SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

Orchard Vale Community School 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. Details of this plan must be recorded, as should a record of contact made. The communication plans

can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits (if appropriately risk assessed). Other individualised contact methods should be carefully considered, ideally working with families, and recorded.

Orchard Vale Community School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. Any such plan must be reviewed at least weekly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate. The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and through school newsletters. Orchard Vale Community School 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 and carers

All staff at Orchard Vale Community School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Orchard Vale Community 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. Orchard Vale Community School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. We 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. Orchard Vale Community School will continually refer to the most recent 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. Where staff have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they discuss them immediately with senior leaders.

9.0 PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Orchard Vale Community School 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 their in house reporting systems outlined within the settings 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 and appropriate referrals made.