Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Approved by:	Local Governing Body	Date: 12.06.2020

Contents

Important contacts

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
DSL/Assistant Head Teacher	Jeanette Rigby	0781 214 8356	j.rigby@kirkbyhighschool.net
Deputy DSL	Leah Unsworth	0772 205 3660	l.unsworth@kirkbyhighschool.net
Deputy DSL	Karen Hughes	0151 477 8710	
Head Teacher	Rochelle Conefrey		r.conefrey@kirkbyhighschool.net
Chair of Governors	Carole James		admin@kirkbyhighschool.net
Safeguarding Governor	Carole James		admin@kirkbyhighschool.net
LADO	Jacky Evans	0151 443 2600.	Jacky.evans@knowsley.gov.uk

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 our 3 local safeguarding partners Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board, Merseyside Police, Knowsley Health and Well-being Board and Knowsley Local Authority

It sets out changes to our normal 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 child protection 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 the provider and LA's 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.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes reporting the concern to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding lead within the school at that time.

If the concern arises out of school hours the member of staff will phone the designated safeguarding lead and email a concerns form, the headteacher must be copied into the email

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

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use a concerns form to report the concern to the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors:
Carole James.

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

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

There will be a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email and the staff rota as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

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

If for any reason there is an occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be the member of SLT on duty and in school that day.

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 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

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 doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

> Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by continuing with absence phone calls

> If no contact can be made we will inform the school based police officer to undertake a welfare call

> Notify their social worker, where they have one

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

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.

The school counsellor will be available in school to support victims. Where this is not possible, students will be referred to Kooth for support

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.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use a concerns form to report the concern to the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Carole James.

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 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 an individual plan, which sets out

> How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week

> Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well

> How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them weekly with Knowsley Local Authority

If we can't make contact, we will send out a letter if no contact has been made after 3 days. This will be followed up by a welfare check from the school based police officer. This may lead to a referral to MASH.

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 pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above by following reporting procedures

10.1 Children returning to school

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

Children will be supported appropriately to their needs by relevant staff.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils 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 to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold 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

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Online Teaching and Learning Policy.

Online Safety Procedures

Communication with students or parents should be made through the approved school channels, for example Classcharts.

Staff are not permitted to contact students or parents via any other personal communication method, for example, email, Skype or Whatsapp.

Staff should not use live streaming/broadcasting and must only use platforms approved by the school.

If a member of staff is required to contact a parent, they should use 141 as the prefix before dialling the number, to mask their own phone number (i.e. it will show as private/withheld).

Communication with Children (including the use of technology)

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should **not** take place, other than on Classcharts and should be within explicit professional boundaries. Any other communication methods will only be with the permission of the headteacher. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as

Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive).

This means that adults should:

- **not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with students outside of their normal place of work, other than Classcharts.**

If, for any reason a student should contact you directly, for any reason, inform a member of the senior leadership team.

Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number, home or email address to students unless the need to do so is agreed with senior leadership.

Internal email systems should only be used in accordance with school policy.

This means that staff should:
- **Always approve any planned social contact with senior leadership team, for example when it is part of a reward scheme or support programme**
- **Advise senior leadership of any regular social contact they have with a student which may give rise to concern**
- **Report and record any situation which they feel might compromise the school or their own professional standing**

Any IT issues with the school's systems should be logged through the IT helpdesk as normal.

Homeworkers are responsible for complying with data protection law and for keeping all documents and information associated with the organisation secure at all times.

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.

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

Parents have been signposted to the school website, where they can find advice to support online safety.

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 pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

The school counsellor and other trained staff will be available to support students on their return to school..

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Over the phone counselling will continue where necessary.

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

When setting expectations for pupils 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 aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14. Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements. Safeguarding training is delivered online by the DSL

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

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 our logging in systems for school staff and signing in systems for support staff to ensure we have a record of who is on site each day

> 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 (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.

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by Jeanette Rigby Assistant Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead. 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

> Guidance for Safer Working Practice

> IT acceptable use policy

> Health and safety policy

> Online safety policy