

Annex 1



Temporary Policy Addendum:

COVID-19 college closure arrangements for Safeguarding at Valley College

This Policy addendum is effective from 8th March 2021

Academy Name: Valley College
Policy owner: SJ
Date: 01.03.2021
Date shared with staff: 01.03.2021

Context

On Monday 22nd February 2021, The Prime Minister announced the government's roadmap to cautiously ease lockdown restrictions in England. This included a direction that from 8 March 2021, all learners should attend school/college.

We will ensure that where we care for learners on site, we have appropriate support in place for them.

We will take advice and work with the local safeguarding partners.

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 coronavirus.

This addendum of the Valley College Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

Key contacts

Remain as per the college Safeguarding Policy.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable learners include those who:

- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan;
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including learners who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

Valley College will continue to work with and support social workers where relevant to help protect vulnerable learners.

In circumstances where an advocate is hesitant about or does not want to bring their learner to an education setting, and their learner is considered vulnerable, the social

worker and Valley College will explore the reasons for this directly with the learner and advocate.

Where advocates are concerned about the risk of the learner contracting COVID19, Valley College or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the learner/advocate following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Valley College will encourage all learners to attend college.

Attendance monitoring

We expect all learners to attend college. (The advice for learners who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend college while shielding advice applies nationally).

Advocates are expected to contact the college on the first day of the illness and inform us of the reason for absence so that the correct attendance codes can be used in every case of absence. We expect advocates to make contact to make us aware of the status of any COVID-19 tests that have become necessary and to update the college on the welfare of the learner.

From 8th March 2021, we will record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)¹ for all pupils.

A small number of learners will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

The advice for learners who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally.

For learners self-isolating or quarantining or shielding – we will use code X.

In compliance with the Remote Education, Temporary Continuity Direction² will provide remote education to learners who are unable to attend college because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19).

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/923539/Remote_Education_Temporary_Continuity_Direction_-_Explanatory_Note.pdf

Also, we will offer pastoral support to learners who are:

- self-isolating
- shielding

The Department for Education expects college to grant applications for leave in exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the college) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

Where learners are not able to attend college, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a learner, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the college Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via Eduspot, which can be done remotely.

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

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with learners in college, they should use a pink form to report the concern to the Head of College.

Safeguarding Training and induction

All existing staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) as part of the training programme for Tor View School, from where staff are seconded to work within the college. The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a learner.

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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) central team that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's safeguarding policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

All staff are currently recruited by Tor View School to be seconded to work within Valley College. Tor View School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for the college setting.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.³

Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis provide personal care on a one-off basis in Valley College, will be in regulated activity. This means that if a volunteer is administering a COVID-19 test whilst un-supervised, they will be in regulated activity and therefore require an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check.

Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information).

Supervision must be:

- by a person who is in regulated activity.
- regular and day to day; and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

In appointing volunteers, the college will continue to follow safer recruitment processes.

Learners and online safety away from college

It is important that all staff who interact with learners, including online, continue to look out for signs a learner 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 adult social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

Valley College 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 if there are virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and learners 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.

³ Paragraph 183. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (as amended, Jan 2021)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_Update_January_2021.pdf

- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- 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 our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting learners not in college as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Valley College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.

Where the DSL has identified a learner who would normally receive pastoral-type support in college, they should ensure that a robust plan of communication plan is in place for that learner.

Details of this plan must be recorded on Eduspot, as should a record of contact made.

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

Valley College and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Valley College recognises that college is a protective factor for young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of learners and their advocates.

Lecturers at Valley College need to be aware of this in setting expectations of learners' work where they are at home.

Supporting learners in college

Valley College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.

Valley College will continue to be a safe space for all learners to attend.

Valley College will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing⁴ and continue to follow the advice from

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963541/Schools_coronavirus_operational_guidance.pdf

Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Valley College will ensure that where we care for learners of critical workers and vulnerable learners on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each learner and recorded on Eduspot where applicable.

Valley College will ensure that appropriate support is offered to all learners with respect to their mental health.

Contingency planning

Valley College will ensure that for individuals or groups of self-isolating learners and learners who are shielding, we follow government guidance related to coronavirus (COVID-19), remote education plans.

Valley College will continue to operate as normally as possible. In the event that restrictions in schools/colleges are needed to help contain the spread of the virus, we will refer to the contingency framework⁵, which has been updated and outlines how schools/colleges should operate in the event of any restrictions.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Safeguarding and Central Teams will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities>