**Annex to West Nottinghamshire College Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**January 2021 – this represents a replacement to paragraph 7.1 in the college’s approved safeguarding procedures**

**Response to COVID-19**

There have been significant changes to the college’s normal ways of working and indeed in ways of working across the country in response to the outbreak of COVID-19.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments that West Nottinghamshire 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, the college’s new way of working is:

The vast majority of our teaching and support for students will now move online.

The college does remain open for a small number of students who have been contacted by support teams and invited to come in**.** The Derby Road site **only** will be open to accommodate these students and tutors and support teams will be on site to offer support. Other students who feel that they need to attend college can contact the support teams and request that they attend, this includes students who do not have access to adequate IT to learn effectively online.

**Our ways of working from 5th January until further notice are as follows:**

* Students will receive their remote learning as per their timetabled sessions and should log-on and be ready to learn at those times.
* Support services such as careers, safeguarding and learning support will also be provided largely remotely.
* The Derby Road campus only will be open for a small number of students, specifically those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or who are otherwise vulnerable and cannot learn remotely.
* The college will commence asymptomatic testing of students and staff on site from week commencing 11th January. Where necessary parental consent will be sought and parents/carers enabled to attend site to support young people in administering the test.
* We will provide support on-site to these students to access their online learning. This is entirely voluntary and we understand if those students choose not to come into college. We urge you to stay at home if it is possible for you to do so.
* Students who are self-isolating in accordance with government advice should NOT come into college.
* College bursaries will be paid as normal and students in receipt of free college meals will receive payment of £10 per week directly into their bank account.

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.

**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 or support coaches at least twice weekly with these students in agreement with the family and social worker. Where families have requested this to be once per week, this has been discussed and agreed with the allocated social worker.

**For students who are Looked after Children and recent Care Leavers** : contact will be made by the support coaches on at least a weekly basis and where needed calls will be made on a daily basis.

**For students with an EHCP**: Support Workers and Learning Support Advisors will continue to support remote learning as per timetabled sessions. Support staff will also maintain regular contact as agreed with student and parents / carers.

**For students identified as high risk**: contact will be made by support coaches as regularly as felt necessary and at least once per week. Issues will be escalated to external agencies where it is felt necessary and in the best interests of the young person or vulnerable adult.

NB Contact will be made remotely through telephone calls, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.

**Reporting arrangements:**

The college arrangements continue in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Senior Designated Person – Louise Knott louise.knott@wnc.ac.uk

Deputy Designated Person – Suzanna Smith Suzanna.smith@wnc.ac.uk

Safeguarding Manager – Rebecca Broomhead \* rebecca.broomhead@wnc.ac.uk

Safeguarding Officer – Danielle Blower danielle.blower@wnc.ac.uk

Safeguarding Officer – Rebecca Smith rebecca.smith@wnc.ac.uk

\*carries operational responsibility for responding to safeguarding referrals.

The college also has identified a lead governor for safeguarding and this is currently Steve Sutton.

**All safeguarding referrals should be made to the safeguarding team inbox** **safeguarding@wnc.ac.uk**

We will be operating during normal business hours, 8.30am – 5pm (Mon – Thurs) and 8.30am – 4.30pm (Friday).

Arrangements to contact external agencies and the LADO remain unchanged.

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.

If you have access to ProMonitor please continue to log confidential comments as you normally would. If you do not have access to ProMonitor to log confidential comments please email concerns to **safeguarding@wnc.ac.uk**where a member of the safeguarding team will respond to the concern and log on ProMonitor. This email address is monitored by all safeguarding staff.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply for referrals to children’s services. This contact will go through a member of the safeguarding team (listed above) 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 Director of HR – Suzanna Smith.

Any agency staff or volunteers working with students during college closure will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

**Peer on peer abuse**

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a college closure and a move to online learning. 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.

**Risk online**

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying, grooming and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when students are learning at the College.

**Mental Health**

Restrictions to movement and contact with other people means students are more likely to be at risk of mental health problems. The college counselling service continues to provide telephone and online consultations, referrals regarding a student’s mental health should be made either through the safeguarding team or support coaches.

The following organisations can also provide support:

[*www.kooth.com*](http://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/>