

# Child Protection and Safeguarding: COVID-19 Addendum



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## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Miss N Sullivan (Senior DHT)	0151 631 4400
Deputy DSL	Mr J Horman (AHT)	0151 631 4400
Other contactable DSL(s) and/or Deputy DSL(s): Weatherhead H.S	Safeguarding Officers: KS4 - Mrs C Walton (AHT) <i>Currently on Maternity Leave</i>	0151 631 4400
	6 <sup>th</sup> Form – Miss R Byrne (AHT)	0151 631 4400
Designated member of Senior Leadership Team if DSL (and Deputy) can't be on site	Day-to-day responsibility and nominated Safeguarding Officers/Senior Leaders can be found later in the document	
Headteacher	Miss A Whelan	schooloffice@weatherheadhigh.co.uk
Local Authority designated officer (LADO)	Anne King	<b>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</b> Safeguarding Children Service Wirral Borough Council PO Box 290 Brighton Street Wallasey Wirral CH27 9FQ <b>Tel:</b> 0151 666 5525 <b>Mob:</b> 07342 058612 <b>Email:</b> anneking1@wirral.gov.uk
Chair of Trustees	Mrs Jane Owens	Email: purplegovernance@gmail.com

## 1. Scope and definitions

This Addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 Local Safeguarding Partners; Wirral Local Authority, Merseyside Police, Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group.

It sets out changes to our normal Safeguarding Policy and Appendices [Child Protection Policy] in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal Safeguarding Policy and Appendices [Child Protection Policy] continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
- With a Child Protection Plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked After by the Local Authority
- Have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan

## 2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

## 3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

All staff can contact a Safeguarding Officer remotely using our normal safeguarding procedures. All staff have a copy of the school Safeguarding Card and how to contact a Safeguarding Officer.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

## 4. DSL (and Deputy) arrangements

Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important Contacts' section at the start of this Addendum.

All staff can contact a Safeguarding Officer remotely using our normal safeguarding procedures. All staff have a copy of the school Safeguarding Card and how to contact a Safeguarding Officer. Furthermore, there are experienced Team Leaders in attendance each day who are aware of safeguarding procedures and protocols.

Staff on-site each day will be notified as to the nominated Safeguarding Officer/Senior Lead for the day.

We will ensure that DSLs (and Deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

The Senior Leader/Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or Deputy) to make sure they (the Senior Leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

## 5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with Children's Social Care, and with virtual school heads for Looked After and previously Looked After Children.

We will continue to update this Addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 Local Safeguarding Partners
- The Local Authority about children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, the Local Authority Designated Officer and Children's Social Care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

*Currently, the DSL is responsible for implementation and action of any specific guidance from the 3 Local Safeguarding Partners.*

## 6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers - led by Mrs J Kaloumenos (AHT) who will oversee and monitor the Key Worker Register and children in attendance. If a child does not report to school, parents will be contacted immediately
- Notify their Social Worker, where they have one

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

For all children who are attending on-site provision for Key Workers/Vulnerable children, the school is in direct communication and has up-to-date email and telephone information.

## 7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

## 8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## **9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns**

We have a central matrix of identified students who we deem as vulnerable, but do not meet Government threshold. The group of students is monitored and contact is made with parents/carers via the Student Services Team on a weekly basis. Families are signposted to support services as necessary.

The Director of SEND has implemented similar arrangements for those students who we deem as vulnerable. Teaching Assistants are offering help and support via telephone. This is also on a weekly basis.

## **10. Contact plans**

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate
- Each child is monitored via relevant members of the Student Services Team:
- School will make contact – depending on need, contact will be weekly or fortnightly, Pastoral staff will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- Staff will make contact via telephone
- Records of contact will be held centrally via CPOMS or central database

We have agreed these plans with Children's Social Care where relevant, and will review them regularly

If we can't make contact, we will contact the relevant external agency eg Social Services or the Police.

## **11. Safeguarding all children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on students' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in Section 3 above.

All staff can contact a Safeguarding Officer remotely using our normal safeguarding procedures. All staff have a copy of the school Safeguarding Card and how to contact a Safeguarding Officer.

Staff on-site each day will be notified as to the nominated Safeguarding Officer/Senior Lead for the day.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see Section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See Section 13 below for information on how we will support students' mental health.

## **12. Online safety**

### **12.1 In school**

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to use assistance from our external IT Support Team- they have remote access to our systems.

### **12.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Staff Code of Conduct/IT Acceptable Use Policy.

The School has made appropriate arrangements to provide a remote education for students. Miss R.Byrne (SAHT) and Mr M Reid (AHT) have issued guidance to staff to support them with these platforms and how to use them safely with students.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in Section 3 of this Addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

### **12.3 Working with parents and carers**

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

The Deputy DSL is providing regular emails for parents with guidance and support for keeping their children safe online. They continue to be signposted to resources on our school website in relation to this.

## **13. Mental health**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for student mental health for all students. Our Well-Being Officer continues to liaise with local partners eg CAMHS to provide mental health support for children and families. School Counsellors are continuing with appointments remotely with parental consent. The school website has details of support services for students and families.

We will also signpost all students, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for students learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

## **14. Staff recruitment, training and induction**

### **14.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## **14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools**

The school has no staff 'on loan'.

## **14.3 Safeguarding induction and training**

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our Child Protection Policy (and this Addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our Child Protection Policy and this Addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

## **14.4 Keeping records of who's on site**

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our Single Central Record up-to-date.

## **15. Children attending other settings**

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or Deputy) and/or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC Plan, Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan or Personal Education Plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, Deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

The Deputy DSL is liaising with off-site providers and monitoring attendance and welfare issues.



## **16. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 Local Safeguarding Partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, every 4 weeks by the Headteacher, Miss Whelan and the DSL, Miss N Sullivan. At every review, it will be approved by the Chair of Trustees.

## **17. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy

There are related policies and procedures that are in operation and are available online, through the school website eg Whistleblowing Policy.