

**Annex 1**

**COVID-19 School Arrangements for  
Safeguarding and Child Protection  
at Vale of Evesham School**

**Policy Owner: Advance Trust**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**Date shared with staff: 3rd April 2020**

## **1. Context**

From 20<sup>th</sup> 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 Vale of Evesham Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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## Key Contacts:

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## Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and/or young people up to the age of 25 with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. This definition encompasses most of our pupils at Vale of Evesham. The only exceptions are those pupils in Nursery who are on an assessment place. Those who have a social worker includes 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.

All will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school 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 deputies) 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.

Vale of Evesham School will continue to work with and support Children's Social Care 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 Rachel Perks, supported by Nicky Sentence and Dave Short.

Whilst, looked-after children are identified within the cohort of vulnerable children who could need a continued school place, the guidance from Worcestershire Children First identifies that those pupils placed with professional foster carers are not in such need.

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 Vale of Evesham School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, but the pupil remains vulnerable, Vale of Evesham School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. Vale of Evesham School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remote learning if needed.

### **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.

Vale of Evesham School and social workers will agree individually with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. Vale of Evesham School will follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child and the child subsequently does not attend.

To support the above, Vale of Evesham School will, when communicating with parents 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, we will notify their social worker.

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.

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 accessing and updating the child protection online

management system (Edukey) 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 Vale of Evesham School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). Each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them. Contact number and details are at the front of this addendum.

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

All staff have been issued with the contact number for the DSL Rachel Perks and Deputy DSLs . This will allow all staff working on the school site or working remotely to raise any safeguarding concerns promptly with a member of the safeguarding team.

### **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 Edukey.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access Edukey from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads. 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 Edukey 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, Daniel Thombs.

### **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 Vale of Evesham 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 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.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter Vale of Evesham School or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Vale of Evesham 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.

Where Vale of Evesham 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.

Vale of Evesham 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.

Vale of Evesham 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](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, Vale of Evesham School keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in schools**

Vale of Evesham School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

### **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 safeguarding policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching and interactions should follow the same principles as set out in the School's code of conduct.

Vale of Evesham 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 involved in virtual interactions, 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.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Vale of Evesham School to communicate with pupils.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

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

Vale of Evesham 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, as should a record of the contact you have made.

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

Vale of Evesham 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. Vale of Evesham 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 and carers. Teachers at Vale of Evesham School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Vale of Evesham 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, when appropriate.

## **Supporting children in school**

Vale of Evesham School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

Vale of Evesham School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. However, it is clear that there will always be additional risk of viral contamination for anybody on the school site.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Vale of Evesham 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.

Vale of Evesham 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 when appropriate.

Where Vale of Evesham School has concerns about the impact of staff absence, such as the absence of our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders we will discuss them immediately with the SLT.

Vale of Evesham School recognises for most vulnerable pupils, attending school is a protective factor. However, pupils on role at Vale of Evesham School often have a complex range of learning needs, medical needs and comorbidities. The Covid-19 pandemic can exacerbate the difficulties pupils experience which may impact on their emotional, psychological and physical well-being. Risk assessments will be completed for vulnerable pupils to consider the individual needs of the pupil, medical conditions, social situations, known health conditions of parents/carers and established behavioural patterns. In cases where there are no actions the school can take to mitigate risk to the student's well-being and attending will expose them to a higher level of risk; alternative support strategies will be used, such as learning/monitoring phone calls and packages of work to support home education.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Vale of Evesham 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 the student. Concerns and actions must be recorded, and appropriate referrals made.

### **Social Distancing**

All staff and pupils working in school will observe the government guidelines on social distancing where possible, recognising that many of our pupils will not be able to socially isolate from others, including staff. Currently these are:

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands regularly