



COVID-19 college closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

1. Context

From 5th January 2021 parents/carers were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible. Schools, colleges and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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2. Key contacts

Role	Name	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Stuart Ormson (Assistant Principal - Student Support)	stuart.ormson@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Tim Craven (College Lead for Safeguarding & Behaviour)	tim.craven@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk
	Tom Holland (Head of Student Services)	tom.holland@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk
	Dave Williams (Head of Additional Learning Support)	david.williams@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk
	Nicola Threlfall (Deputy Head of Student Services)	nicola.threlfall@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk
Nominated Director	Jeremy Mannino	jeremy.mannino@blackpool.gov.uk

3. Vulnerable children

Blackpool Sixth will continue to work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Vulnerable children include children/young people who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an EHC plan
- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services) - this includes:

- young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
- adopted children
- those at risk of becoming 'not in employment, education or training' (NEET)
- those living in temporary accommodation
- those who are young carers
- those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Students on an EHC plan, assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, or who have a high level safeguarding concern will be risk-assessed, where necessary, in consultation with the Local Authority and parents/carers. This risk assessment will determine whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Many children and young people who fall into the criteria above can safely remain at home. If, following risk assessment, this is not the case, a plan for their care during college closure will be agreed with the local authority and parents/carers accordingly. The risk assessment and outcome will be recorded on MyConcern.

4. Engagement monitoring

During college closure due to a national lockdown, Blackpool Sixth will monitor student engagement with remote learning and non-engagement will be followed up accordingly. For any required follow-up, the first focus for all staff will be to ascertain if there are any underlying welfare issues and to take into consideration a student's home situation.

Initial follow up will usually be by subject teachers who can also refer to the pastoral team for further support. In the first instance, follow up communication will usually be to the student themselves. However, staff may choose to communicate with parents/carers as appropriate.

For instances where the communication and interventions above do not resolve the concern, this can be passed on to a relevant Head of Department or Pastoral Lead for further intervention.

Throughout any follow-up, all staff should be mindful if the student is 'vulnerable' and if there is a safeguarding concern. If so, staff should follow the process outlined in the college Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and this addendum. This includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely. If a vulnerable child/young person (as defined in section 3) does not engage with remote learning, a member of the safeguarding team may choose to notify their social worker and/or local authority virtual school head (VSH) accordingly.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the Deputy DSLs and their primary contact details are detailed in the 'Key Contacts' section.

During working hours (8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday, during term time), it will be possible to contact the DSL or a Deputy DSL. This should be via email in the first instance. There always will always be a DSL or Deputy DSL on campus fulfilling the role of 'Duty DSL' and they will have access to a college mobile during working hours. As a result, it will be possible to arrange a phone call where needed.

The DSL, and deputies, will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

6. Reporting a concern

For concerns where a student may be at immediate risk of harm, staff are expected to:

In college hours (8:30-16:30, Monday to Friday, term time only)

Contact the duty DSL who will be in college and available on the safeguarding mobile.

Out of college hours

Staff are expected to make contact themselves with the police and/or social care. Full out of hours safeguarding advice is available to staff, students and parents/carers at <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/coronavirus/safeguarding/>

For safeguarding concerns where a student is not at immediate risk of harm, but staff have concerns about the safety/wellbeing of that student, staff are expected to report their concern and any action they have taken on MyConcern. MyConcern is being monitored during the college closure, therefore, case owners will be assigned and there will be the usual follow-up from a member of the safeguarding team.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their MyConcern from home, they should make a record on a Word or Google document on their work computer and add it to MyConcern when it becomes available.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with our students, they should follow the process outlined in the college Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; this includes making a report directly to the DSL, which can be done via email.

7. Safeguarding training and induction

The availability of DSL training may be limited whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus. However, some remote training is available.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing college staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

8. Safer recruitment

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children and young people. When recruiting new staff, Blackpool Sixth 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) (KCSIE).

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.

Blackpool Sixth will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

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

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the college is aware, which staff are continuing to engage with students and that appropriate checks have been carried out. As such, Blackpool Sixth will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up-to-date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

9. Online safety

Blackpool Sixth will ensure that any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. However, it should be recognised that the college has no direct control of student and staff personal devices and normal filtering and monitoring of network traffic cannot be applied while such devices are not connected to its network.

It is important that all staff who interact with students online continue to look out for signs that a student may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and this addendum, and where appropriate referrals should still be made to social care and, as required, the police.

Online risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself. Staff and students should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours when working remotely. To support this, the college will share safeguarding messages and online safety advice with all stakeholders via the college website, social media pages, student notices and pastoral mentors. This advice will include information on clear reporting routes so students and parents/carers can raise any concerns whilst online.

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web-based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries.

This means that staff should:

- not request or respond to any personal information from children or young people other than that which may be necessary for their professional role;
- ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as '[grooming behaviour](#)';
- not give their personal contact details to students or their parents/carers, for example, personal email address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web-based identities. If students locate these by any other means and

attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, the member of staff should not respond and must report the matter to their line manager;

- wherever possible, contact students and parents/carers using equipment provided by the college (e.g. college email, college phones, college mobiles or computer softphone which dials from the college number). It is strongly advised that staff don't use their personal mobile phone to contact students or parents/carers but where this is absolutely essential, staff MUST dial 141 (or use another secure method of ensuring your caller ID is not shown) before they dial the number so their personal contact details are not visible;
- use only the equipment and internet services provided/recommended by the college unless agreed with their line manager. The Google suite of apps should be used rather than other platforms such as WhatsApp or Zoom;
- follow the college's acceptable use of computers policy;
- ensure that their use of technologies (including social media) could not bring the college into disrepute

10. Supporting students during college closure

Blackpool Sixth is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. It is recognised that college is a protective factor for young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers at Blackpool Sixth need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

The college will share safeguarding messages with students via the college website, social media pages, student notices and pastoral mentors. This advice will include information on clear reporting routes so students can raise any concerns. All students will receive regular contact from their Pastoral Mentor. This communication will focus on their wellbeing, home situation and progress with online learning.

Where a student meets the following criteria, an additional communication plan will be put in place for that young person. This communication will be recorded on EMRIS or MyConcern as appropriate and will be managed by a member of the safeguarding or additional learning support team.

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an EHC plan
- is identified by the DSL (or a deputy) to be on the edge of social care support
- would normally receive support beyond that of typical pastoral-type support in college

The communication plans will typically include email contact, phone or Google Meet contact with the student, at least once a fortnight. However, parents/carers will be contacted when needed. Other individualised contact methods may be considered and recorded, but this must be agreed with a DSL or Deputy DSL.

Blackpool Sixth will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

Where concerns arise, staff should follow the process outlined in the college Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and this addendum. This includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

11. Peer on peer abuse

Blackpool Sixth recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where the college receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The college will listen to and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on MyConcern and appropriate referrals made.