



# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

SAFEGUARDING EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

## Designated safeguarding Leads

Alison Bolton

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## Useful numbers

Childline	0800 1111
Wigan Safeguarding Hub	01942 486262
Wigan Social care Referral and Assessment team	01942 828 300

# Domestic Abuse during Lockdown

There is already evidence to suggest that, as in previous crises, rates of Domestic Abuse are increasing during the current situation – with some police forces in England already noticing an increase in reports of domestic abuse.

In France, after reports of Domestic Abuse increased by 36% in Paris, extra funding commitments have been made and hotels will be used to house victims. Similar patterns are being seen in Australia, China and many other countries.

At the same time, the options available to alert someone to what is happening are decreasing. Children may well not be attending school where disclosures can be made or concerning behaviours noticed. Even vulnerable children who already have a social worker, and are still expected to be in school, are often not attending. Work is underway to follow these children up to make sure they are getting into school - or to keep an eye on them if they are not - but they are largely yet to bring results.

Self-isolation and social distancing rules play into the hands of those who perpetrate coercive control and already limit their victim's movements and what they allow them to do. 'Lockdown' means victims will be subject to even closer scrutiny and control by abusive partners - and have even fewer opportunities to seek out help. They will be less able to find time alone to contact helplines, look at online resources, call the police or ask advice from professionals.

Many of the routine contacts that they may have had with friends, family or members of the community will likely have reduced significantly, so fewer people will be able to identify problems. Many services – such as GPs, children's centres and health visitors – are now moving to remote provision or stopping routine checks when domestic abuse can be picked up. Pregnancy and the arrival of a new baby can be a trigger point for domestic abuse to begin, but without a reason to spend time alone with a health professional, mothers may be unable to disclose it.

The Children's Commissioner wants to see a powerful public campaign that makes clear what Domestic Abuse is (using the broad definition in the delayed Domestic Abuse Bill), and that it is never acceptable, and the devastating impact it has on children. This campaign would speak to:

### Victims:

- To help them to identify that what is happening is abuse, and that it is harmful for them and their children.
- To provide them with information about where to get help – including calling 999 silently (calling and then pressing 55 to alert your local police force), the National Domestic Abuse helpline, Women's Aid etc.
- To make clear that the rules on staying at home do not mean you are not allowed to leave to seek help if you and your children are unsafe. Police forces should be involved in this messaging to make it clear that victims will get appropriate responses and not be fined or told to go home.

### Perpetrators:

- To make clear that whatever the stress they may be feeling, they always have a choice and all forms of Domestic Abuse are a crime.
- To advise them to seek out help from eg Respect if they become worried about their behaviour.
- To make clear that exposing children to Domestic Abuse is also child abuse.

**If you come across anything suspicious please pass on to the safeguarding team using the link on forms**

# Supporting the Local Community During This Time

## Food Banks

The school is offering a Food Bank service in conjunction with the Local Authority which enables us to support our most vulnerable families. We are issuing at least 10 food parcels per week. All donations are gratefully received.

## Daily Phonecalls

We are maintaining our daily phonecalls to our most vulnerable pupils. The phonecalls check on their well being and assist them in accessing the work and identify any other concerns or challenges they have. We are able to signpost them to new council services that have emerged due to the current crisis.

## Free School Meals

All pupils who are eligible have received vouchers provided by school to ensure they are able to purchase food whilst school is closed. The government has now taken over that scheme and are providing vouchers that are being co-ordinated by school. The government have made it simpler for parents who may need it to apply for free school meals.

## Laptops / Technology

The school has applied for technology for a large number of pupils. We have had offers of further support with this from local businesses.

## Working together

The school is continuing with valuable partnerships such as Social Care and CAMHS via systems such as skype and Zoom

**If any of the above is raised with teachers as an issue, please let s know using the safeguarding form link.**

# Supporting Mental Health

Mental health is a concern during this period of time where children may be missing their friends and family and not having regular contact with their teachers and tutor and Head of House. Teachers are the eyes and ears and if you notice a change in mood then please let us know. We can then put the correct support in place for them and in some cases their family.

## On line Safety

We are now teaching in a different world and online safety is more important than ever. With education moving towards more video type resources here are a few simple tips to help teachers and parents navigate their way through.

- Always ensure your environment is professional (no inappropriate items in shot)
- Wear professional attire. This will set the climate for the pupils
- Avoid showing personal items that may generate conversations that you may not feel comfortable with
- Use professional language at all times
- Always check with Curriculum Leaders about how this is going and feedback any concerns
- Only use safe platforms using school systems
- Any concerning behaviour from a child must be reported immediately

## Safeguarding form link

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6rjfWzm1\\_U-kH2Ki9I4n6oHlWS-REhFDhJDlq1TvDAXUMjYxS0ZLSTFFUVdOUVY4N1QxV1FaMTÉ0UC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6rjfWzm1_U-kH2Ki9I4n6oHlWS-REhFDhJDlq1TvDAXUMjYxS0ZLSTFFUVdOUVY4N1QxV1FaMTÉ0UC4u)