

Annex 1



Merrydale
Junior School

Be the Best you can Be

**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection at
Merrydale Junior School and re-opening**

School Name: Merrydale Junior School

Policy owner: Catriona Mugglestone

Date: 30th March

Date shared with staff: initially 30th March

1. 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 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 Merrydale Junior School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Catriona Mugglestone	0116 276 7708	cmugglestone@dsatmerrydale.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Antony Corbett	0116 276 7708	acorbett@dsatmerrydale.org
Headteacher	Catriona Mugglestone	0116 276 7708	cmugglestone@dsatmerrydale.org
Chair of Governors	Lesley Butcher		lbutcher@dsatmerrydale.org
Safeguarding Governor / Trustee	Lesley Butcher		lbutcher@dsatmerrydale.org

Any individual school contacts:

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Clair Munton Pastoral Support, 0116 276 7708

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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.

Merrydale Junior 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. The lead person for this will be: Helen Smith

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 increased 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 Merrydale Junior School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Merrydale Junior School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

In the event of total school closure the vulnerable children will be phoned at regular intervals by the pastoral team. The team will be making sure the children are safe and well and discuss issues with parents if there is a need to do so.

The pastoral team will prepare a list of vulnerable children and contact details. They will also prepare a secondary list of children who are regular visitors to the pastoral team and need emotional support. The secondary children will be contacted at least once a week by a member of the pastoral team to ensure they are safe and well and feeling okay.

Merrydale Junior School will set up a page for pastoral needs that children can contact the pastoral team if they feel worried or anxious.

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.

If Merrydale Junior School has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

Merrydale Junior School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Merrydale Junior School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Merrydale Junior School 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, Merrydale Junior School 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, Merrydale Junior School will notify their social worker.

For all children the on-line learning platforms will form the basis of communication between school and child. In year 6 this will be through TEAMS. In year 5 this will be in the form of TEAMS and/or the school blog. In year 3 and 4 the school blog is the main way that children will show their attendance. The children will do this by leaving a short message or by completing tasks. Teachers will log on each day and complete the attendance registers stored in TEAMS. The teachers will also look for activity across numerous on-line platforms provided by the school. Such as TT Rockstars, Accelerated reader, and Century AI. The teachers will synthesize this information to build a picture of engagement and to keep track of attendance.

Once the daily attendance registers are completed our Pastoral Lead, ELSA, and parent link worker will contact those children that have not been 'seen' through the learning platforms. They will be supported by bi-lingual teaching staff. This will work will continue until the crisis has passed.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Merrydale Junior School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Catriona Mugglestone

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Antony Corbett, Helen Smith, Clair Munton, Donna O'Connor, Radhika Raval, Gilly Williams, and Laura Hackett

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, 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 Merrydale Junior School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

In the event of total school closure the DSLs will maintain contact through the CPOM system. Each DSL will maintain contact with the vulnerable child and Social worker they are working with. Teachers will be able to phone in concerns, e-mail, use TEAMS to share concerns. DSL meetings will be organised through the TEAMS system in order to discuss vulnerable children and contact with school.

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 Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher and the Trust Safeguarding Manager. 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 use a yellow form to 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 around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors:
Lesley Butcher

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

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 Merrydale Junior School, 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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

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, Merrydale Junior 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 (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.

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

Where Merrydale Junior School 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.

Merrydale Junior 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 163 of KCSIE.

Merrydale Junior School 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,

Merrydale Junior School 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

Merrydale Junior 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.

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 Child Protection 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 as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

Merrydale Junior 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
- 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 must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

Merrydale Junior School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

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 on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Merrydale Junior School 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.

Merrydale Junior 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/carers. Teachers at Merrydale Junior School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Merrydale Junior School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Merrydale Junior School 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.

Merrydale Junior School 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.

Meerydale Junior 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 on CPOMS.

Where Merrydale Junior School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the trust.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Merrydale Junior 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 the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of 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.

Re-opening the school.

As part of the government plan to re-open schools Merrydale Junior School is planning to re-open to Year 6 during the week beginning 1st June. We have planned for a full return of year 6 children, but we doubt that we will get the full cohort in straight away. The Pastoral team are working with parents to communicate the plans the school has, to keep the children safe while at school. We hope that this will encourage the parents to send their children to school.

We will look at the transition work required for Year 6.

Safeguarding while re-opened.

For the children that will return to Merrydale Junior School the pre-COVID lockdown safeguarding procedures will resume. Teachers have access to CPOMS and will send concerns via this system to the DSLs who will then follow up on concerns. The previous Safeguarding policy will provide the systems and procedures for us to follow.

All meetings for children with CP plans will continue to be attended as they have been.

The school is factoring in time for teachers to continue to maintain the on-line learning for the year 3, 4 and 5 children. We will continue to implement the strategies in this document to safeguard the children who are not with us in school.

DSL meetings will continue to meet once a week in order to ensure the children's needs are met. The DSL meetings will follow strict social distancing and may be conducted on TEAMS. A standing agenda item for Merrydale Junior school is on-line presence so that we can assess children who are potentially at risk of becoming missing in education due to their lack of engagement on-line.

The school has also organised phone calls from teachers and the Pastoral team to check upon children who do not engage in on-line learning. The school are organising the shielding staff to look at the on-line learning to lift the burden from staff.

The school and trust have thoroughly Risk Assessed the return to school for the year 6 children in order to ensure their safety in school. The Pastoral team and teachers are planning a curriculum that will help the children to deal with any anxiety, or other issues that they may have from the COVID lock down.

This policy will be reviewed once the children have returned in-line with DSAT expectations. Any adjustments will be made and referred back to the AB board.