



Appendix to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Covid-19 academy closure arrangements for
safeguarding and child protection

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Associated documents:			
NCEA - Safeguarding and child protection policy NCEA – Covid 19 behaviour policy NCEA – Attendance policy			
Links to:			
Keeping Children Safe in Education			

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1. Context

From July 2nd the government announced that all students would return to school from the autumn term 2020. In the event of any lockdown which may occur, this policy automatically comes into effect.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Email
Chair of Governors	Kirsty Cowley	k.cowley@nationalacademy.org.uk
Principal	Martin Brailsford	mbrailsford@nationalacademy.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	David Llewellyn	dllewellyn@nationalacademy.org.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Amy Harmston-Hall	a.harmston-hall@nationalacademy.org.uk

2. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan (CPP) 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.

These students may also have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by the academy or local authority.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with NCEA, the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, guardians, 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. NCEA is committed to maintaining effective provision of free school meals to all eligible children throughout the covid-19 crisis.

Senior leaders in NCEA, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and the deputy designated safeguarding leads) know who our most vulnerable children are. In addition to those children on a child protection plan (CPP), or who are child in need (CIN), or a looked after child (also referred to as 'CLA'), or a home guardian, NCEA expects staff to provide a safeguarding check to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

The NCEA safeguarding team 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. The lead professionals for this will be the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Senior Leader responsible for CLA.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have an underlying health condition that places them at increased risk of infection. 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 the Designated Safeguarding team will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting covid-19, the safeguarding lead or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/guardian following the latest advice set out by Public Health England at the time.

NCEA will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend the provision on offer, including remotely if the home supports the technology. NCEA will provide online learning resources for their respective cohorts during the period of closure.

3. 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. NCEA records the daily attendance of vulnerable children and/or the children of key workers. This daily attendance sheet will be submitted to the Department for Education by 1200 hours in accordance with the guidance as set out in the link below.

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

The NCEA safeguarding teams and social workers will agree with parents/guardians whether children in need should be attending school – the respective academy will then follow up, first day absence calls on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, following the protocol issued by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the event of any child on our confirmed lists not attending, NCEA will adopt the usual practice of first day calls – 'safe and well' checks. The information for ALL attendees will be held by the office/senior staff on the ground. A child who should have been in attendance, but who has not attended will be followed up with a phone call. Once parent/guardian has established the cause of the absence – all authorised absence will be in accordance with the Department for Education guidance – which is the X code.

Communication around attendance/safe and well checks will be fed through to the attendance officer.

There will always be at least one Level 3 trained safeguarding officer available during the school day. A safeguarding team member will be on site each day of the term.

Any concerns should be reported to the respective Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – this will then be logged on MyConcern within 24 hours.

NCEA will have at least ONE member of staff who is first aid trained/paediatric first aid (where applicable) on site.

NCEA will have the contact details of all vulnerable young people attending – this should be held by the most senior member of staff on site and/or the safeguarding lead on site.

Any enquiries around safeguarding or attendance practice should be fed through to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, academy safeguarding staff will notify the child's social worker.

4. The role of the academy Designated Safeguarding Lead

During the period of Covid-19 closure, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) role, in addition to the above, will include, when applicable, updating and managing the MyConcern child protection online management system, liaising with the offsite Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy and other designated staff) 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 academy.

It is important that all staff and volunteers have access to a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will continue to attend all multi-agency meetings, which are likely to be conducted remotely.

5. Reporting a concern

Where NCEA staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the NCEA safeguarding and child protection policy, this includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of NCEA staff cannot access their MyConcern from home, they should email the respective Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Principal. This will ensure that the concern is received and logged.

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

Normal safeguarding whistleblowing protocols are applied.

Concerns around the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be directed to the Principal.

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

NCEA will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

6. Safeguarding training and induction

Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing academy staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). The Designated Safeguarding Lead will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

All existing academy staff have complete the Child Protection Refresher course (2021) via the Educare training system

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter NCEA, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education establishment or children's workforce setting to the academy, NCEA will take into account the Department for Education 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 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and children's barred 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead arrangements.

7. 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, NCEA will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their settings, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) (KCSIE).

In response to covid-19, the DBS has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our academies, NCEA will take into account the Department for Education 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 barred 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

Where the academy is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in CSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

NCEA 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.

NCEA will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 143 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

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any academy hub is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be on site, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, NCEA will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 251 in KCSIE.

8. Online safety

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

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

9. Children and online safety away from NCEA

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

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the NCEA code of conduct and the NCEA remote learning policy.

NCEA leaders, in conjunction with IT personnel 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 delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No one to one's, 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.
- Any live classes should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Any live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by a Trust/NCEA network manager/provider to communicate with pupils.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

10. Supporting children not in academies

NCEA is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 on MyConcern, as should a record of contact have made.

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

The respective academy and its Designated Safeguarding Lead 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The academy will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media channels.

NCEA recognises that school is a protective place for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/guardians. Teachers at NCEA need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

11. Supporting children in the academy

NCEA is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

NCEA will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

NCEA 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 Covid-19.

NCEA will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children across our sites – we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on MyConcern.

Where the academy has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the Governing Body.

12. Peer on peer abuse

NCEA recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where NCEA receives a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the safeguarding and child protection policy.

The safeguarding lead will listen and work with the young person, parents/guardians and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

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