

3 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

COVID-19 Annex **June 2020 update**

Birkenhead High School Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This commitment remains the same in the difficult circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak, and will be a key concern as the school prepares for more pupils to return to face to face learning.

During this period the principles and practices of the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and the *GDST Safeguarding Procedures* (including the Code of Conduct) will continue to apply. In order to ensure the safety and welfare of children whilst working in the current circumstances, the school will also adhere to the DfE [safeguarding coronavirus guidance](#), together with other relevant guidance and advice as this is published and updated.

In practice, the following procedures will apply:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

There will always be a nominated DSL or deputy DSL available, either on site or contactable by phone or online video. Where a DSL or deputy is not on site a senior leader will take responsibility for safeguarding on site. The DSL will oversee the safeguarding aspects of wider opening, and advise on relevant policy and procedures as more pupils return to school.

The DSL is Klaire Costello, Deputies – Gwen Saccheri and Maryanne Ramsbottom

In the event that you are unable to contact either the DSL or the Deputy DSL, please speak to any member of SLT on site.

Pupils or parents with a safeguarding concern should contact the DSL or her deputies, or the headteacher.

Vulnerable Children

The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers and local authority virtual school heads to help protect vulnerable children. This will include liaising with relevant providers and

ensuring that vulnerable children and those on the edge of receiving social care support can attend/return to school where appropriate.

Pupils and staff on site

As more pupils begin to return, we will ensure that the school site will continue to be a safe place for children:

- Safeguarding will be a key consideration of all risk assessments carried out in preparation for wider opening
- The school will continue to use relevant guidance published by the Government, Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive to inform arrangements and decision making
- Appropriate staff will always be on site to maximise safety, and the school will maintain a record of all staff/volunteers on site on any given day

Attendance

Pupils, both on site and learning remotely, will be registered and the school will follow up on any absence. Where a vulnerable child does not attend, the school will also notify their social worker. No one with COVID-19 symptoms should come into school for any reason.

Online Learning

The school will provide a safe environment for online learning. All pupils and staff must remind themselves of and adhere strictly to the Acceptable Use Agreements, Online Safety Policy, and COVID-19 Online Safety Policy Annex.

Pastoral Support

We recognise that the current circumstances could have a significant effect on the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and their parents, and pastoral care will be a central part of the school's plans for wider opening. Staff have been in regular contact with pupils whilst not in school, and will remain vigilant for signs of safeguarding risk or emotional distress – keeping in mind that new concerns may come to light as pupils begin to return.

Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the DSL as outlined above. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Pupils or parents with a pastoral concern should contact the Progress Leader in the first instance.

Pastoral concerns will be addressed initially by the class teacher or tutor, who may involve the pastoral team, depending on the nature of the issue.

Where a pupil is known to the school or newly identified as being in need, the DSL will ensure that a communication and support plan is in place for that child. This may include email, phone or online video contact. The plan will be reviewed regularly and should concerns arise the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

All safeguarding and pastoral concerns will be logged on CPOMS in the usual manner, and the school will liaise with parents and carers wherever possible to ensure pastoral records remain up to date and staff are aware of any changes to welfare, health or wellbeing before a child returns to school.

If children move between schools, welfare and child protection information will be shared as required.

Working in partnership

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 – Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership, The Police and Wirral LA 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. Refer to Wirral Safeguarding Partnership for further guidance.

Wirral Safeguarding partnership 0151 606 2008