

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure Addendum March 2020: Coronavirus COVID-19

Following the government announcement on Wed 18th March 2020 that schools and colleges were to close to the majority of students from Friday 20th March 2020 as part of measures to control the spread of Coronavirus COVID-19, Weston College closed “on premise” delivered teaching to all students at the end of the day on Friday 20th March and for all staff from Monday 23rd March.

This addendum details the safeguarding arrangements in place at Weston College from Tuesday 24th March 2020 until such time as the government allows the full re-opening of Weston College.

Safeguarding arrangements for full closure of the college estate

Safeguarding arrangements for the students enrolled at Weston College remains the responsibility of the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer (Lead DSO). If the Lead DSO (Fiona Waters) is unavailable for any reason the Corporate Lead for Safeguarding (Andrea Greer) will nominate one of the other DSO to act as Lead DSO.

As teaching, pastoral and support staff remain in contact with their students through online learning platforms, email and by phone, they must continue to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities referring any concerns immediately to the safeguarding team using the existing, 24/7, out of hours number 01934 411464.

Staff are aware that home is not always the safest place for learners and that the situation may have an impact on the mental health of students, their parents and their staff colleagues. Information and support is available through the college Welfare and Human Resources teams.

The Welfare, Mental Health, Safeguarding and Additional Learning Support teams will remain in regular contact with students for whom there are existing concerns including, but not limited to, Children Looked After (CLA), Previously Looked After Children (PLAC), students who are subject of a Child Protection (CP) or Child in Need (CiN) plan, students receiving mental health support, students entitled to Free Meals in FE and those on Guaranteed Bursary.

Staff, students and their parents have been made aware, through the college website, of how to raise a safeguarding concern during this period.

The college’s Lead DSO and Corporate Lead for Safeguarding will remain available via email, telephone and Microsoft Teams to receive any concerns and to co-ordinate a response include making referrals to the Local Authority and / or The Police.

The college's Lead DSO is aware of the local arrangements for contacting the duty intake team and the Designated Officer for Allegations (DOfA) for the local authorities for our student population.

The college's marketing team will ensure that all emergency numbers and alternatives are kept up to date on our website.

The Welfare, Mental Health and Safeguarding Teams have ensured that electronic copies of such things as Safety Plans, EHCPs, CP / CiN plans and safeguarding records are accessible from home using college logins.

The college has arrangements in place for remote support for IT services and its online teaching and learning strategy has considered safeguarding.

The college has a plan in place to handle bereavement including access to college counselling services and external support services provided by national charities and the Local Authority.

The college Corporation has been made aware of the updated safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding arrangements for re-opening part of the college estate for specific vulnerable students, students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or students who are the children of key workers and not able to stay at home alone.

The college, on a daily basis, will keep a record of all students and staff in attendance and will put in place arrangements to follow up on any student who is due to attend but fails to do so.

The college will designate a staff member on site to be in charge each day, they will be responsible for contacting the Lead DSO or Corporate Lead for Safeguarding, if needed, via telephone, email or Microsoft Teams.

The college will ensure that its safer recruitment processes are clear and adhered to by not allowing volunteers not known to the college to come in and help.

Arrangements for students not required to attend the college under this situation remain the same as the arrangements outline for full closure of the college estate.

Safeguarding staff

It is important that staff members are aware of their behaviours during this period. Staff should ensure that they remain professional at all times.

Staff must not share any personal contact details with students in particular personal phone numbers, personal email addresses or home addresses. Staff should use their college email addresses, college phone number via Skype or college mobile

phone when contacting students. Permission is not given to any staff member to use their personal mobile number to contact a student.

When presenting online lessons staff must consider:

- Appropriateness of dress, as should anyone else in their household
- Computers should be used in appropriate areas with the background blurred or in a situation which does not give students insight to their private lives
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including family members in the background
- Staff should record the length, time, date and student attendance of any sessions held online

Peer to Peer abuse

Weston College recognises that during the closure that students may be engaging online even more than usual with their peers and that the likelihood of peer to peer abuse is intensified.

Our response to such incidents is guided by the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges) Sept 2019.

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

Concerns must be referred through the usual Safeguarding channels.

Approved by the Weston College Corporation

Date: 07/04/2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Leighton-Price', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Leighton-Price – Chair of Weston College Corporation