

Westfield Academy Online Teaching Policy

As when school is open as normal, the health and safety of both staff and students is paramount. We consider that the school environment is the safest, most secure venue for our on-line provision. If staff are working from home, the exact same safeguarding practices must be followed.

This policy must be utilised when using Zoom, Loom or any other on-line platform.

Privacy settings need to be considered:

- Consider what information does the online platform require – personal data and privacy questions.
- Always use a platform where students have to log on with a password
- Always use a school provided email/account, not your personal account

Teaching and Learning Platforms and Activities

- When choosing activities remember that the student's devices at home will not have the same content filtering systems that you have in school. Student access to the internet and online devices will need to be considered as well as the student's Internet speed, to ensure all students can be included.
- Schools should encourage parents and carers to set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites.
- Be aware that some students may not have access to a device with a keyboard – only a phone or a tablet, and many will not have access to a printer. The school is equipping students in this respect.
- Be aware of data usage - videos can use a lot of data so this needs to be considered to avoid costs to staff and students.
- Consider the security of cameras and microphones. Ensure you have the latest Software updates, as they help to keep your devices safe.
- Ensure your passwords are strong and that your personal password and work password are different.
- The video call/livestream may be recorded and backed up, so that it is available for review if any concerns arise. Participants and parents should be informed of any recording.

Teaching and learning environment

As above, we consider the school environment to be the most secure and appropriate for on-line lessons. If working from home, colleagues must ensure that these procedures are in place.

- Our expectation, for staff safety is that 'live lessons will be recorded from school. Staff should ensure their homebase/classroom is clean and tidy and check that no inappropriate objects or information is visible in the background.

- Staff should ensure that they are following the school dress code and are professionally dressed when they present their lessons.
- If working from home has been approved, staff must ensure that they have a quiet or private room or area to talk to pupils, parents or carers. There should be no interruptions during either the recording or delivery of a lesson.
- Staff should be particularly vigilant about what is visible and ensure that the background is as blank as possible. Steps should be taken to minimise any disruption, sight or sounds from other people in the household.
- Students will also require a safe and quiet space to work.

Communicating with parents, carers and pupils

All communication between school staff and families should remain professional and the following should be followed:

- Communicate from the school site and within school hours as much as possible (or hours agreed with the school to suit the needs of staff)
- Communicate through the school channels approved by the senior leadership team
- Use school email accounts only (not personal ones)
- Use school devices (not personal ones)
- Staff should not share personal information
- Contact with parents and carers during this time can also be used to reinforce the importance of children staying safe online.
- No communication, with parents or students should ever take place over any social media platform.

Personal Data and GDPR

It is important to continue to follow data protection and GDPR guidance whilst teaching remotely.

Staff should:

- be vigilant when emailing multiple people to ensure that contact details of recipients aren't shared
- be careful when sharing usernames and passwords and other personal data for access to online resources

Additional safeguarding points:

- With students spending more time online during this period, it is important to remind both students and staff of the safeguarding process.
- Ensure consent is gained from parents and students prior to online learning. They should be aware of what they will be asked to do, the sites they will visit and who, if anyone, they will be interacting with online.
- Parents and children should be made aware of the benefits and risks of the online learning activity and advised how to mitigate risks.
- Parents and children should be aware of the reporting processes so they can raise any concerns they have whilst children are working online. Ideally reporting routes would be accessible online.
- Avoid one to one online tuition to help safeguard staff and students.

- At least two members of staff should be involved in any given online tuition, and other colleagues eg Head of Department should know/have agreed that this teaching is taking place.
- If one to one tuition is unavoidable (private tutors), parents should be informed and asked to be present with the child during the lesson.
- E-safety should be embedded in your teaching. Continue to educate students on how to keep themselves safe online with an added awareness of current scams and fake news.
- Keep a log of everything that occurs during the online lesson – what time, who was there, who joined late, left early, a summary of the learning activity etc– as well as any problems encountered.
- Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Some useful resources are listed at the end of this course.

Reporting Concerns

- Safeguarding concerns may arise from what you have seen, heard or been told during them online interaction with students. They may directly affect the student you were teaching or may concern other family members - you may have seen or heard something in the background whilst interacting with the student.
- If you are concerned that any form of abuse or neglect could be occurring or has taken place, you must inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/deputy as soon as possible and at least within 24 hours.
- Staff should know how to contact the DSL/deputy, or the leadership team if the DSL is not available. With staff leave/sickness at this time and with some schools pooling resources the contact details for the DSL may change - it is important to keep up to date.
- It should be emphasised that immediate action on safeguarding concerns is vital, as it may be harder to access/provide immediate support for the child during this time.
- It essential that schools communicate clear reporting routes to all staff, parents, carers and students so that everyone is aware of how to report safeguarding concerns.
- Remember, abusers can be of any age, gender, ethnic background or class. You must not allow your personal values, attitudes or preconceptions to prevent you from responding appropriately.
- A full factual written record of the concern/disclosure should be made as soon as possible on the same day and stored in a secure location until passed to the relevant agency.
- If the child is at imminent risk you must not delay. Contact Children's Social Care Services immediately or the police in an emergency.

Safeguarding for your students is more important than ever during COVID-19. It is essential that the best interests of children must always continue to come first.

Pastoral Care

- This is a stressful time for many and by helping parents, carers and pupils to make a weekly plan or structure that includes time for education, playing and relaxing is important to reduce stress and anxiety for families.
- As set out in Public Health England's guidance for parents and carers, routine can give children and young people an increased feeling of safety in the context of uncertainty.
- One-to-one sessions with students could be appropriate in some circumstances. For example, to provide pastoral care or provide support for pupils with special educational

needs and disabilities (SEND). This should be discussed and approved by the senior leadership team to assess any risks. Solutions, such as including a parent or additional staff member in the call would help to safeguard.

Links for support:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/safe-remote-learning/>

[online safety and safeguarding,](#)