

Addendum



COVID-19 RSM and RCM closure arrangements for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection

Policy owner: DSL
Date: 6 April 2020
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Context

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

Schools, colleges and all childcare providers, were asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of CYP who are vulnerable, and whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of Seashell Trusts Child Protection and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

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NB: DSL meetings will continue to operate on a normal basis throughout this period of time utilising Zoom / conference calls.

Vulnerable children and young people

Vulnerable CYP include those who have a social worker and those CYP 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 CYP 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 and section 42 of the Care Act 2014.

CYP's EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority (LA) and parents, 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 will include providing resources and telepractice support and 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.

As circumstances can change Seashell Trust will contact parents on a regular basis to discuss the wellbeing of CYP and family, this will inform plans to support by Seashell Trust and/or the Local Authority

CYP who have 45 - 52 week placements with the Trust will remain at the Trust and cared for by staff at the Trust unless parents request an alternative arrangement which will be assessed and ongoing staffing levels allow.

Senior Managers, the DSL and Safeguarding Officer know who our most vulnerable CYP are and have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of care support and termly/weekly and day students will be assessed in terms of the support that can be offered throughout this period of time.

Seashell Trust will continue to work with and support CYP social workers to help protect vulnerable CYP. This includes working with and supporting CYP social workers and the local authority lead for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Critical workers

Although HM Government is clear that CYP should be at home wherever possible, schools and other educational settings have been asked to provide care for the CYP of any critical workers who need this support. This may include days and times on which the school/college would not normally be open, including the school/college holidays. If our school/college cannot remain open, due to staff illness or self-isolation, we will notify our parents and the relevant placing authority who are responsible for arranging for the CYP to be cared for in an alternative setting that can meet their needs.

The HM Government guidance for educational settings regarding critical workers can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers#critical-workers>

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.

Seashell Trust (and social workers) will agree with families whether CYP should be attending the Trust and will then follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Seashell Trust will also follow up with any 'critical worker' parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) but the child(ren) subsequently do(es) not attend.

To support the above, Seashell Trust will, when communicating with parents, carers and allocated social workers / placing authorities, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable CYP does not take up their place at the Trust, or discontinues, the Trust will notify their social worker/LA.

If Seashell Trust has any CYP in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable, the children of critical workers or because they are residential pupils who were not able to return home) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Seashell Trust has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a number of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – these are named on the front sheet.

We will endeavour to have a trained DSL or deputy available on site at all times when pupils are present. 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 the online safeguarding system, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, if 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.

Whatever the scenario, it is important that all Trust staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or deputy. The Trusts current arrangements for contacting the DSL / Dep DSL remain unchanged and staff should submit an online cause for concern and/or ring the safeguarding number shown at the top of this paper.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a CYP, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Trusts safeguarding policy, this includes making a cause for concern which can be access through the Trusts SharePoint page and can also be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff has a concern about a CYP but cannot access the recording system, they should telephone the Safeguarding number. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff must not just leave an answerphone message.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with CYP at the Trust, they should report the concern immediately to their line manager and/or onsite care co-ordinator. Staff must not just leave an answerphone message.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place during this period.

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 staff have had safeguarding training and have read at least part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The Designated Safeguarding Lead should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a CYP.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the Trust, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

The existing workforce may move between education and care establishments on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19. Where the Trust receive staff from another setting, we will judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding and general site induction required. As a minimum, the visiting professional(s) will be provided with a copy of our safeguarding / child protection policy and the name and contact details of the DSL and deputy DSLs.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's/adults workforce or gain access to CYP. When recruiting new staff, the Trust will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of 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 – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

If staff are deployed from another setting to the 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/adults barred list check where relevant
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children or adults at risk
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Where Trust 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.

The Trust will continue to comply with 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.

The Trust 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 environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school or college 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, the Trust will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Added 15 June 2020

- **TELEPHONE VERIFICATION OF REFERENCES:** From 15 June 2020 to the 30th September 2020 - only the most recent (first) reference will require telephone verification. For second references and additional references telephone verification will still be attempted (evidence of the attempt logged) but if unsuccessful will not be a requirement to complete Onboarding checks. Any references where verification has not been possible should be flagged in the Compliance Sign off (CSO) and the HOS should review and create a risk assessment evidencing that they are able to risk assess any decision to sign off the file as complete.
- **FAST TRACK DBS:** From 15 June 2020 to the 30th September 2020 we will use the DBS fast track service, any candidates (not existing employees) using the service will not be able to join the update service and will be required to join the update service on their next renewal- they will need to be informed of this requirement. (Information about the service and instructions can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-of-charge-dbs-applications-and-fast-track-barred-list-check-service>)

Onboarding team to ensure HR team are aware who is not on the update service, and a note should be added to the CSR (COVID fast track DBS complete- not on update service).

Online safety in schools and colleges

Seashell Trust will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online monitoring and filtering system.

Where CYP are using computers at the Trust, appropriate supervision will be in place.

CYP and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with CYP, including online, continue to look out for signs a CYP may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection and vulnerable adults safeguarding policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children and adult social care and as required the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's or college's staff code of conduct.

The Trust will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. The Trust will connect with families to offer support and resources that can be used in the home whilst any CYP remains at home.

The following should be in place for any online/virtual contact with families and CYP:

- Staff and CYP must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household;
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms;
- Contact should be kept to a reasonable length of time;
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background;
- Staff must only use platforms agreed with senior leaders and the Head of IT to communicate with CYP and their families;
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any session/contact that is made on the contact log for the relevant CYP.

Supporting CYP not currently at the Trust

Seashell Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Senior managers and DLS/Dep. DSLs will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for each child, their parent(s) / carers and the allocated social worker or placing authority.

Details of risk assessments and COVID 19 support plan are recorded on CYP SP page, BCP page and contact logs.

The COVID 19 support plans may include; remote contact, sent resources and equipment, phone contact, home visits in line with social distancing, limited on site day services. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Seashell Trust and its DSL team will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any support plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DLS's will consider any referrals as appropriate, taking into account the local criteria for action.

In addition, the Trust will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

The Trust recognises that school/college is a protective factor for CYP, and the current circumstances have a significant potential to affect the mental health of students and their parents. Education and care staff at the Trust will be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

The Trust will ensure that if we are unable to care for the child/ren of critical workers, residential pupils and vulnerable children on site, we will liaise with the placing local authority and the parent / carer to find a suitable alternative; e.g, at a 'hub' school or via a multi-disciplinary package of support. In that situation, the DSL will ensure that the DSL of the hub school / lead practitioner is made aware of any relevant safeguarding information relating to a child.

Supporting CYP in School/College/Residence

Seashell Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

The Trust will continue to be a safe space for all CYP to attend and flourish. Senior managers at the Trust will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff ratio numbers are appropriate, maximising safety.

The Trust 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 coronavirus.

The Trust will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers, residential pupils and vulnerable CYP on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each CYP and recorded as appropriate.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Seashell Trust recognises that during the closure/limited services a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where the Trust receives a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Trust's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy.

The Trust will work with the young person, family and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

All concerns and actions taken must be recorded on cause for concern system / Behaviour Watch and appropriate referrals made.

Assessment and Emergency Admission to Hospital

Heads of Service will communicate with staff the arrangements that are stipulated by the NHS in terms of hospital admissions which will restrict them accompanying any students to hospital in the current circumstances. In anticipation of this the nursing team are updating Hospital Passports and Health Action Plans. These documents will be stored in CYP's 'medical ISP' libraries on SharePoint so that they can be easily and quickly accessed should a CYP be admitted to hospital.

Hard copies of the documents, once updated, will be shared with families whose CYP are currently at home with them to ensure families can take these and present them to the acute team should a CYP be admitted to hospital.

The clinical guidance from NHS England for LD and ASC highlights this as a key area of need:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0031_Specialty-guide_LD-and-coronavirus-v1_-24-March.pdf

Written guidance for Seashell Trusts clinical team draws together our new models of working in response to C19. This also includes issues of diagnostic overshadowing and overcoming the difficulties our students experience in communicating pain clearly (both also highlighted in the above NHS England clinical guidance).

The Trust note and acknowledge that the guidance used for assessing individuals (Clinical Frailty Scale) for admission to hospital for critical care was challenged and the guidance above will be referred and utilised if required to ensure individual residents at the Trust are assessed on an individual basis as detailed below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/04/C0166-Letter-DNACPR.pdf>