

COVID –19 and Safeguarding Arrangements

The current College position and local advice

Lincoln College will maintain its legal obligation under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have in place Safeguarding arrangements and to promote the welfare of its learners. National and Local Government have provided guidance to Further Education establishments in relation to COVID-19 which reflects that provided to the general public in that they recommend you:

- Stay at home as far as possible
- Stay two metres away from others
- Avoid public transport
- Work from home
- Cancel social gatherings
- Avoid contact with those over 70 and those with underlying health conditions
- Avoid contact with those displaying symptoms

Reporting arrangements

The College arrangements in regards to reporting safeguarding concerns continue in line with our Safeguarding policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Group Director of HR and Student Support Services:

Jacqui Varlow, jvarlow@lincolncollege.ac.uk

The Deputy DSLs are the Head of Student Services and Supported Education:

Charlotte McHugh, cmchugh@lincolncollege.ac.uk

and the Customer Service and Pastoral Manager:

Sam Yates, syates@lincolncollege.ac.uk

The DSL or a deputy have made arrangements that a member of staff is available to offer advice and to deal with Safeguarding matters that may be identified or reported.

A flow chart has been produced which sets out the arrangements that have been made. This provides for channels of communication and how to report concerns related to safeguarding.

Staff will continue to follow the Safeguarding Policy 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 authority. The arrangements for contacting children's services are:

Lincolnshire Customer Services Centre	01522 782155
Emergency Duty Team (17.00-09.00)	01522 782333
Notts Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	0300 500 80 90
Emergency Duty Team (17.00-08.30)	0300 456 4546

Should a child in the College's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the College will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure, available here:

https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/pr_prof_resolution.html

https://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/p_conflict_res.html

Identifying vulnerability

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable children and vulnerable adults. This has included reviewing all of the Looked After Children, Care Leavers and Previously Care Experienced learners. Reviews have been undertaken of learners known to the Safeguarding team as well as 14-16 year olds and those with an Education and Health Care Plan.

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

- Looked After Children – Each student is contacted separately to establish their welfare. The Virtual School Head is fully involved in this process

and the learner has an identified single point of contact within the Safeguarding Team as well as the team itself.

- Care Leavers and Previously Care Experienced – Each student has been offered support and has an identified single point of contact within the Safeguarding Team as well as the team itself.
- Children subject to a child protection plan – Each student would be contacted individually as well as the Social Worker working with the learner to identify risks and the best way to safeguard. This will be overseen by the Safeguarding and Security Team Leader
- Children who have a social worker – Social Workers identified to be working with a learner have been contacted and advised as to the arrangements at College and also to identify and risks.
- Children with an EHCP – Each student and parent/ carer has been contacted and regular contact is made to manage risks and maintain continuity in regards to academic learning and identify any risks or concerns.
- Other children the College considers vulnerable include 14-16 year old learners who's parent/ carers have been contacted. There is an identified single point of contact at College if they wish to raise concerns and regular contact is to be maintained.
- Any learner identified as being a “high risk” safeguarding concern will have individual contact from a member of the Safeguarding Team on a regular basis or in agreement with the learner.

Holiday arrangements

Safeguarding will continue to be available over any holiday period and advice and guidance is available to all staff and learners. EHCP and vulnerable learners will continue to be contacted over the Easter period.

Attendance

The College is currently in a period of closure and as such learners are accessing learning online. Academic staff should be mindful that these are unprecedented times but they should be alert to safeguarding concerns. Staff should follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the learner and/or their family. If contact is unable to be established and there is a safeguarding concern then this should be raised with the Safeguarding Team.

Staff to 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 should 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 go on 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. When making contact with 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 [appropriate filters and monitors are in place](#)
- Our governing body will [review arrangements](#) to ensure they remain appropriate
- 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. Guidance is available here:

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

- It is a risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and staff have been reminded of the College's code of conduct

and importance of using College systems to communicate with children and their families.

- Staff have been provided with the [20 safeguarding considerations for livestreaming](#) guidance prior to delivering any livestreamed sessions
- Staff, and in particular Academic staff, should consider providing learners and their parent/ carer with material to allow them to be online safely. A list of support and advisory websites for parents and carers is listed below:
 - [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
 - [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
 - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
- 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 concerns related to staff and volunteers will be reported to the Local Area Designated Officer as per the normal reporting procedures.

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS 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 using the address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

New learners at the College

Where learners join College from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. This file must be provided securely **before** the child begins at College and a call made from our Safeguarding team to the placing school's DSL to discuss how best to keep the child safe. In some unusual circumstance this may not be possible. Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about children placed in College will be recorded on our safeguarding database, will be securely copied to the placing school/ College DSL and will be securely returned to the placing school/ College on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The Safeguarding team will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding database system.

Mental Health

Restrictions to movement and contact with other people means pupils are more likely to be at risk of mental health problems. Academic and support staff should make pupils and their families aware of where further support can be found. The Department for Education have produced guidance to support parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The following organisations can also provide support:

www.kooth.com – Free online emotional wellbeing and counselling with self-help articles

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/>

Calm Harm App – A phone app providing help for those who use self-harm as a coping strategy; <https://calmharm.co.uk/>

In addition to the above the College's Student Support Services are available to make contact with students to offer support and guidance.