



ST. ALBAN'S CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

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Learning together, side by side with God.

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St Alban's CVA Coronavirus (Covid-19) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Update (To be read in conjunction with St Alban's CVA Main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.)

Updated 1st April 2020, in line with DfE Covid-19 safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance.

CONTEXT

Due to Covid-19 Crisis, from 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools 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.

This is an addendum to the St Alban's CVA Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

St Alban's CVA

Key contacts:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Andrew Monaghan** Head@stalbans.derby.sch.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead's: **Kate Johnson** KJohnson@stalbans.derby.sch.uk & **Patsy Wilson** PWilson@stalbans,derby.sch.uk

Chair of Governors: **Clare Cuomo**

Safeguarding Governor: **Clare Cuomo**

Outline and Eligible Children

Whilst acknowledging the pressure that all schools and colleges are under as a result of the required responses to addressing coronavirus (Covid-19), St Alban's CVA understand it remains essential that we continue to be a safe place for children.

This guidance is designed to support the whole school to ensure we continue to have appropriate regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education and promote the welfare of all our pupils.

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, 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 immediately in line with existing expectation
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy must be available.
- Safer working practices must be maintained -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 safeguarded when they are online.

Schools are being asked to continue 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.

Vulnerable children include those who are supported by social care (have a social worker), those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).

Additional information is available by following the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

At St Alban's CVA, 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.

All Vulnerable children will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority, social workers (where applicable) 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. These risk assessments will be recorded on CPOMs.

Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

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 St Alban's CVA will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent as part of the risk assessment.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, St Alban's CVA or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

St Alban's CVA 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. We will work with social workers to ensure that Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for Looked After Children are up to date with the current education offer that looked after children are accessing.

As well as safeguarding those children who are attending our setting, thought must be given to how we safeguard those children at home who are also deemed to be vulnerable. Safeguarding principles remain unchanged. How we escalate and manage them is communicated here and will be shared with all Governors and staff to ensure they are understood by the whole school community. This document is an annex to our more detailed safeguarding policy which still contains relevant details and information on recognising and responding to abuse and continues to be a source of reference.

In line with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) we are committed to working in partnership with Derby City Local Authority, Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the St Ralph Sherwin catholic Multi Academy Trust. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all should make sure their approach remains child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. We work in a multi-agency way understanding no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding Children Remotely

We remain committed to supporting the safety and wellbeing of our children that are off site and will take the following steps:

- Where vulnerable children are not in school, we will ensure that phone contact is maintained by the school with all vulnerable families at least once per week. If deemed necessary, DSLs may carry out a joint door-step visit. All interactions will be recorded on CPOMs.
- Where it is identified that a child or family are in need of additional support or guidance, we will ensure that this is in place. This may include extra phone calls, signposting and referring to other services. All interactions will be recorded on CPOMs.

- All vulnerable children and families will be provided with a point of contact for support this will be via the school phone, an actively monitored email account and contact through dojo. Sharing of staffs personal phone numbers and emails is not permitted.
- We will ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is available to support staff where they have concerns about a child from interactions with families through remote learning or a support package.

Safeguarding Children on the School Site

We remain committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all of our children. St Alban's CVA will continue to be a safe place for all children that attend and will take the following steps:

- Our Governors and Head Teacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.
- We will ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is available to support staff where they have concerns about a child.
- We will ensure that a first aider will be on site at all times.
- Where we have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Chair of Governors
- We 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.

Where we believe a child is at risk of significant harm or danger on or off-site, we will refer our concerns (by phone in the first instance and follow it up with an online referral) to Children's Social Care – as described in our full Safeguarding Policy.

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.

St Alban's CVA will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon as directed by the government for children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

The St Ralph Sherwin CMAT collects daily attendance figures from the school and is in regular contact with school leaders.

St Alban's CVA will have a weekly register of children due to attend each day after liaising with parents, carers and social workers. We will follow up on any children that we were expecting to attend, who do not by phoning parents / carers and if necessary and concerned, we will carry out a door-step visit. Where there is a social worker in place, we will notify them.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

All concerns will be communicated with the DSL or DDSL's verbally and then recorded on CPOMs.

The DSL is Andrew Monaghan, the DDSL's are Kate Johnson and Patsy Wilson. All staff have their contact numbers.

In the unlikely event of staff being unable to reach the DSL /DDSL's, and they consider a child to be at immediate risk of harm they will contact First response on **01332 641172** and follow it up with an online referral.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher 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:

Mrs Clare Cuomo

The DSL/DDSL & other pastoral staff will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Online Safety

St Alban's CVA will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where pupils are using computers on site, appropriate supervision will be in place.

It is likely many students are accessing internet enable devices more frequently whilst families follow the advice of the government to 'stay at home'. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we continue to create as many opportunities as we can to support and educate children on how to stay safe online. Staff should be mindful of existing polices and the details described by the DfE in KCSiE19 -[teaching-online-safety-in-schools](#) .

St Alban's CVA will only recommend reputable apps and platforms to be used for home learning activities. The use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. 1:1 video calls will not take place between staff and families.

Peer On Peer Abuse

St Alban's CVA recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing children on and off site and providing support to any report of such abuse.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in the main safeguarding policy and in part 5 of KCSiE.

The school will listen and work with the parents/carers and children and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of the child.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMs and appropriate referrals made.

Emotional Wellbeing

We recognise the complexities and challenges of the Covid-19 crisis and the potential impact it may have on the emotional wellbeing of our staff and pupils. We will continually review guidance and cascade information across our workforce and to parents and carers. We ask staff to be vigilant for signs of distress and to respond to them in line with our usual working practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/education/health-safety-and-wellbeing-in-schools>

Parents and carers are informed of guidance to support them and their children.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

Parents and carers are signposted to our school website that has links to appropriate information and support related to positive Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Appropriate information, guidance and support that relates specifically to Covid-19 for parents and their children have also been communicated with parents and carers. This includes social stories about the school closure, signposting to websites full of information and how to access wellbeing support as well as family support.

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.

Any new staff, visitors or volunteers will be risk assessed and inducted in line with existing practice and in compliance with part 3 KCSiE.

Staff should continue to apply the principles of our safer working practice standards and general code of conduct.

It is particularly important that staff pay regard to previous advice and guidance on safer worker practice, especially in relation to any online activity.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the Head teacher is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in St Alban's CVA, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, St Alban's CVA will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSiE.

Safeguarding Training and Safeguarding 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 St Alban's CVA 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. This will include contact numbers and emails for DSL's/DDSLs' if not on site.

In the possible event of staff having to move between schools on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19, any staff arriving at this school from another establishment will be given a tailored induction and copies of the school safeguarding and safer working practice policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

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