



Safeguarding Policy

The VICI Language Academy

Last updated: January 2025

1. Introduction to Safeguarding

The VICI Language Academy is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all students, especially children and vulnerable individuals under 18 years old. Safeguarding is about protecting students from harm and ensuring a safe, supportive environment where they can thrive.

It is the responsibility of every adult at VICI to prioritise the well-being of our students. Abuse can occur regardless of age, gender, race, religious beliefs, or abilities. It is often perpetrated by individuals the victim knows and trusts, including within educational settings.

This policy outlines our safeguarding measures, identifies signs of abuse, and provides clear actions for staff to take in safeguarding scenarios.

2. Definitions

Child: Any person under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Student: An individual who, due to their age, disability, or other circumstances, may be at greater risk of harm or abuse.

Types of Abuse:

- **Physical abuse:** Causing physical harm or injury.
- **Emotional abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts self-esteem or emotional development.
- **Sexual abuse:** Forcing or enticing a child to engage in sexual activities.
- **Neglect:** Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

3. Safeguarding Best Practices

Staff Responsibilities:

You should:

- Always work in public spaces when interacting with children. Avoid being alone with a child in unobservable situations.
- Ensure students are never left unsupervised.

- Treat all students equally and with respect, always maintaining professionalism.
- Monitor your tone and manner. Avoid sarcasm or ridicule, which can upset children.
- Prioritise the students' safety and well-being above all other considerations.
- Record and report any suspicions or allegations immediately.

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually suggestive games.
- Use inappropriate language or make suggestive comments, even jokingly.
- Perform tasks of a personal nature that a child can manage independently.
- Ignore, dismiss, or fail to report allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- Take students to your home or transport them alone in your car.
- Engage in private communications (e.g., phone calls, texts, or emails) outside the scope of scheduling lessons and without parental consent.
- Connect with students on social media without parental consent.

4. Recognising Signs of Abuse

Staff should remain vigilant and aware of potential indicators of abuse, such as:

- Unexplained injuries or bruises.
- Sudden changes in behaviour (e.g., withdrawal, aggression).
- Fear of certain individuals or reluctance to go home.
- Poor hygiene, malnourishment, or frequent absences.
- Knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for their age.

If you observe any of these signs, it is essential to report them immediately.

5. Reporting Concerns

Steps to Follow:

1. **Stay calm** and listen to the child carefully. Create a supportive environment.
2. **Reassure** the child, letting them know they have done the right thing by speaking up.
3. **Record** the conversation in detail as soon as possible, including dates, times, and direct quotes where applicable.

4. **Report** the incident to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) immediately. At The VICI Language Academy, this is Nathalie Danon, Director or Jo Allen, Operational Manager.

Do not:

- Panic or express shock.
 - Promise to keep secrets.
 - Ask leading or probing questions about the abuse.
 - Make the child repeat their account unnecessarily.
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6. Handling Allegations Against Staff

If an allegation is made against a member of staff:

1. **Take the allegation seriously.**
 2. **Document** all details of the allegation promptly and accurately.
 3. **Report** the matter to the DSL (Nathalie Danon or Jo Allen) or a senior staff member immediately.
 4. **Cooperate fully** with any investigations led by external authorities or safeguarding teams.
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7. External Contacts

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Nathalie Danon, Director or Jo Allen, Operational Manager
 - Email: ndanon@thevici.com | jallen@thevici.com
 - Phone: 07976 243529 | 07588 501527
 - **Local Authority Safeguarding Contact:** 01635 519056 or safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk.
 - **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
 - **Emergency Services:** Dial 999 if a child is in immediate danger.
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8. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The VICI Language Academy is dedicated to maintaining the highest safeguarding standards. This policy will be reviewed annually or when significant changes occur. All staff receive regular safeguarding training to ensure they remain informed and compliant with best practices.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. By working together, we create a safe and nurturing environment for all students to thrive.