



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

### **The Thomas Lord Audley School**

School Name: The Thomas Lord Audley School

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

Date shared with staff: 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020

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## 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 vulnerable children and 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.

From 1st June 2020 (at the earliest), early years and primary school settings covering EYFS, Year 1 & Year 6 were asked to welcome the return of these students following rigorous risk assessment. Subsequently, from 15th June secondary schools should be in a position to offer face-to-face support for no more than a quarter of Year 10 & 12 cohort at any one time. In both settings, the full-time provision for vulnerable & children of key workers remains unchanged alongside supporting all other pupils at home, making use of the available remote education support.

This addendum of the Thomas Lord Audley School's 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        | Ann Bryant        | 01206 547911   | Ann.bryant@tla.school            |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | Mandy Davis       | 01206 547911   | Mandy.davis@tla.school           |
| Head                                | Helena Boast      | 01206 547911   | Helena.boast@tla.school          |
| Chair of LGC                        | Stephen Whitfield | 01206 575488   | Stephen.whitfield@stanway.school |
| LGC Safeguarding Governor           | Brian Palmer      | 01206 575488   | Brian.palmer@stanway.school      |

## 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.

The Academy 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: Suzie Biggins who can be contacted at [suzie.biggins@tla.school](mailto:suzie.biggins@tla.school)

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 Thomas Lord Audley School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Thomas Lord Audley School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

### **Attendance monitoring**

As of 1st June the DfE has issued updated guidance for schools regarding student attendance and how it should be recorded and submitted to the DfE:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings/process-for-recording-attendance-and-using-the-educational-setting-status-form>

To summarise, there are three main points:

1. Schools should now resume taking attendance registers.
2. Schools should use the codes suggested below by the DfE to record attendance and absence in the attendance register.
3. All settings should continue to submit daily attendance figures using the educational setting status form by midday everyday.

### Attendance codes to be used

\* 'X' (not required to be in school) for students who are not in an eligible year group or priority group (either vulnerable or children of key workers). This may also include children who are in eligible years but are not among the quarter of students expected in school at a given time.

\* 'Y' (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances) for students who are eligible to attend a session but do not. This includes students in eligible year groups, vulnerable students and children of



key workers, students who are either shielding, self-isolating or have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school. To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the absence is due to shielding or isolation.

- \* 'I' (illness) where a student cannot attend school due to illness. To help with the educational settings form, you should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms.

- \* 'C' (leave of absence authorised by the school) where a student does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school.

At this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

#### *Pupils who are attending other schools*

- \* Where code 'D' is used to record dual registered students, schools should continue to do so where the pupil is not expected to attend the session in question as they are attending the other school at which they are registered.

- \* A host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the pupil will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the pupil as attending an approved education activity using code B (off-site educational activity) - the host school does not need to add this child to their attendance register but should keep a record of their attendance for safeguarding purposes and include the child in their daily totals for the educational setting status form - schools should put in place arrangements whereby the host school notifies the home school of any absences.

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these instead, such as an M code for a medical appointment.

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

To support the above, Thomas Lord Audley 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, Thomas Lord Audley School will notify their social worker.





### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Thomas Lord Audley School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Ann Bryant

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mandy Davis

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 recording 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 Thomas Lord Audley School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On 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.

### **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 the designated safeguarding email address, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access the designated email address from home, they should email the 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 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: Stephen Whitfield.

The Sigma Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations. The Sigma lead will be the Employee Relations Manager (or, if unavailable, the Trust HR Manager).



## **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 Thomas Lord Audley 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 of pre-employment checks 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 their substantive headteacher 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, Thomas Lord Audley 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). During the COVID-19 period, face-to-face selection interviews may be conducted by video link.

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.

Where Thomas Lord Audley 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.

Thomas Lord Audley 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. Any such referrals will be made by the Employee Relations Manager on behalf of the Trust. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.







Thomas Lord Audley School will continue to consider and, where appropriate, 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. Any such referrals will be made by the Employee Relations Manager on behalf of the Trust.

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, Thomas Lord Audley 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**

Thomas Lord Audley 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 Sigma Trust Code of conduct.

Thomas Lord Audley 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 provided by the school or the Sigma Trust to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

### **Supporting children not in school**

Thomas Lord Audley 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 as should a record of contact made.

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

Thomas Lord Audley 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 Academy will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Thomas Lord Audley 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 Thomas Lord Audley School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Thomas Lord Audley 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 in the appropriate way.

### **Supporting children in school**

Thomas Lord Audley School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Thomas Lord Audley 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.

Thomas Lord Audley 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.





Thomas Lord Audley 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.

Where Thomas Lord Audley 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 Sigma Trust.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Thomas Lord Audley School recognises that during partial closure and phased return for identified year groups 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 Academy 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.

### **Support from the Sigma Trust**

The Sigma Trust will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the school and the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

