



Covid-19: The Vale Academy Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Annexe A

May 2020

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to:

- Delta Academy staff
- Delta Core team staff

Protective marking

Not protectively marked.

Review date

This policy will be in place during the Covid-19 related amended provision and will cease to apply once schools reopen.

Revision History

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR
1	March 2020	Policy issued.	Sarah Gill
2	May 2020	Policy revised.	Sarah Gill

1. KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Andy Collins 01652 294511 collinsA7@valeacademy.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Jill Cullum 01652 294511 cullumj@valeacademy.org.uk
Head of Academy/Principal	Nicola Williams 01652 294511 williamsn@valeacademy.org.uk
ELT Education Lead	Chris Mitchell 0345 1960033 Chris.mitchell@deltatrust.org.uk
Trust Director of Inclusion and Student Support	Sarah Gill sarah.gill@deltatrust.org.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	David White Contact via elt@deltatrust.org.uk

2. CONTEXT

From 20th 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 – who absolutely need to attend.

Academies and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children – children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents/carers are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot safely be cared for at home.

From 1st June 2020, a greater number of children will be returning to education as schools extend their provision beyond the provision of emergency childcare to the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils.

This addendum of the Delta Academies Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during the time of school closure and transition opening period.

3. VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

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.

Children with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents/carers, to determine whether the child will be safe or safer at school. Where a child is deemed to be safe or safer at school, we recommend that they attend.

Where a risk assessment determines a child with an EHCP will be safer at home, we will recommend that they stay at home.

Many children and young people with EHC plans can have their needs met and safely remain at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services.

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.

Mr A Collins 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: Nicola Hewitt

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 The Vale Academy will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, The Vale Academy or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

The Vale Academy will support our vulnerable children and young people to attend an education setting, including remotely, if needed.

A risk assessment will be undertaken for vulnerable children who may not be able to follow instructions and/ or exhibit challenging behaviours which may compromise their own safety or the safety of staff and other students in a school setting. (Appendix A) The safety of pupils and staff is paramount and the SENDCo and DSL will work with professionals and parents when conducting risk assessments whilst considering the health and safety and best interests of the child.

[DfE Guidance: Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus \(Covid-19\) outbreak - actions for educational providers and other partners](#)

4. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Schools and colleges should resume taking their attendance register from 1 June and continue to complete the online Educational Setting Status form which gives the Department for Education daily updates on how many children and staff are attending.

The attendance of vulnerable children is expected. Vulnerable children – regardless of year group, that have not been attending are expected to return to school where this would now be appropriate for them to do so.

The Vale Academy will work with and support the relevant families and pupils to return to school, where attendance is appropriate.

The Vale Academy 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. Contact will be made by telephone.

How will this look in your Academy?

To support the above, The Vale Academy will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available. Numbers will be added to CPOMS contacts page to ensure they can be accessed remotely as required.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at an education setting, or discontinues, The Vale Academy will notify their social worker. In the absence of the social worker, their manager will be informed.

5. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The Vale Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mr Andy Collins

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Jill Cullum

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 Academy or school.

It is important that all Vale Academy staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person and how to contact to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency 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 Trust Child Protection and 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, Principal/Head of Academy and the Trust Director of Inclusion and Student Support. 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 Academy, they should report this immediately to the Principal/Head of Academy or the designated lead on site. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the

Principal/Head of Academy whilst away from the Academy, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal/Head of Academy.

Concerns around the Principal/Head of Academy should be reported via email to ELT@deltatrust.org.uk.

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

Parents/carers and children are able to report concerns remotely via the safeguarding link on the academy web site. Reports are signposted to designated staff during business hours Monday to Friday. Information may also be passed to Social Care and Police in the interests of safeguarding children.

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 Academy 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, enter The Vale Academy they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our Academy, 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, Academies should seek assurance from the Trust Director of HR that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, confirmation of local safeguarding processes will take place including 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, the Trust 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.

The Vale Academy 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.

The Vale Academy 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 Academy is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be on site, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, The Vale Academy 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 EDUCATION SETTINGS

The Vale Academy 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 THE EDUCATION SETTING

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 Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding 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 Staff code of conduct.

The Vale Academy will not be delivering any live virtual lessons during the period of school closure.

11. SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN AN EDUCATION SETTING

The Vale Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

The DSL (or deputy) will provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to school. Where possible staff will try and speak directly to children to help identify any concerns. Staff will (where possible) make calls from the academy site via school phones and devices. Where staff are working from home and use personal phones to make calls, they will withhold their personal number.

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 staff have made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact and phone contact. Home visits or drive by arrangements will not be conducted. If concerns are raised that a child and family are not able to be contacted, the DSL must consider if threshold is met to make a referral to social care or Police. All referrals should be recorded on CPOMS.

The Vale Academy 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.

The Vale Academy recognises that being in an education setting is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupil and their parents/carers. Teachers at The Vale Academy need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work when they are at home.

The Vale Academy 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.

12. SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN AN EDUCATION SETTING

The Vale Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

The Vale Academy will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The Vale Academy 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 the spread of COVID-19.

The Vale Academy 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 The Vale Academy has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – these will be discussed immediately with the Trust.

13. MENTAL HEALTH

The Vale Academy recognises that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents.

Where The Vale Academy has concerns about a child, support will be provided. This may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone for those children still not attending provision or from pastoral staff in school. Referrals to specialist support services will be made as required.

14. PEER ON PEER ABUSE

The Vale Academy recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where an Academy receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles set out in Part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The Academy 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.

15. SUPPORT FROM THE TRUST

The Director of Inclusion and Student Support will provide support 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 Trust will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of a telephone call or online meeting.

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