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To: Headteachers, Principals, Chairs of Governing Boards, FE Colleges and Multi-Academy Chief Executives

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Our ref IP/VB

Your ref

Date 01 May 2020

Dear colleague

### **Safeguarding Updates**

We hope that you are keeping both safe and well and would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all of your staff for the work which you are doing to keep your school and college open for children of key workers and also for vulnerable young people.

During the last week, the Government has made slight changes to some of their guidance and key sections are highlighted below. Before we do this, it is worth noting that we are now in the sixth week since not all children and young people have been attending school or college on a regular basis. We are all aware that the reduced visibility of children is becoming more significant because of the longevity of this situation and therefore please continue to consider who should be in school in light of their vulnerability. The Government's definition of vulnerable young people also extends to those who you may regard as being vulnerable even if they do not have a social worker. If this is the case and you have children and young people for whom you believe being in school is a protective factor, then please contact the young person's family to offer a school place and undertake a risk assessment to determine that they are free from Covid-19 symptoms and that neither they nor their family are self-isolating or shielding. The county council's children's services also remain open to referrals of new cases where you believe that levels of vulnerability are significant.

### **What are the expectations of my school or college to follow up on attendance?**

The Government's expectations are clear. Providers should follow up with the parent or carer – and social worker/local authority, where appropriate – to explore reasons for absence. This covers young people with a social worker, those with an education and health care plan and those whom you deem to be otherwise vulnerable and a school place has been offered. The Government's advice also extends to providers notifying social workers should a child with a social worker not take up the place which is offered.

### **Should education providers remain open on the Bank Holiday on 8 May 2020?**

Firstly, thank you for all your work in remaining open over the Easter weekend. Over 1,000 young people attended schools and this meant that many Derbyshire key workers could continue to work. In relation to the forthcoming Bank Holiday on 8 May, the Government is asking for schools to decide, in consultation with the parents of children who are currently attending school, whether it is necessary for them to continue to look after either key workers' or vulnerable children on Friday 8 May 2020. We know that some schools are already operating in clusters and you may decide to continue to do so with other schools directing their young people to the school which is open. In relation to children who

have a social worker, then please advise the child's social worker if your provision is closing on 8 May 2020 and if no other local provision is available for you to signpost the young person to.

**Where can I find more guidance on HR matters?**

The county council will be publishing more guidance within the next few days. In the meantime, the link at the bottom of this email takes you through to the Government's guidance around HR and the issues within this letter.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing#attendance>

Once again, many thanks for your help and support.

Yours sincerely

*Iain Peel*

*Alison Noble*

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Service Director Schools and Learning  
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