



Walthamstow School For Girls

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee"

Policy Document

Safeguarding (Covid-19) Policy

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Waltham Forest Model Safeguarding Policy

Schools Model Safeguarding Policy COVID-19 School Closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Walthamstow School for Girls

School Name: Walthamstow School for Girls

Policy Owner: Kristine Pratt Assistant Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: 29 April 2020

Date shared with staff: 1 May 2020

I. CONTEXT

From 20 March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible.

Schools and all childcare providers were at the same time asked to provide care for a limited number of children – children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum to Walthamstow School for Girl's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements while the Covid-19 situation continues.

KEY CONTACTS

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT NUMBER *	EMAIL
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kristine Pratt	020 8509 9446	k.pratt@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jane Snowsill	020 8509 9446	j.snowsill@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk
Headteacher	Meryl Davies	020 8509 9446	m.davies@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk

Chair of Governors	Gillian Barker	020 8509 9446	g.barker@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Jeroen van Dinteren	020 8509 9446	j.vandinteren@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk

* Please ask for your contact details to be passed to our DSL Kristine Pratt, who will call you back.

2. VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with Education, Health & Care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those that are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC Plan will be risk assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting their home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC Plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving Children's Social Care support.

Walthamstow School for Girls (WSFG) will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect the vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the Local Authority Virtual School Head (VSH) for care experienced children and young people. The lead person for this will be Kristine Pratt / DSL

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and the child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and WSFG will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the children contracting COVID-19, WSFG or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parents/carers following the advice set out by Public Health England.

WSFG will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend at school, if appropriate, including remotely if needed.

3. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Local Authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

If WSFG has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable, or their parents/carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE and the Local Authority by 12 noon each day.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

WSFG and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – WSFG will then follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not. WSFG will also follow up with any parent/carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, WSFG will, when communicating with parents/carers confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, WSFG will notify their social worker.

4. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

WSFG has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Kristine Pratt

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Jane Snowsill

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or Deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or Deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone – for example when working from home. A trained DSL will always be contactable.

Where a trained DSL (or Deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management systems, safeguarding reporting systems and liaising with the off-site DSL (or Deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or need to carry out statutory assessments for WSFG.

It is important that all WSFG staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or Deputy DSL. On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL (or Deputy) will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

5. REPORTING A CONCERN

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school's Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via the school's safeguarding reporting system, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access the schools safeguarding reporting system remotely, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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

Where staff are concerned about an adult working or volunteering with children in the school, they should follow the school reporting process and inform the Headteacher as soon as possible. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an e-mail to the Headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Gillian Barker.

If staff are concerned that they cannot report this, they should utilise the whistleblowing process and contact lado@walthamforest.gov.uk

6. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

Designated Safeguarding Lead training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

For the period during which COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or Deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or Deputy) even if they miss the refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read Part I of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so that they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Walthamstow School for Girls, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

For movement between schools or indeed between employers, schools should seek assurance from the originating school that the member of staff has received the appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, the staff concerned will be given a copy of the host setting's Child Protection Policy, confirmation of the local processes and confirmation of the DSL arrangements.

7. SAFER RECRUITMENT / VOLUNTEERS & MOVEMENT OF STAFF

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, WSFG will continue to follow the relevant safer

recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking, to minimise the need for face to face contact.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that: -

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Where WSFG is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in Paragraphs 167-172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

WSFG will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (lado@walthamforest.gov.uk) and DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at Paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

WSFG will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per Paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher Misconduct - advice for making a referral'.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, WSFG will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in Paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

8. ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

WSFG will continue to provide a safe environment, this includes online. This will include the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

8.1 Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and where appropriate, referrals should still be made to Children's Social Care and, as required, to the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in WSFG Code of Conduct.

WSFG will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with the privacy and data protection GDPR requirements.

WSFG is currently NOT using webcams in delivering lessons so the following highlighted guidelines do not apply

- No 1:1's, groups only
- Staff and children 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.

- The live class should be recorded so that if 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.
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

WSFG is using the “chat” functions in Teams, so the following apply

- Language must be professional and appropriate
- Staff must only use platforms specified by their senior managers and approved by or IT network manager/provider to communicate with students.
- WSFG Advises that all communication with students should be via the chat function in Teams

Sending e-mails to students and families

- WSFG has clearly instructed staff that if an e-mail is sent to a student or family for any reason, that one of the following must be copied in as appropriate: HOF, SPL, LT Line Manager, Safeguarding Team. Staff must do this to safeguard themselves.

9. SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

WSFG is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, but who would normally receive pastoral type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of all plans must be recorded on the safeguarding recording system, as should a record of the contact made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, safety checks conducted by the Safer Schools Officer. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

WSFG 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.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website, via parent mail and its social media pages.

WSFG recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers at WSFG need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

10. SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

WSFG is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

WSFG will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and that staff to student ratios are appropriate to maximise safety.

WSFG 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 the spread of COVID-19.

WSFG will ensure that where we care for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure that appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

Where WSFG has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Local Authority leads.

11. PEER ON PEER ABUSE

WSFG recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and for supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in Part 5 of KCSIE and those outlined in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

We will listen and work with the young person/parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system and appropriate referrals will be made.

12. SUPPORT FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY FOR MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

The Local Authority Education Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes supporting them to access child protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

Maintained schools can access regular group and individual supervision sessions from the Safeguarding in Education Team. This may take the form of an online meeting.

13. SUPPORT FROM THE SAFEGUARDING IN EDUCATION SERVICE

The Safeguarding in Education Service will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes providing support, guidance and direction.

The Safeguarding in Education Service can provide group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

MASH: 020 8496 2310

LADO: lado@walthamforest.gov.uk or 020 8496 3646 or

Caroline: 07770 052 421

Gill: 07791 559 789

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