

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

ANNEX 1 – Safeguarding and Child Protection during school closures due to COVID-19

Ratified by the Governing Body: 30th March 2020

Key staff:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Emily Sidhu – Acting Vice Principal
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Joe Creswick - Principal
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Roger Williams – Assistant Principal
Designated member of staff for E-Safety	Ian Hall
Safeguarding Governor	Gill Needham
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Ruth Ellison

1. CONTEXT

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as of 24th March 2020 Ivel Valley has temporarily closed to all pupils, unless their parents/carers are key workers with no other childcare options. This annex to the Safeguarding and Child Protection is based on government guidance published on 27th March 2020. They have highlighted that this is interim safeguarding guidance, it is under review and will be updated. Keeping Children Safe in Education continues to be statutory guidance and **therefore all staff must continue to adhere to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and follow established procedures around reporting concerns**. A number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- With regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- If anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- A DSL or deputy will always be available
- It is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children’s workforce and/or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online
- The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children will continue to work with virtual schools to consider the needs of Looked After Children

2. VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The government have stated that schools should endeavour to provide education for “vulnerable children [which] includes those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans”. They have also stated that “If children can stay safely at home, they should”. Ivel Valley continues to adhere to the principle that due to the aggressive nature of the spread of COVID-19, staff and pupils will be safest at home. Ivel Valley will continue to work cooperatively with health and social care colleagues to protect the most vulnerable children, and to consider individual cases.

Meal vouchers for local supermarkets have been distributed to families with children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), and we will continue to follow government guidance on this.

Quotes from gov.uk.

3. OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Regarding reporting concerns:

- Ivel Valley uses CPOMS, an internet-based recording system, so staff can continue to log concerns, and the safeguarding team can continue to monitor them, remotely and securely.
- In the unlikely event that staff cannot access CPOMS, they should email the DSL and the Principal with their concern.
- If the concern is deemed urgent, staff must ring the school and speak to the member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on site. If it is out of hours or they cannot get hold of a member of SLT, they can contact Central Bedfordshire Children's Services on 0300 300 8585 (working hour), or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours).
- If staff feel that a child is at immediate risk, they must ring the police.

Other operational factors:

- To support the national effort to limit the spread of COVID-19, staff working onsite with pupils will follow the Ivel Valley policy on social distancing, which is based on advice from the government and Public Health England. Staff will support pupils to follow guidance on hand washing.
- There will always be a member of SLT onsite and available to support staff. If they are not a member of the safeguarding team, the DSL or a deputy will always be available on the phone. Up to date contact numbers are all held on Integris, which members of SLT can access.
- Communication and information sharing can continue with social care and health teams via phone calls and emails.
- Where possible, multi-agency meetings will be contributed to either via email updates, or through virtual meeting arrangements.
- Ivel Valley will not be taking on any volunteers during this period. All staff working with children will be employed by Ivel Valley with DBS checks in place.
- SLT will continuously review staffing arrangements – the school will close if there are not enough staff to safely care for the children on site.
- A member of SLT or the admin team will submit required data regarding attendance on a daily basis, to the DfE and CBC.
- Ivel Valley 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.

4. CONTACT WITH FAMILIES

Ivel Valley will endeavour to maintain positive contact with families throughout the period of school closure, which will support safeguarding. Class Dojo is currently used for all classes up to Key Stage 4, which enables secure remote communication between staff and families, complying with GDPR. For

those without Class Dojo, emails and phonecalls are being used to maintain contact. Staff must not use unauthorised methods to communicate with families, such as WhatsApp or other social media.

Measures currently in place:

- Key information to be shared on Class Dojo and ParentMail
- A member of SLT always in the school office to answer phone calls
- Class teachers to post videos / photos / activity ideas / check ins daily on individual class Class Dojo pages
- Daily idea sheets covering all areas of learning to be shared on Class Dojo and the 'home learning' area of the website
- The 'home learning' area of the website contains links to resources supporting mental health and online safety
- The message to be reinforced that work set is designed to be supportive, and not an expectation or additional pressure

Staff will sometimes make phonecalls home to connect with families. The following principles will be followed:

- All phonecalls to be recorded on CPOMS
- If staff are working from home and therefore making a phonecall from a personal device, they must withhold their number, using 141 or equivalent.

Staff may film short videos of themselves. They may also arrange video calls with pupils, with SLT authorisation. The aim of these will be to maintain positive connections with the school community.

The following principles will be followed:

- No one must feel any pressure to film a video of themselves
- Staff can include their children in videos, if appropriate and if consent is given
- Staff must wear suitable clothing
- Videos must be filmed in appropriate areas - for example, not in bedrooms, and with no inappropriate items or images in the background
- Language must be professional and appropriate
- For video calls, staff must use Google Meet and their work email address; if there is an issue with this, they should contact SLT to problem-solve. Where possible, calls should be made during usual working hours, i.e. trying to avoid evenings or weekends. A summary note of the call must be recorded on CPOMS.

Note: this annex may need to be reviewed and updated without governor ratification to reflect changing government guidance. The DSL will notify Safeguarding Governor of any changes.