

Safeguarding Policy Addendum: Covid-19

The Board of Trustees, CEO and Strategic team are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

This policy was created and ratified by the Wensum Trust Board:	22nd January 2021
Responsible for updating:	Strategic Leadership Team
This policy will be reviewed by the Wensum Trust Board: (unless earlier review is recommended by the Wensum Trust or external Safeguarding Advisor)	September 2021
Policy Version:	V2
Signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees:	J. Smith, Chair of Trustees

Associated Documentation

[Keeping Children Safe In Education \(latest edition\)](#)

DFE guidance Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on vulnerable children and young people (March 2020)

Safer Working Practices

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Acceptable use of ICT
- Staff Code of Conduct

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Acle Academy

This addendum to the academy's Safeguarding Policy was created in response to Covid-19. It will be kept under review as circumstances continue to evolve in line with national and local guidance and should be read in conjunction with the full policy document.

This addendum to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains additional information about our safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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5.1. Context

From 5th January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for our academies to remain open 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.

It is crucial that all staff and volunteers understand the continued importance of acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns that arise. The key principles of our approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at our academy remain the same. This guidance has been developed to give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about our safeguarding procedures in light of the current national and local situation. **This appendix should be read in conjunction with the whole school safeguarding policy and not as a standalone document. Unless otherwise stated within this guidance, our normal safeguarding procedures should be adhered to.**

5.2. Key Contact Information:

Role	Name	Contact details incl. those when working remotely:
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Nic Bliss Assistant Principal	nbliss@acle.norfolk.sch.uk 01493 750431 ext. 639
Deputy DSL	Isobel John Behaviour Co-ordinator	ijohn@acle.norfolk.sch.uk 01493 750431 ext. 607
Nominated Senior Leader in the absence of a trained DSL	Helen Watts	hwatts@acle.norfolk.sch.uk 01493 750431 ext. 631
Headteacher/Principal	Helen Watts	hwatts@acle.norfolk.sch.uk 01493 750431 ext. 631
Named Safeguarding Governor	Ralph Masterson	info@acle.norfolk.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Matthew Arrowsmith-Brown	chairofgovernors@acle.norfolk.sch.uk

5.3. Providing School places for Vulnerable Children

For the purposes of this guidance, vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans, in line with the [DfE guidance](#).

At Acle Academy we will risk assess the needs of all pupils with an EHC plan in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a place in our academy 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. In line with Government guidance, we appreciate that many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

At Acle Academy our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and other Senior Leaders 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.

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 increased 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 academy staff will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, academy staff and/or the child's allocated social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Our DSLs know who our most vulnerable children are. As an academy, we have the flexibility to offer a place to other pupils we identify as being vulnerable who may be on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

5.4. Attendance monitoring

In line with the DfE guidance, '[Recording the attendance in the school attendance register during the coronavirus outbreak](#)', we will resume taking an attendance register using the appropriate codes to [record attendance and absence](#) in the attendance register. We will submit daily attendance figures to the DfE using the [educational setting status form](#) by midday every day.

At Acle Academy our DSLs will continue to liaise with allocated social workers and will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. Staff will seek advice and guidance from the Local Authority Attendance Team as appropriate. School staff will then follow up on any pupil that we were expecting to attend, who does not in line with our usual attendance procedures. We 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.

All children identified as 'vulnerable' who do not attend the Academy are allocated to specific members of the safeguarding team to make daily contact with. This is done primarily through phone call or email. Where no contact can be made for periods exceeding one day other measures are put into place such as CADS referrals and police welfare checks.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at the academy, or fails to attend as expected, academy staff will notify the child's allocated social worker and agree a plan to contact the family.

To enable us to effectively support the attendance of vulnerable children, we will ask parents/carers to confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

5.5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have identified key designated contacts for safeguarding at our academy in section 4.2. of this guidance.

At Acle Academy we aim to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site whenever possible. We recognise however that this may not be possible, and where this is the case, we will endeavour to ensure that a trained DSL or deputy from the academy can be available to be contacted via phone or online when they are working remotely from home. In some circumstances we might also work with other settings to share trained DSLs or deputies with other academies in the trust or schools within the cluster (who should be available to be contacted via phone or online video).

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding arrangements in place on-site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection/ our online safeguarding management information system, liaising with the off-site DSL (and/or deputy) and, as necessary, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the educational setting.

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to contact and have access to advice from a trained DSL (or deputy). Each day, staff will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

We will continue to work in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Our DSLs will keep up to date with the latest [Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership advice](#) and guidance from the LA. Our DSLs will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely in line with the NSCP guidance on attending and contributing to [child protection conferences](#) and [Developing Child Protection Plans](#).

All DSLs can seek advice regarding any situation from the Strategic Leads (Primary and Secondary) who are the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Managers.

5.6. Procedures for Reporting Concerns

The principles for responding to safeguarding concerns as outlined in Section 5 of the main body of the safeguarding policy still apply. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outline in this policy.

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk including at risk from peer on peer abuse and exploitation. 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.

5.7. Remote education

At Acle Academy we will give clear guidance to all our staff who are providing remote education about appropriate use of devices and ensure there are clear parameters about what contact with pupils should look like in order for children and staff to be kept safe. Staff are reminded that when engaging with pupils and / or parents online they have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.

We have clearly articulated to staff about where and when they will be delivering remote education and have also shared expectations with parents and carers about the school's approach to lessons and how their child(ren) should be accessing these.

Staff are also reminded of the need to adhere to our Staff Code of Conduct and safer working practices guidance. Staff should continue to report any concerns they have about adults who are working with children in line with Section 12 of the safeguarding policy.

All Academy staff continue to have access to their own individual CPOMS log ins and can record all concerns from here. They do not need remote access in order to access CPOMS, this can be accessed from the staff area of the Academy website. CPOMS is checked daily by the Designated Safeguarding Lead with all members of the safeguarding team responding to any actions allocated to them in a swift and timely manner. Staff are also able to notify the DSL if they log a new cause for concern by email as a backup measure, however CPOMS does email alert every new record.

5.8. Staff Training and induction

All existing staff and volunteers have received a safeguarding induction and training. They have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and are expected to continue to follow this guidance. The DSL will ensure that all existing staff receive

this addendum to the safeguarding policy and will communicate 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 join our academy, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction as outlined in Section 4 of the main policy.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to work in our academy, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that on arrival to our academy, we will verify that they have received safeguarding training and they will be given a copy of our safeguarding policy and information about our procedures including information about our DSL arrangements.

5.9. Safer recruitment of staff & 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 and selection policy, the procedures outlined in Section 10 of the safeguarding policy and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

In those circumstances where we continue to use volunteers in our school, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment processes as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE and our own safer recruitment and selection policy. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to work in our academy, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that we will risk assess the movement of staff and seek written assurances from the current employer that the individual has undergone all the safer recruitment required checks as set out in Part 3 of KCSIE and there are no concerns about their suitability to work with children.

At Acle Academy we 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 in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020). We will also continue to make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) in line with statutory guidance and

understand that during the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, Acle Academy we understand that it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that, on any given day, we are aware of which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out. We will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date and use this as a means to log everyone that will be working or volunteering in our academy on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other institutions. The SCR will also be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

5.10. Children moving between settings

Whilst we will endeavour to keep our academy open, in some circumstances our pupils may need to attend another setting. In order to support children attending another setting during this time, the DSL will endeavour to contact the DSL at the receiving setting to provide any relevant welfare and child protection information including any arrangements in place to support them. We will continue to pay regard to data protection and GDPR but these do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

As a minimum, we will ensure that the receiving setting has access to a vulnerable child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is). This will ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible for this exchange of information to occur between DSLs the identified senior leaders will take responsibility for this.

5.11. Online Safety

At Acle Academy we recognise that it is more important than ever that we provide a safe environment for pupils including online. We will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online via our IT systems and/or recommended resources.

The safety of pupils when they are asked to work online is of paramount importance. The same principles as set out our staff code of conduct must be applied to all online teaching. All staff should ensure that they have read the staff code of conduct and associated [safer working practice guidance](#) and are clear about the acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media.

We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

We will ensure that children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes to key school staff, we will also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from external organisations such as:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

We will also communicate with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We will ensure that parents and carers are aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access as well as who from the academy (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Where parents and carers choose to supplement the academy's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors, we will emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

We will signpost parents and carers to advice what will help them keep their children safe online including:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

5.12. Mental Health

At Acle Academy we recognise that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents.

We will ensure that staff understand that mental health issues can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range

of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. DSLs will make reference to the DfE guidance [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) to help identify children who might need additional support, and to put this support in place.

We will consider the provision of pastoral and extra-curricular activities to all pupils, including those learning at home (for example through online activities and assemblies), designed to:

- Support social engagement and maintaining friendships
- Address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

Our DSLs are aware of the support services available to staff, children and families both locally and nationally and will signpost and / or make referrals as appropriate.

5.13. Review of Policy

The Trust will review this policy addendum every year and assess its effectiveness and implementation. Any deficiencies identified shall be corrected and used to inform review of the policy, which will be promoted and implemented throughout the Trust.

The Chief Executive Officer will report on the effectiveness of the policy to the Trust Board as appropriate.