Covid 19

Following guidance issued in DfE updates to "*Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers*".

Policy and practice will be monitored and amended against government updates and the daily bulletins from Jonathan Lewis, Service Director – Education Cambridgeshire County Council.

This revised appendix to the Long Road Sixth Form College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements when schools and colleges need to close due to a lockdown, to protect all students, whether attending school or remaining at home, from harm and abuse. **Amendments shown in red made on 6/1/2021 to reflect further DfE guidance arising from UK national lockdown instituted from 00.00 on 5/1/21.**

Long Road Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and will ensure compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) which remains in force throughout the response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

During the period of college closure, partial closure and remote working the key principles of Safeguarding remain the same:

- the best interests of our students must continue to come first;
- every member of staff continues to have a responsibility to follow procedures for reporting a safeguarding concern and to act immediately;
- The college will continue to have a DSL or a deputy available for referrals and advice;
- Students will continue to be protected when they are online;
- Unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the workforce or volunteer at the college.

Communication

During remote working the college will:

- Make all students, parents and staff aware of how to report a safeguarding or mental health situation, including how to make an emergency referral and send regular reminders.
- Supply details of support agencies and online counselling to staff, students and parents.
- Set up and staff a dedicated email address for students to use to report concerns, ask for help, make contact with the Welfare and Safeguarding teams.
- Have in place systems for staff to share welfare concerns with the safeguarding and welfare teams, which will be followed up daily.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding team continue to work together through virtual meetings at least weekly.
- Continue to make referrals and obtain support from the safeguarding advice line set up by the local authority and continue to work with LA and social services.

Monitoring

- Each member of the Safeguarding team will have a group of vulnerable students to contact and monitor. Students will be risk-assessed to determine the frequency of contact.
- Frequent and regular phone checks on welfare will be made to students living independently; those living in a household with a history of Domestic Violence; those students with a social worker; those with pre-

existing mental health problems; those assessed as being in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 eg designated a Child in Need or with a Child Protection Plan, and any others deemed to be potentially at higher risk.

- Regular audits of provision for students with EHC plans will be completed by the Academic Support team to ensure that their needs are being met both educationally and in support of their welfare and to assess whether they would benefit from working on site.
- Progress Coaches will also make phone contact with all college students, discussing their experience of the lockdown and remote learning and passing on any concerns to Welfare/Safeguarding staff for follow-up.
- If the college is unable to contact a student after a reasonable number of attempts, we will seek further advice from social services about 'safe and well' home visits.
- Records of all contacts will be recorded on college systems including MyConcern.

On- line safety

- The college IT acceptable use policy and all guidance in the main Safeguarding policy still applies during remote learning and partial closure.
- The college will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of the online filtering systems.
- The IT Services team will continue to refer any on-line activities which cause concern to the Safeguarding team and Prevent Lead.
- The college will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.
- Students will be directed to report any inappropriate online activity, peer to peer abuse or bullying to the Safeguarding team via the Wellbeing email or by contacting any member of college staff
- Staff communicating with students online must ensure that they are adhering to the same professional standards as are required of them in a physical classroom. The following key points should also be observed:
- Staff must only communicate with students on the college remote learning forums accessed via their college account. This includes communications via email and Microsoft Teams.
- Staff are not permitted to use their own personal online accounts for these purposes

Staffing
- 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 using virtual platforms, Long Road Sixth Form College 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 (2020).

- The college 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.

- 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.

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

Partial opening of the college - Safeguarding

In the case of the partial opening of the college rigorous Health and Safety risk assessments and Equality & Diversity Impact assessments will be completed and measures implemented. These are detailed separately (See below: Relevant documents and support).

- The college will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement protective measures including social distancing: <u>implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings</u>

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a nominated Deputy Safeguarding Lead will be on site. Contingency plans for the availability of a DSL for staff will be made clear and communicated to all staff.

- Prior to a return to college, the expectations of students relating to social distancing, behaviour, hygiene and what to do in case of feeling ill will be clearly communicated to students and parents in amendments to in the Student Code of Conduct, and will also be displayed prominently around the college.

- Regular safeguarding and welfare phone checks on vulnerable students who are not attending college will continue.

- College staff will be reminded of the need to respond sensitively to students' differing experiences during the period of school closure. College staff have been asked to be particularly vigilant, as more children return to school, for signs and indicators that a student may have experienced abuse or neglect.

- Prior to a return to college, parents and carers will be asked to ensure that all personal details held by the school, such as emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

- Parents and carers will also be asked to advise the college if there are any changes regarding the welfare, health and wellbeing of a student during the period of remote working. Where the college is made aware of particular circumstances affecting a student or family, such as bereavement, a relationship breakdown, an incident of domestic violence, this will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis so that the student can be best supported.

- DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. In the interim, Designated Safeguarding Leads continue to keep themselves up to date with safeguarding developments through updates from the Education Safeguarding Team, accessing the Knowledge Hub and via the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board communications and website.

Continuity of education for vulnerable students during National Lockdown

We are committed to enabling continuity of education for all our students including our most vulnerable. Following DfE guidance, all vulnerable children continue to be eligible to attend college full time during the period of lockdown in order to follow their remote learning programmes and/or pursue independent study. Long Road Sixth Form College recognises vulnerable children and young people as those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child.

- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment (<u>risk assessment guidance</u>), that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment.

- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include students on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living alone and/or in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers, those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education, and others at the college and local authority's discretion.

In addition, the college will be open to the children of parents or guardians whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response, including those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in government guidance 'Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings' (updated 8 January 202).

Where necessary additional rigorous Health and Safety risk assessments will be completed and measures implemented in accordance with current government and/or PHE advice.

Related documents and support

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers 20 May 2020 and all updates
Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings Published 11 May 2020 and all updates
Daily Covid bulletins from Jonathan Lewis, Service Director – Education Cambridgeshire County Council.
Long Road Operational Plan and Risk Assessment (Covid 19) June 2020

Safeguarding advice line: Tel: 01223 703800
email:ECPS.General@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk