

Annex 2

Annex to Safeguarding Policy March 2020

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting and within the UK in response to the outbreak of COVID-19.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments USP College is making in line with the changed arrangements in the college and following advice from government and local agencies.

The current position is that, following the Government announcement, all college sites are closed and timetables have been postponed.

Despite the changes, the College's Safeguarding Policy is fundamentally the same: the welfare of children and young people always comes first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and referrals should continue to be made in line with our established safeguarding procedure.

The pressures on children, young people and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures for a variety of reasons including through having to stay within the household, through financial hardship or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in terms of setting any work for students to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning and ability to access on line resources). Staff may be aware of the mental health of both students and their parents or carers, and should refer to safeguarding about any emerging concerns.

We have undertaken a scoping exercise to identify the most vulnerable students and individual arrangements have been made with students who have an attached social worker and those with an EHCP.

For students subject to a Child Protection Plan and Child In Need Plan, and who have an allocated social worker: contact will be made by the safeguarding team at a frequency agreed with these students, with their family and social worker. But no less than once a week.

For students who are Looked after Children and recent Care Leavers : contact will be made by the Safeguarding Wellbeing and Mental Health Coordinator who will call ,at a frequency agreed with the student, carer and social worker. But no less than once a week.

For students with an EHCP: Tutors and LSA's will maintain regular contact as agreed with student and parents / carers. Support can be delivered through individual arrangements based on curriculum activity.

For students on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker, or identified as high risk: contact will be made by the safeguarding team once per week for a welfare check. The Progress Coach team will also be contacting students to ensure the necessary level of support is offered.

NB Contact will be made remotely through telephone calls.

Reporting arrangements:

Student Services and Wellbeing

Our Wellbeing teams and counsellors will continue to support students remotely. Students have been informed of the methods they can use to contact the team

Seevic Campus – wellbeingsevic@uspcollege.ac.uk

Palmer's Campus – wellbeingpalmers@uspcollege.ac.uk

In addition our counsellors will offer Skype meetings with students in accordance with the BACP Guidelines.

Safeguarding Emergency Designated Line - 01268 882 665.

The safeguarding team are only available between 8.30am and 4.30pm,

Links to some alternative resources should students require support out of hours.

- Kooth – chat online to friendly counsellors, read articles written by young people and receive anonymous online support
- Samaritans – often through the phone they can provide emotional support
- Mind – a mental health charity who can provide information and advice
- SANeline – out of hours mental health helpline
- Students Minds – student mental health charity
- Every Mind Matters – they offer simple and practical advice to help you stay mentally healthy
- NHS – they have dedicated resources available to help deal with stress, anxiety or depression

If students need urgent wellbeing help they can contact:

- Samaritans - Tel: 116 123 who are available any time and any day
- Mind - Tel: 0300 123 3393
- SANeline - Tel: 0300 304 7000 (4.30pm-10.30pm)
- Your local GP for medical advice by making an emergency appointment
- NHS (England & Wales) Tel: 111 999 or go to Accident and Emergency (A&E) for immediate help

Safeguarding Concerns

Staff will continue to follow the safeguarding procedures and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, 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.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply for referrals to children's services. This contact will go through a member of the safeguarding team, who will follow appropriate measures in seeking the appropriate and necessary support.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements in place, young people could be at greater risk of on line abuse. 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.

New staff or volunteers

All new starters must have an on line induction. They must have taken the online Safeguarding awareness Training, and online Prevent awareness training and read the staff Code of Conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child or young person and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

All new starters need to confirm that they have read Part I of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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.

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 students are learning at the College. The College continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place. The College has taken on board the guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium.

It is extremely important that professional boundaries do not slip during this exceptional period and protocols for on line working have been issued. (See Attached Presentation)

Staff can access further guidance here:

<https://www.tes.com/news/coronavirus-10-safeguarding-rules-teachers-home>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/march/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely/>

Students accessing remote learning will receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the college and external agencies.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/internet-connected-devices/>

Mental Health

Restrictions to movement and contact with other people means pupils are more likely to be at risk of mental health problems. Student have been provided with links to external support and the Wellbeing Team are working remotely to support students.

<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>

Ongoing Sharing of Information

Weekly newsletters will be produced for staff and students during the period of remote studying. This will provide information and links to additional support and activities to assist with coping with the current social distancing measures that are in place.