



Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures: COVID-19 addendum

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Contents

Important contacts	2
1. Scope and definitions	3
2. Core safeguarding principles	3
3. Reporting concerns.....	3
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements	3
5. Working with other agencies	4
6. Monitoring attendance	4
7. Peer-on-peer abuse.....	5
8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer	5
9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns	6
10. Contact plans	6
11. Safeguarding all children	6
12. Online safety	6
13. Mental health	8
14. Staff recruitment, training and induction	9
15. Children attending other settings	9
16. Monitoring arrangements.....	10
17. Links with other policies.....	10

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Ms Sonia Hothi	shothi@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk 07553 317476 / 07899 691362
Deputy DSL	Mrs Sarah Valentine	svalentine@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk 07553 317476 / 07899 691362
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL can't be on site	Ms Sarah Wood	swood@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk 07553 317476 / 07899 691362
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Valentine	svalentine@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk 07553 317476 / 07899 691362
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Buckinghamshire LADO service	secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk 01296 382 070
Chair of governors	Professor Nick Braisby	nbraisby@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19 and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners Buckinghamshire Council, the local authority (LA), Thames Valley Police and the Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal safeguarding and child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- › Have a social worker, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - Assessed as being in need
 - Looked after by the local authority
- › Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- › The best interests of children must come first
- › If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- › A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- › It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the UTC workforce or gain access to children
- › Children should continue to be protected when they are online

3. Reporting concerns

All staff must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending the UTC and those at home.

Reporting procedures remain unchanged.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in the UTC, they can be contacted remotely by email : shothi@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk or svalentine@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk

We will keep all UTC staff informed by email as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSLs (and Deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our UTC are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a Senior Leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Assistant Principal, Sarah Wood. You can contact them by email : swood@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the Senior Leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

The DSL Team will continue to engage with Social Workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which are delivered remotely.

We will continue to work with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

The following guidance is currently in place:

Our procedures for all staff, volunteers and visitors in safeguarding and protecting children from harm are in line with Buckinghamshire Council and Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership safeguarding procedures 'Working together to safeguard Children 2018', 'keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the Counter Terrorism Act.

The Buckinghamshire safeguarding Children Partnership <https://www.bucksscp.org.uk/> is a website which brings together information for

- Children/young people
- Parent/Carer
- Professionals

Advice and guidance on how to stay safe as well as information combatting fraud and scams is included.

The 3 local safeguarding partners consist of:

- Thames Valley Police – support for Parents/Carers and Young people on online Child sexual abuse
- Buckinghamshire County Council – helpline for concerns about extremely vulnerable person
- Silent Solution – helps young people who are unable to speak but genuinely need police assistance

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending the UTC during this period of closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend the UTC during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by phone call and email
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible. The business support team complete a regular audit of all parent and carer contact details.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

Bucks UTC recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending the UTC and those at home.

The procedure to report any concerns remains the same, via all staff, or and for parents.

Bucks UTC recognises that during the period of college closure, children/young people may have more access frequent access to online devices, which has the potential to lead to online peer on peer abuse. These would include:

- Sexting
- Online abuse
- Peer-on-peer grooming
- Distribution of youth involved sexualised content
- Harassment

Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, it will be addressed promptly and appropriately, following the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within Bucks Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

We will listen and work with child/young person, parents/carers and multi-agency partners, including a report to the police, if required, to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions will be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in the UTC to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this. These might be children where concerns have been raised but haven't met the threshold for referral, or those who have previously had a social worker.

If these children will not be attending the UTC, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

10. Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending the UTC (for example where the UTC, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

Each child has an individual plan which sets out:

- How often the UTC will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, via MS Teams audio/video call, doorstep visits, or a combination of these

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant and will review them monthly.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

11. Safeguarding all children

Staff are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to UTC systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside the UTC.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support students' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In the UTC

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in the UTC.

This continues to be managed remotely by CST <https://cstltd.com/>

12.2 Outside the UTC

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow the existing staff code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy. In addition, during this period of the Covid-19 outbreak, there are other aspects of e-safety that have been considered:

All staff at Bucks UTC have been reminded to familiarise themselves with the following policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Social Media Guidance
- Online Safety Policy
- IT Acceptable use Policy

And to ensure that:

- Ground rules are in place so that students and parents have a good understanding of how remote learning will be organised and run
- Language must be professional and appropriate at all times
- Staff must use platforms provided by Bucks UTC (MS Teams or email) to communicate with students
- The needs of vulnerable students and SEND will be taken into account

Protocols, updates and reminders about online safety will be communicated to students, staff and parents using the UTC's normal communication channel.

Children/Young people and online safety away from Bucks UTC

It is important that all staff who interact with children/young people, including online, continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too. Any such concerns will be dealt with as per our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures and where appropriate, referrals will still be made to the relevant multi-agencies.

Bucks UTC will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems are in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Bucks UTC will ensure that children/young people who are being asked to work online, have clear reporting routes in place, so that they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes, students will be sign posted to age-appropriate practical support from for example:

- [Childline](#) – for support
- [UK Safer-internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) – for advice on making a report about online abuse
- [MIND](#) – advice on blocking harmful comments

12.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- › Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- › Know what our UTC is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our UTC

- › Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our UTC provides
- › Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

Support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online includes:

[Internet matters](#) – support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online

[Net-aware](#) – support for parents from the NSPCC

[Parent-info](#) – support for parents/carers to keep their child safe online

[Thinuknow](#) – advice from National Crime Agency to stay safe online

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – advice for parents/carers

Supporting children/young people not in the UTC

Bucks UTC will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness any communication plan.

The UTC will share safeguarding messages on its website, in parent and student newsletters and on social media as appropriate

The Government has also provided:

[Support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms](#) – includes advice such as online sexual abuse, sexting and cyberbullying

[Support to stay safe online](#) – advice on security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content and parental controls

13. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for student mental health for all students. During this period students also have access to:

Support by telephone on 01296 431183 from Youth Concern via their new triage service. Young people can talk with a youth worker or counsellor 1:1 by phone or via a safe platform of their choice. This service is available Monday to Friday 10am-5pm

[Kooth.com](#)-online support for young people to support young peoples wellbeing and resilience. Kooth is a web based confidential support service available to young people. Kooth provides a safe and secure means of accessing mental health and wellbeing support designed specifically for young people.

Kooth offers young people the opportunity to have a text-based conversation with a qualified counsellor. Counsellors are available from 12noon to 10pm on weekdays and 6pm to 10pm at weekends, every day of the year on a drop-in basis. Young people can access regular booked online counselling sessions as needed. Outside counselling hours' young people can message the team and get support by the next day.

We will also signpost all students, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 Recruiting new staff

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our UTC are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our UTC.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.2 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

14.3 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our UTC each day
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers

15. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving setting or school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by Sonia Hothi, Assistant Principal. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Online safety policy