

# Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum UTC Plymouth



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| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Jo Ware    | <b>Date:</b> 01.04.2020 |
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## Contents

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

## Important contacts

| ROLE                                      | NAME            | CONTACT DETAILS  |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)        | Jo Ware         | <a href="mailto:jo.ware@utcplymouth.org">jo.ware@utcplymouth.org</a><br>01752284250<br>Mobile: 07510586941 |
| Deputy DSL                                | Jasmin Chapple  | <a href="mailto:jasmin.chapple@utcplymouth.org">jasmin.chapple@utcplymouth.org</a><br>01752284250          |
| Safeguarding Officer                      | Leigh Hotchin   | <a href="mailto:leigh.hotchin@utcplymouth.org">leigh.hotchin@utcplymouth.org</a><br>01752284250            |
| Safeguarding Officer                      | Nathan Tills    | <a href="mailto:nathan.tills@utcplymouth.org">nathan.tills@utcplymouth.org</a><br>01752284250              |
| Safeguarding Officer                      | Natasha Ive     | <a href="mailto:natasha.ive@utcplymouth.org">natasha.ive@utcplymouth.org</a><br>01752284250                |
| Safeguarding Officer                      | Esther Knight   | <a href="mailto:esther.knight@utcplymouth.org">esther.knight@utcplymouth.org</a><br>01752284250            |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) | Marie Partridge | <a href="mailto:LADO@plymouth.gov.uk">LADO@plymouth.gov.uk</a><br>01752 305200                             |
| Chair of governors                        | Sam Smith       | <a href="mailto:sam.smith@utcplymouth.org">sam.smith@utcplymouth.org</a>                                   |

From 20<sup>th</sup> 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 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.

## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local authority (LA) Plymouth City Council and the DfE.

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 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 school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

## 3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, and log all safeguarding concerns onto CPOMS.

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 school, they can be contacted remotely by email, or the DSL mobile number listed as important contacts.

If our DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, we will share a DSL with Plymouth Creative Arts. Their DSL can be contacted by: Ian Golding- [igolding@psca.co.uk](mailto:igolding@psca.co.uk) contact number;01752221297

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email/other methods of communication 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 school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding. This will be Leigh Hotchin. You can contact them by: email- [leigh.hotchin@utcplymouth.org](mailto:leigh.hotchin@utcplymouth.org). The DSL Jo Ware ([jo.ware@utcplymouth.org](mailto:jo.ware@utcplymouth.org) mobile; 07510586941) and Deputy safeguarding Jasmin Chapple will routinely rotate shifts on attending the school grounds. This is to protect the students health during the COVID-19 outbreak.

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 and continue to communicate between parents and staff.
- 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

We will continue to work with children's social care, and 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

## 6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school 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 school 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 contacting the parents/carers via their preferred method of contact
- 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. We will do this by sending out an emergency contact detail form to all parents via email. Requesting parents to update their information if not correct.

## 7. Peer-on-peer abuse

UTC Plymouth 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 the Child Protection Policy. The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

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

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.

## 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.

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](mailto: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

The option to offer places in school 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.

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 the Local Authority 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 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.

UTC Plymouth 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 will be: Jo Ware

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 UTC Plymouth will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

UTC Plymouth will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely

if needed.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

## 10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

### 10.1 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 school (for example where the school, 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

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them continuously via email with the social worker and parent/carer. If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care, Gateway or the police depending on the level of concern.

### 10.2 Safeguarding all children

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

Staff and volunteers 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 particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

## 11. Online safety

### 11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school. The DFE have stated that 'all schools should be doing what they reasonably can to keep all of their children safe. If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact the Reach South IT support team. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

### 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.

Staff will 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.

### 11.3 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 school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

## 12. Staff recruitment, training and induction

### 13.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school 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 school.

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.

### 13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

### 13.3 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

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

### 13.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers 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. Alongside requesting staff to sign/out on the large whiteboard at the entrance of UTC Plymouth. We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

### 13. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving 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.

### 14. Monitoring arrangements

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

### 15. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Anti-bullying policy

All schools should consider the safety of their children when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles as set out in UTC Plymouth code of conduct for safer working practice, acceptable use of technologies and social networking policy. UTC Plymouth online learning tools and systems are used in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Pupils who are being asked to work online can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting concerns to the school pupils can access:

**Childline** - for support

**UK Safer Internet Centre** - to report and remove harmful online content

**CEOP** - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Staff at UTC Plymouth are in regular contact with parents and carers. These communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online. Staff will actively signpost resources to ensure parent/carers can keep their children safe online. These resources include:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#)- for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

## 16. Mental Health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. This includes referrals being sent to Young Devon. And advice being sent out by our mental health lead when requested or required.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. And have added a link on the UTC Plymouth website for online counselling with Kooth.

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.

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff are aware that children, parents/carers and families may find the current circumstances challenging and need access and signposting to specific support.

### **Apps and on-line sites for Mental Health wellbeing and support.**

Anxiety UK – 08444775774

Bipolar UK – [www.bipolaruk.org](http://www.bipolaruk.org).

CALM - <https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/get-help/> - for men Child line  
– 08001111

Community mental health service (CAMHS) – 01752 268011 – online link for information and self-referral form [www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk)

Depression – [www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)

Domestic violence helpline – 08082000247

Eating disorders (Adults) – 08456341414

Eating disorders (Children) – 03456347650

Family lives (Deal all aspects of parenting Inc. bullying) – 08088002222

FRANK (Confidential drugs advice service) – 03001236600

<https://www.giveusashout.org/> - text helpline for anxiety

MIND (Mental health problems helpline) 03001233393 - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>

NSPCC – 08088005000

OCD UK – 08451203778

PAPYRUS (Young suicide prevention society) – 08000684141

Relate (relationship advice) – 03001001234

Rethink mental illness – 03005000927

Samaritans – 116123 <https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact>

UK Drugs helpline – 08000241477

Young minds – <https://youngminds.org.uk/about-us/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilpvdMVnfGs&t=12s>

<https://www.calm.com/blog/take-a-deep-breath>

<https://www.stopbreathethink.com/blog/>

<https://www.facebook.com/stopbreathethink>

## **Apps**

Headspace Calm SAM Happify Moodtools Stop, Breathe and Think, Kids – mindfulness and meditation (and fun) app for children

**At times staff may have to listen and support pupils, parents/carers through some difficult times. Staff may find the tool kit below useful when communicating with families.**

Empathetic Dialogue which may help when speaking to parents /carers who may be affected by the pandemic.

Key phrases in initial conversations:

- Try not to compare and talk about your own experiences...EG; they may tell you someone in the family may be seriously ill...or at risk...or even died, don't then talk about you or someone you know being in a similar situation. You will no longer be coming from THEIR frame of reference!
- Recognise their pain by saying "That sounds difficult" "I sense you are finding these times challenging" I'm sorry they have died we will offer support to your child by..." this affirms that it is hard from them and validates their fears. You are also there for their child and not them and need to direct them to people who can support them. To avoid personal burnout.
- Suggest they talk to someone they trust and try to differentiate the conversation. It is important you don't take on their emotional stress as you have lots of others to deal with...this is not being selfish it is avoiding emotional burnout.
- Don't be afraid to use the words they have used back to them... it can be frightening to use the word death, ventilator, hospital but again it will affirm that you have listened to what they are saying.
- Answer their questions to the best of your knowledge...do not pretend or lie, re-iterate you are there for their child.
- Suggest social stories that support the issue eg.
- Talk to a peer or supervisor about some of the difficult conversations you have had...off load and compare empathetic ways of dealing with it.
- What to suggest to the parent? Tell them to acknowledge the child's worries, reassure the child that not everyone will react the same to the virus. Don't be afraid to have conversations with your child about coronavirus – not talking about something can sometimes make children worry more.

### **Staff well-being**

Staff making contact with pupils, parents/carers may have concerns regarding the safety and well-being of pupils and should follow the procedures highlighted in the Academy's child protection policy and Covid-19 annex. These staff would under normal conditions be offered support and supervision on the school site. These arrangements should and will continue. Staff will be offered support virtually, to ensure positive

well-being is maintained and staff are managing the new working conditions.

Ways for you to cope whilst working from home:

These are suggestions from counsellors:

- **Keep a routine** - Many people are working from home for the first time in their lives, and some will now be juggling a full-time job and home-schooling their children. “Without a routine, negative thinking and anxiety can escalate. I would suggest that people create a day to day plan of things they will need to do e.g. create a morning exercise programme, work from home if possible, cook something different, get into an online course.”
- **Think about restricting access to news media and social media** - This may involve choosing news sources you trust – and avoiding social media channels filled with speculation. Stick to the official government guidance and NHS advice websites or limit your access to the news to a certain time of the day. “Some people can be quite paralysed by this anxiety and may want to completely stop interacting with the news,”
- **Keep connected with friends and family (well those who make you happy??)** In our new world of self-isolation and social distancing, we can’t meet up with family and friends like we used to. But keeping connected to them is vital. “Connecting online with friends and talking about other stuff, inventing new fun ways to connect. An online pub quiz among friends...learn a dance routine at home then share it? Play games online? Cook the same recipe in your own home whilst online?”
- **Be present** -Take time to take a breath and really experience where you are and how you are feeling. To take in your surroundings and thank the space/environment and people in your space - to actively be grateful is very powerful. After all that space could be keeping you safe;
- **Practise gratitude** - Some counsellor’s recommend keeping a gratitude diary, where you write down three things you are grateful for every day.
- **Try some breathing and relaxation techniques** - Take a five-second breath in through the nose, hold that breath for five seconds and then breathe out for five seconds. Do this five times or Smile, take a (breath) and relax...breathing out longer than in to override fight and flight mechanism,” I can recommend trying mindfulness or relaxation apps, like Calm, although you have to pay for it after a free trial and practising deep breathing.
- **Write down your anxieties and let them go** - It can help to express this anxiety in a way that you can control. That could be writing down what you feel or keeping a journal.
- **Look after your wellbeing** - Make sure you are looking after yourself, doing what you can to help get a good night’s sleep, eating well and doing exercise. Do a well-being check, ask if you are Sleeping, eating, exercising. If we manage our health like this, it can help make us more robust against anxiety.” Running either on the spot, or outside, releases endorphins or fools the brain and body that they’ve run

away from the danger.

- **Use all your senses** - Try to use all your senses to notice where you are. You might want to notice five things you can see right now, five things you can hear right now, or any smells or tastes. These can help us resist the well-worn neural pathways around catastrophising and feeling helpless.
- **No expectations, no pressure** - We have no idea how to deal with this as we have never experienced anything like it before, so I feel it is best just to take it day by day, week by week.
- **Positive thinking** - at times, this may feel very difficult to do depending on your personal situation. But reframing a negative situation into a positive one can be very helpful. We live at such a fast, frenetic pace and sometimes don't stop to think about what it's all about and where we are heading. This is forcing us to do that. And we will grow as a result of this.
- **Ask for support** - Make a list of everyone you know, friends, family, colleagues, neighbours etc. Now tick 9 people from this list, who can provide practical, psychological and moral support. Connect with them and sustain this support circle.”

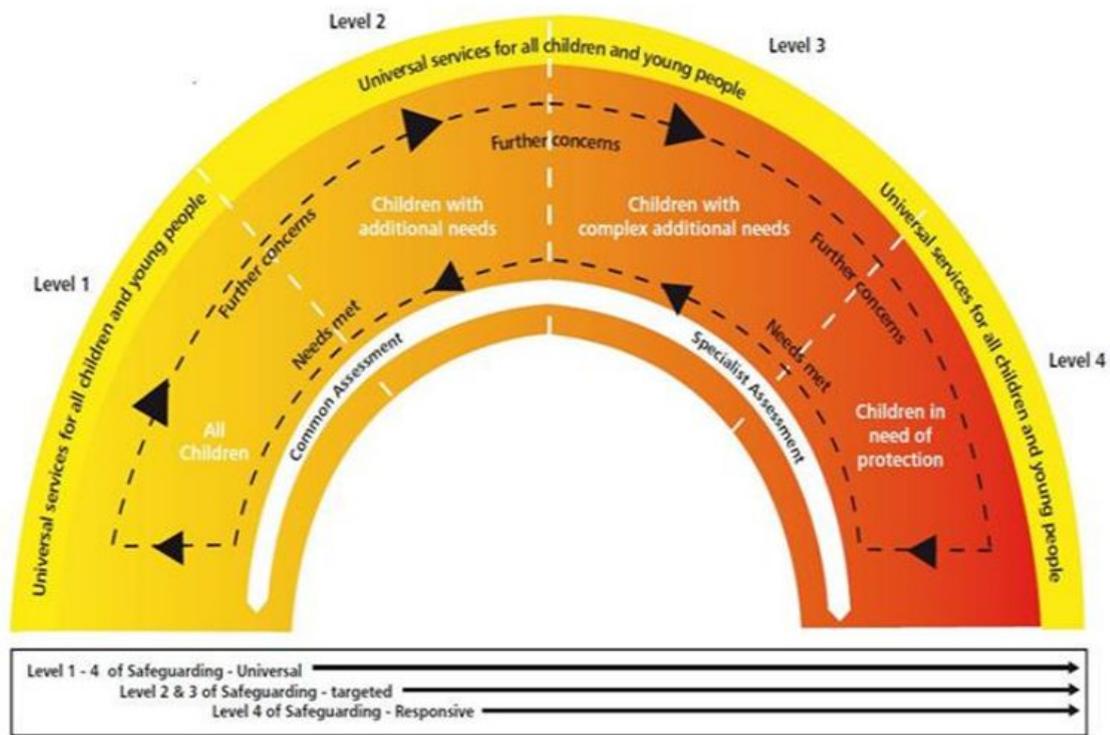
If you would like support from a qualified professional, many counsellors offer online or telephone counselling.

## 17. Child Protection

All staff have a copy of the schools 'key safeguarding' document which highlights all pupils who are CP, CIN, LAC or at risk in relation to specific safeguarding concerns. This document is updated weekly ensuring all staff have a clear idea of which children are at risk or vulnerable to significant harm. **All relevant (safeguarding related) communication with the parent/s/carers should be logged on CP POMS and DSL Jo Ware and DDSL Jasmin Chapple copied in.** This

information, where relevant will be shared within a multi-disciplinary and social care framework.

This protocol follows the local safeguarding guidance, set out below:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/framework-of-outcomes-for-young-people>