

## 1. Introduction

This annex incorporates the Government's latest advice on Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and COVID-19 safeguarding guidance when compared to 'normal' business. It should be read in conjunction with VHA full Child Protection Policy. It is available to all staff and published on the school website.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will review this annex as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance.

## 2. Supporting All Children During COVID-19

Viewley Hill Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.

- VHA 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 that the staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate and enable effective social distancing to maximise safety.
- VHA will refer to the government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and will continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.
- VHA 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.
- Where VHA has concerns about the impact of staff absence on maintaining safe provision – such as the Designated Safeguarding Leads, senior leaders or first aiders – we will discuss this with the LA's Chief Adviser and Chair of Governors.

## 3. Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times, the safeguarding of all children at our school – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- all staff are required to remain vigilant
- if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy (DSL) will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

## 4. Current School Position

We are currently providing a limited childcare provision for pupils whose parents are critical workers (as identified by government guidance) and those allocated a social worker in the following circumstances:

- Child Protection Plans (CPP)
- Children in Need (CIN)
- Children who are Looked After (CLA).

Provision is staffed on a 3 week rota of VHA employed staff.

The provision will remain under constant review throughout the period of closure and the Headteacher will liaise with Middlesbrough Local Authority if a time arises whereby it is no longer possible to safely operate this provision.

## 5. Safeguarding Partners' Advice

We continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners, and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting children with Education, Health and Care plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need. There are no changes to current advice or procedures.

## 6. Safeguarding Practice during COVID-19

All usual expectations regarding staff behaviour and response to any safeguarding concerns remain in force during this time.

- Should staff have any safeguarding concerns they will report them as normal to the DSL or DDSL without delay.
- Staff will continue to follow school policy if they have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children.
- School staff will continue to be vigilant of child and family welfare and use established systems to record and report **all** concerns.
- CPOMS will continue to be used :
  - To record incidents relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour, attendance and to alert key staff to these incidents.
  - As a communication log to record conversations (phone, email, letter, face to face) that have taken place with regard to individual children.

## 7. DSL and Deputy DSL Roles

The DSL is Helen Malbon. The Deputy DSLs are Sam Gardiner and Claire Scaife.

- The DSL or a deputy DSL will be on duty in school each day between 8am and 3pm.
- Helen Malbon (DSL) is available by phone or email when not in school for any enquires regarding the safeguarding of pupils, and any staff related issues. (DSL and DDSLs out of school contact details have been shared with all staff.)
- In the unlikely event that no DSL or DDSL is available, staff have been directed to contact the MACH and seek advice (See 14). In addition, there is a capacity plan in place which identifies two local Headteachers who will offer 'Virtual Leadership' in the absence of all leaders at VHA.
- The Safeguarding Team are monitoring identified pupils and families, making contact via phone and home visits on a weekly basis.
- The Safeguarding Team will keep the LA updated on the welfare of vulnerable pupils and continue to discuss concerns and liaise with other agencies and professionals.

## 8. Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Children meeting the government criteria as 'vulnerable' are offered a place at school during the closure. VHA currently has no children with an EHC plan.

A nominated member of the safeguarding team is responsible for maintaining contact with families and social workers. In addition, these staff will continue to make full contribution via email or telephone to any social care discussions such as strategies, conferences or PEP plans or reviews.

## 9. Supporting Mental Health and Well-Being

We firmly believe that positive relationships are the foundation to a safe and successful school and strong mental health and well-being. As part of our approach during the school closure, teachers will keep in regular contact with their class predominantly through Marvellous Me and Twitter. Through these platforms, encouragements, activities and celebrations will be shared in order to promote a sense of connection and well-being.

In addition Mrs Moore (PSA) will telephone each family once a week to check in, ask after general welfare and enquire as to whether any additional support may be offered.

## 10. Peer on peer abuse

Given the very different circumstances school is in, safeguarding in relation to this area of need should be monitored closely. Should any concern come to light regarding this type of abuse it will be shared immediately with the DSL or deputies in order for further advice to be sought from MACH if necessary.

## 11. Staff training and induction

Our DSL and deputy DSLs all have up to date training. All current staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- The individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any cause for concern.
- There are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual.
- The individual remains suitable to work with children.

## 12. 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, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment Policy.

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.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential that from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

## 13. Keeping children safe online

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with according to the Child Protection Policy and, where appropriate, referrals should be made to the DSL who will notify children's social care and if required, the police.

Interaction online should follow the same principles as set out in the school code of conduct. Parents/carers, and children will be given regular reminders about keeping safe online.

Staff will ensure that any interactions with pupils, parents and carers online adhere to the staff code of conduct and is professional at all times.

- School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.
- Staff will only utilise recommended platforms that involve pupils having direct contact with each other and staff.
- School will carefully select sites recommended for pupils to access that are assessed by staff as adhering to the highest standards for online safety.

### **14. Emergency contacts:**

Any concerns to be passed immediately to social worker/MACH 01642 130700/Admin 01642 513600 or escalated to Sue Butcher: [sue\\_butcher@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:sue_butcher@middlesbrough.gov.uk)