

# West Kirby Grammar School

## Child Protection and Safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum



**Approved by:**

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## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mrs K Cliffe	0151 632 3449 <a href="mailto:kcliffe@wkgs.net">kcliffe@wkgs.net</a> or <a href="mailto:dsl@wkgs.net">dsl@wkgs.net</a>
Deputy DSL	Mrs E Sargent	0151 632 3449 <a href="mailto:dsl@wkgs.net">dsl@wkgs.net</a>
Other members of our Safeguarding Team	Miss D Lidgett	0151 632 3449 <a href="mailto:dsl@wkgs.net">dsl@wkgs.net</a>
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Mr S Clarke	0151 632 3449
Headteacher	Mrs E Sargent	0151 632 3449

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Anne King	Telephone 0151 666 5525 Mobile 07342058612 <a href="mailto:anneking1@wirral.gov.uk">anneking1@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Chair of governors	Ms S McLennon	0151 632 3449

## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of phased return following school closure due to COVID-19. It reflects updated advice from Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership.

It sets out changes to our normal 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 policy continues to apply.

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

- Are assessed as being in need, including children:
  - With a child protection plan
  - With a child in need plan
  - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:
  - On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
  - Adopted
  - At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - Living in temporary accommodation
  - Young carers
  - Considered vulnerable at our discretion

## 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 continuing to attend or returning to school and those at home.

All concerns should continue to be recorded on MyConcern.

The DSL can be contacted directly in an emergency on 0151 633 2239 or 07949452256

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

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. One of the following people will be on site on any given day (Mrs K Cliffe, Mrs E Sargent, Mr S Clarke).

If for any reason our DSL (or deputy) cannot be in school, they can be contacted remotely by using [dsl@wkgs.net](mailto:dsl@wkgs.net) or using the phone numbers provided in section 3.

All school staff and volunteers will be aware of who from the Safeguarding Team will be in on any given day as all staff have a staffing rota.

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

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will only be due to illness and staff on site will be advised of which senior leader is in charge, if ever this is the case.

The senior leader 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 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

### 6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also continue to submit the Department for Education's daily online attendance form, until no longer asked to do so.

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending:

- Our Attendance Officer will follow up on their absence with their parents or carers
- The DSL or deputy will notify their social worker, where they have one

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

## 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. Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and other 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 has a nominated member of the Safeguarding Team/Pastoral Team

- Who will make contact regularly – this will be staff who know the family or carers well
- Contact arrangements will be appropriate for the case – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with parents/carers and social care, where relevant, and will review them as need arises

We have emergency contacts for these students for times when engaging with our normal point of contact has failed.

## 10. 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.

### 10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before the child returns.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see students in person.

### 10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are not yet returning to school. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home (as outlined in the plan for each year group) to help identify any concerns. They

will use school phones and devices to make calls home or will use Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings. If they use personal phones, calls will be made using the 3CX app or by withholding their personal number.

Staff and volunteers 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

## 11. Online safety

### 11.1 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 contact [nattwood@wkgs.net](mailto:nattwood@wkgs.net) and the IT staff will resolve issues remotely or come onto site as necessary.

### 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy.

As provision changes, Mr N Attwood and Mr S Clarke will provide information and advice about how to ensure that staff and students are appropriately safeguarded throughout these changes.

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 using [wellbeing@wkgs.net](mailto:wellbeing@wkgs.net) or [dsl@wkgs.net](mailto:dsl@wkgs.net) or by contacting key staff. These staff know how to signpost them to other sources of support.

### 11.3 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

Mr W Douthwaite will continue to provide regular updates and support through Pastoral Classrooms, newsletters, our website and social media platforms.

Staff have been directed to complete additional safeguarding training around online use.

## 12. Mental health

### 12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on students' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including students being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

Pastoral Staff will work closely with our Wellbeing Manager (Miss D Lidgett) and other services to provide appropriate individualised support.

## 12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for student mental health for all students. Miss D Lidgett will continue to provide support via email, over the phone or through Microsoft Teams where required. In addition to this, the Action for Children counsellor (Miss Alex McStea) continues to work with students virtually.

We will also signpost all students, parents/carers 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.

## 13. Staff recruitment

### 13.1 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.

Similarly, temporary measures allow right to work checks to be carried out by verifying scanned documents on a video call. If we need to take this approach, we will follow [Home Office and Immigration Enforcement guidance](#).

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

### 13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

## 14. Safeguarding induction and training

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

### 14.1 New and 'on loan' staff induction

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children 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

## 14.2 DSL training

The DSL (and deputy) may not be able to take part in training during this period. If this is the case, the DSL (and deputy) will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

The DSL (and deputy) will do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

## 15. 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.

We will use the single central record to log:

- › Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- › Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

## 16. 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 (SENDCO) 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 SENDCO can't share this information, the senior leader on duty will do this.

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

## 17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum, every 4 weeks by Mrs K Cliffe. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

## 18. 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
- › Whistle-blowing policy
- › Anti-bullying policy