

Annex to Safeguarding Children Vulnerable Adults Prevent Policy & Procedure

COVID-19 changes to our Policy

30 March 2020

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. The vast majority of our young people are now at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, the College's Policy is fundamentally the same: **children, young people and vulnerable adults always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the Safeguarding Team in line with our established safeguarding procedure.**

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the College and following [advice from government](#) and local agencies.

The current college position and local advice

We have followed guidance from government on how to support Vulnerable and EHCP (Educational Health Care Plan) learners during this time and will remain open for a small number of students for who it is deemed necessary.

Reporting arrangements

The College arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) is: **Angela McLean (amclean@hrc.ac.uk 07795241913)**

The Deputy DSPs are: **Philip Line (pline@hrc.ac.uk 07930884105) Helen Richards (hrichards@hrc.ac.uk 07507833224) Gemma Hilton (ghilton@hrc.ac.uk 07710854138)**

The College's usual approach is to ensure that the DSP or a deputy is always on site while the college is open with attending students. In this unusual circumstance, this is not always possible, however one of the DSP or Deputy DSPs will be contactable via mobile/email/teams and will be able to attend the College campus within an hour. A rota of senior managers acting as Duty Principals will be present on site. All staff on or off site will be made aware of this as well as means of contact for the safeguarding team.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding team immediately about concerns they have about any child or vulnerable adult, whether in college or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authorities. The safeguarding team will continue to follow its usual routes of referrals and will also follow those same routes of escalation.

Identifying vulnerability

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable children. All EHCP learners, CLA (Children Looked After) students, and those with social workers were contacted as closure began, and a discussion was had as to whether they should continue to attend college. In addition, staff were asked to identify any students that they felt were vulnerable, and the safeguarding team looked at recent safeguarding/welfare referrals. A small number of students as a result of this process were retained at college, and many more were added to a vulnerable student list to be called weekly by our Welfare team.

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups:

- Looked After Children – all students on this list were added to the vulnerable student list and our designated teacher is in contact with virtual schools and social workers. There is information on the College website advising students of email addresses to contact that are monitored. Also, there is information on the College website about general support sites.
- Previously Looked After Children – all students on this list have been added to the vulnerable student list. Our designated teacher is in contact with virtual schools and social workers. There is information on the College website advising students of email addresses to contact that are monitored. Also, there is information on the College website about general support sites. Young People subject to a child protection plan – No students on plan.
- Young People who have, or have previously had, a social worker – Contact made prior to closure with all students in this category. All students on this list have been added to the vulnerable student list. There is information on the College website advising students of email addresses to contact that are monitored. Also, there is information on the College website about general support sites.
- Learners with an EHCP – all students in this category have been contacted and discussions had. Students have been added to the vulnerable student list if felt appropriate. The ALS (Additional Learning Support) team are making contact and

offering support to students, and are also making referrals to safeguarding/welfare if appropriate. There is information on the College website advising students of email addresses to contact that are monitored. There is also information on the College website about general support sites.

- Other learners the college considers vulnerable - More students may be added to this list in response to concerns raised with the safeguarding team. These learners can be offered care at college if required and will be added to the vulnerable student list.

Attendance

The college is following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a learner is expected and does not arrive the college will follow our attendance procedure and contact the family. If contact is not possible by 10:30am the safeguarding team must be informed. The team will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent/carer (but if necessary arranging a home visit through an appropriate agency may be necessary).

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, [poverty](#), and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both [children](#) and their [parents and carers](#), informing the safeguarding team about any concerns.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to take place between young people, especially in the context of a college closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the [signs of peer-on-peer abuse](#), including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, and similar. When contacting these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The College may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of [cyberbullying](#) and [other risks online](#) and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the College.

- The College continues to ensure that appropriate filters and monitors are in place on our systems within the College.

- The College has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly.
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the college's code of conduct and importance of using college systems to communicate with children and their families.
- For areas using live streaming/video conferencing with learners protocols will be put in place.
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the college, [Childline](#), the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) and [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection).
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to act if they are concerned.

If necessary, the college will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on [03.04.2020] and is available on the College website at <https://www.hrc.ac.uk/policies-and-procedures>.