



## **Education My Life Matters**

# **COVID-19 School Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection**

**School Name; Education My Life Matters Policy**  
**Date Created: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021 Revised: September 2022**

This addendum of the Education My Life Matters Safeguarding, and Child Protection Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

<b>1. Context</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Key Contacts</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Vulnerable Children</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Attendance Monitoring</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Designated Safeguarding Lead</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Reporting a Concern</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>7. Safeguarding Training and Induction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>8. Safer Recruitment/Volunteers and Movement of Staff</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>9. Online Safety in Schools and Colleges</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>10. Children and Online Safety away from School and College</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>11. Supporting Children not in School</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>12. Supporting Children in School</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>13. Parents and Carers</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>14. Visiting Professionals</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>15. Peer on Peer abuse</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>16. Support from the Independent Education Board</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b> .....	<b>12</b>

Throughout this document Education My Life Matters will be referred to as “EMLM.

## **1. Context**

From 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 parents and carers 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 and for children who are regarded as vulnerable.

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.

On Friday 27 March 2020, the government published safeguarding guidance for schools, colleges and other providers. Whilst Keeping Children Safe in Schools 2020 remains the key statutory document for schools, the DfE have issued interim guidance during the coronavirus outbreak.

Government guidance can be found here: <http://safeguarding.info/covid19safeguarding>. Within this addendum, EMLM will reflect any updated advice from the three safeguarding partners (Social Care, Police, Health).

## 2. Key Contacts

<b>Key Contacts</b>			
<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>	<b>Contact Email</b>
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Tameka Prince	020 8698 9663	t.prince@emlm.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mark Reid	020 8698 9663	m.reid@emlm.org.uk
Lead teacher	Cordelia Campbell	020 8698 9663	c.campbell@emlm.org.uk
Chair Governors	Charmaine Walters	020 8698 9663	c.walters@emlm.org.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Denzil Bell	020 8698 9663	d.bell@emlm.org.uk

## 3. 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 deputy) 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.

## **Supporting students**

EMLM is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. This includes ensuring that all learners who are learning from home during school closure know where to find help and have an opportunity to discuss any concerns with school staff.

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

EMLM 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 COVID-19.

EMLM 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 is will be: Mark Reid/Akilah Muhammad

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 EMLM will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, EMLM or the Social Worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

EMLM will encourage our vulnerable learners and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

#### **4. 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.

EMLM and Social Workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – EMLM will then follow up on any learner that they were expecting to attend, who does not. EMLM will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

#### **HOW WILL THIS LOOK IN YOUR SCHOOL?**

To support the above, EMLM 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 learner does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, EMLM will notify their Social Worker.

#### **5. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

EMLM has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL. Contact details are on page 2 of this addendum.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Akilah Muhammad/Mark Reid**

## **The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mark Reid**

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 online management system, 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 EMLM staff and volunteers 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 multiagency meetings, which can be done remotely.

### **6. 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.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their cause for concern form, from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher. 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 in the school, they should report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. 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 around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: **Eyvonne Browne**

## **7. 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 (2020). 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 EMLM, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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.

## **8. 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, EMLM 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 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.

In terms of video conferencing options, you should decide what is most appropriate for you but we would recommend using Microsoft Teams or Zoom. You can use this to video call a candidate via their laptop or mobile phone. Microsoft Teams or Zoom can be easily installed onto a laptop using this link or by downloading the Microsoft Teams app on any smart phone. You would then send them an invitation to a Teams meeting as usual. The DDC and DBS have said they have strong business continuity and disaster recovery plans in place and, therefore, their standard SLAs should not be affected by the current situation.

Where EMLM 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.

EMLM 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.

EMLM 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](mailto: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, EMLM will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **9. Online safety in School**

EMLM 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.

## **10. Children and Online Safety away from School**

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

EMLM 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
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- 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 should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

## **11. Supporting Children not in School**

EMLM is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a learner 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 plans can include remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

EMLM 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 and social media pages.

EMLM 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 EMLM need to be aware of this in setting expectations of learners' work where they are at home.

EMLM 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.

## **12. Supporting Children in School**

EMLM is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.

EMLM will continue to be a safe space for all learners to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to learner ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

EMLM 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 hand washing/sanitising and other safety measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

EMLM will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable learners on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where EMLM has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the school governors.

### **13. Parents and Carers**

We value the relationships and communication between parents/carers and the school. Unfortunately, in the current climate, in order to keep staff and learners safe, we have had to introduce measures to restrict access to the building and staff. Parents/Carers should not enter beyond the school office and should maintain social distancing whilst dropping off or collecting their child(ren).

Parents/Carers are encouraged to make appointments in advance via the school office by email or telephone. Parents/Carers with appointments are asked to observe social distancing and following government guidance.

### **14. Visiting professionals**

Visiting professionals to our school will be restricted to allow only essential access and with approval from the Strategic Lead or Lead Head Teacher. There will be a checklist of approved visitors to the site which will be updated by the school's Business Manager and DSL. Any visitors will be requested to sign in, read and confirm that they will comply with the school's guidance. They must ensure that they use hand sanitiser on entry to the building and maintain social distancing where possible. Visiting professionals will be restricted to using a single meeting room which will be subject to frequent cleaning.

### **15. Peer on Peer Abuse**

EMLM 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 of the Safeguarding and 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.

## 16. Support from the Independent Education Board

The Independent Education Board (IEB) will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

The IEB will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.

Appendix 1



### COVID-19 Access Restrictions

#### Individual Self Isolation Assessment:

As part of the current Government guidelines for protecting individuals who are at risk of exposure to COVID-19, all persons entering the School are required to complete the below document, sign and date before access will be granted.

Note: anyone who meets one of the following criteria should not come on site and return home for self-isolation:

Name: .....

#### Do you have any of the following symptoms?

Yes No

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste

#### Are you a clinically vulnerable person?

Yes No

Classification of this as below:

- Aged 70 or older
- Chronic respiratory disease
- Chronic heart disease

- Chronic Kidney disease
- Chronic Liver disease
- Chronic neurological condition
- Diabetes
- A Weakened immune system
- (any other advised by HM Gov i.e. Pregnant)

**Are you living with someone in self-isolation or a clinically extremely vulnerable person? Yes  
No**

Signed: ..... Date:.....

**Person permitted on to site (to be completed by Strategic Lead/Principal/SLT):**

Name: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Appendix 2



## **COVID-19 Visitor Questionnaire**

The safety of our pupils and employees remain EMLM's priority. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to our pupils and employees, we are conducting a simple screening questionnaire for transient workers (NonAcademy Staff) e.g. contractors, social workers, educational professionals.

Your participation is important to help us take precautionary measures to protect you and everyone in this building.

Visitor's Name:	Contact number or email:
Visitor's Company/Organization:	Name of School Host:
Reason for visit:	



