

Addendum 1 – COVID 19 School closure arrangements for safeguarding and child protection at Colston’s Girls’ School

This addendum of the Colston’s Girls’ School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas due to the COVID 19 response.

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1. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were also 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.

On 20th May 2020 updated guidance was published by the DfE to support schools with their safeguarding measures as more children would be returning to schools as the phased reopening is implemented from 1st June 2020.

2. Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Kerry McCullagh	07584080858	Kerry.mccullagh@colstongirls.org
Deputy DSL	Rachel Edwards	07748233813	Rachel.edwards@colstongirls.org

Trust Safeguarding Lead	Jenny Winfield	07572 939967	Jennifer.winfield@venturerstrust.org
Chair of Governors	Chris Patterson		Chris.Patterson@venturerstrust.org
Safeguarding Governor	Chris Patterson		Chris.Patterson@venturerstrust.org

School telephone number and Email address: 0117 942 4328 info@colstonsgirls.org

There is the possibility due to the circumstances of the virus that the DSL or a deputy DSL will not be on site at all time. The Academy will ensure that there is a person available to contact directly whilst working from home if they are not on site. This may be organised on a rota basis.

The information regarding whoever is DSL on any given day in school and whether they are on site or need to be remotely contacted will be shared with all staff on a daily basis, both those working on site or those working remotely so they are aware of who and how to take any safeguarding concerns they have regarding children.

CPOMS will still be used as the main reporting tool for concerns and this will still be monitored daily by the safeguarding teams and acted on as necessary.

If there are no trained DSLs or Deputy DSLs available arrangements will be made with another academy to utilise their DSL and support will be given by the Trust Safeguarding Lead.

3. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with parents and the Local Authority as necessary, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children’s social care support.

Colston’s Girls’ School will continue to work with and support children’s social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children’s social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this is: Rachel Edwards

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Colston’s Girls’ School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. This will be balanced with the ‘stay alert, control the virus, save lives’ message and an assessment of safety for these children.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Colston's Girls' School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Colston's Girls' School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed via our distance learning packages that are available to our other students and with support from staff as appropriate.

Colston's Girls' School are aware that that circumstances for families will change e.g. children will come out of isolation, parents may access employment that makes them critical to the COVID 19 response, it is our intention to remain as flexible as we can to continue to offer a school place and care to those who need it. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if their circumstances do change to discuss their support needs.

School staff (supported by the DSL or deputy) will continue to work with and support children's social workers, virtual school heads and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners to help protect vulnerable children whether remotely or whilst accessing care in school.

Our DSL and safeguarding team will continue to assess the needs of children and their families and ensure that Early Help and intervention is accessed as necessary.

4. Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Colston's Girls' School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Colston's Girls' School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Colston's Girls' School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

Attendance figures will be submitted to the DfE within the daily timescales detailed in their updated attendance guidance.

The Academy will continue to notify social workers where children with social workers do not attend, and also follow up with parent/carers whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't, in line with our attendance procedures.

How will this look in our school?

To support the above, Colston's Girls' School will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Colston's Girls' School will notify their social worker.

Vulnerable children attendance is now expected, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan). We will work with families to ensure our pupils are accessing the sessions they need.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Colston's Girls' School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Kerry McCullagh

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s is/are: Rachel Edwards

We will endeavour to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site when we are open. Where this is not the case, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all Colston's Girls' School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and co-ordinate attendance at all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

6. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they will continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which will be done remotely or via the member of staff responsible for safeguarding working in the school if remote access is not available.

In the event that this member of staff cannot be contact, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal and the Trust Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received and actioned as necessary.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately as they would if normal business was happening.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use the same process to report this to the Principal. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal whilst they are away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal.

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors:

Chris Patterson Chris.Patterson@venturerstrust.org

Venturers Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Where there are changes to local reporting or referral processes due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Principal and DSL will ensure they are up to date with all advice and updates shared from our local safeguarding partnership and will follow any changes specified by them to continue to ensure safety for all our students.

7. Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

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 school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL will 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, or new volunteers enter Colston's Girls' School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our Trust, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children

- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's safeguarding and child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

For staff from within the Trust, that might be site sharing or supporting another academy, we are confident that Trust staff meet the above criteria, only staff that do so will be deployed in this way. Arrangements for them being on another site will be agreed between Principals e.g. Health and Safety info.

8. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Colston's Girls' School 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 (2019) (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.

Where Colston's Girls' School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Colston's Girls' School 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.

Colston's Girls' School 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 will 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 any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such Colston's Girls' School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date.

As we reopen to more staff and pupils, we will ensure we are aware of who is on site and expected to be in regulated activity on a daily basis and they are all appropriately checked or risk assessed and are listed in our Single Central Record.

9. Mental Health

We recognise that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. We will work to provide appropriate support for our pupils and signpost parents/carers to services that are appropriate for them should they be needed.

The DfE has published guidance to support the identification of children who might need additional support and we will use this, and current practice to ensure support is put in place. We recognise that the current situation could bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state and this can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which can be an indicator of an underlying problem.

As well as being aware of the issues for children currently attending school, our staff will also be aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of those students/pupils (and their parents) who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of childrens' work.

Our behaviour policy has been adapted to help staff to further understand the issues that children might be facing, how this may manifest itself in behaviour and how we can all support our pupils through this.

10. Online safety in schools and colleges

Colston's Girls' School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. We will continue the use of an online filtering system and the monitoring systems we currently have in place to safeguarding students and staff.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

11. Children and online safety away from school and college

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

Colston's Girls' School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. If new tools or systems are recommended by staff to students, these will be checked and added to the academy's data map in consultation with the Academy's Data Protection Lead. Support from the Trust's Data Protection Officer will be sought if needed.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the VT code of conduct, however some specific expectations have been put in place to further protect staff and students.

These are our additional expectations for staff conduct when supporting distance learning during the COVID 19 pandemic

- 1:1 contact can be made with pupils/students using video conferencing if permission is given by line manager and the DSL, and the Venturers Trust guidance is followed.
- If 1:1 online support is needed, academy email addresses must be used.
- Any group conferencing that happens, needs to use Microsoft teams as a platform to complete this, this ensures appropriate monitoring and safeguarding will be in place – separate guidance on the safe use of this will be made available to staff, if you have not seen this do not use this method of contact.
- Any group conferencing needs to be recorded for reference if needed, these recordings must be stored for no less than 6 months.
- If recording lessons or conferencing a group of students or parents, staff must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- If recording lessons or conferencing a group of students or parents, staff must not be seen to be consuming anything inappropriate e.g. alcohol, illegal substances or smoking.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms or bathrooms; and the background should be neutral and blurred.
- Any live classes must be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Venturers Trust guidance on delivering live classes safely must be followed.
- Language and gestures must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by their academy to communicate with students.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.
- Any lessons/worksheets shared must come from reputable sources, be appropriate in content and be sourced in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements
- When contacting students by telephone, academy numbers must be used, or if personal phones have to be used then numbers must be withheld. If sharing contact details with students or families then these must not be personal numbers.
- Staff must not meet up with any students in a 1:1 situation.
- Staff must not meet up with any family members of students in a 1:1 situation

- Staff must be vigilant regarding concerns about their students, both in terms of safeguarding, child protection and well-being and report this in a timely manner via CPOMs or to their DSL.
- Any contact made with families due to needing pastoral type support must be recorded as agreed with your safeguarding team.

Staff members not following these additional expectations will be subject to action in the same way they would if they were not following our normal code of conduct.

12. Supporting children not in school

Colston's Girls' School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, we will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan will be recorded by the school, shared with the senior leadership team and the Trust Safeguarding Lead. A record will be kept of any contact made with families and children or young people.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact. Other individualised contact methods could be considered and will be risk assessed and recorded.

Colston's Girls' School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan will be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Colston's Girls' School will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages. We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers have been made aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

13. Supporting children in school

Colston's Girls' School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Colston's Girls' School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Colston's Girls' School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded where appropriate.

Where Colston's Girls' School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the trust and implement use of risk assessment to mitigate any risk to children and staff.

14. Peer on Peer Abuse

Colston's Girls' School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school 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 our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

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

Concerns and actions will be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

15. Support from Venturers Trust

The Trust Safeguarding Lead will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

All reopening plans and risk assessments have been developed in partnership with the Executive Team within the Trust and the Trust safeguarding lead has scrutinised these plans to ensure the ability to effectively safeguard children – both on and off site - had not been compromised. We will continue to all work together to monitor and review these plans, with safeguarding being at the centre of them all.