

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch

Context

From 20th March 2020 parents/carers 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 and for children who are vulnerable.

This addendum of the Mulberry Academy Shoreditch Child Protection policy contains details of our safeguarding arrangements (Section A) and arrangements for the school opening on the 1st June. (Section B)

Keeping children safe at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) is statutory safeguarding guidance that schools and colleges should continue to have regard to as required by legislation and/or their funding agreements.

Our safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

Section A

The provision for Mulberry Academy Shoreditch children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and children who are vulnerable will take place at **Mulberry School for Girls**.

Further safeguarding arrangements for Mulberry Academy Shoreditch students attending the provision at Mulberry School for Girls can be found here:

<http://www.mulberryschoolforgirls.org/index.php/important-information/policy-documents>

Key Contacts

Dan Collis (Designated Safeguarding Lead) dcollis@mulberryschooltrust.org - 07376 431 091

Kendra Healy (Safeguarding Officer) khealy@mulberryschooltrust.org - 07487 268 446

Jennie Montgomerie (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) jmontgomerie@mulberryschooltrust.org - 07780 110 247

Child Protection Advice Line - Tower Hamlets - 020 7364 3444 / 020 7364 5006

Hackney – 020 8356 5500

Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

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.

The Designated safeguarding team, our Heads of Year and the Inclusion Team 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 and to offer respite to these students or those who may have mental health concerns.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with social workers, the local authority and Virtual School Head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead member of staff for this is Dan Collis, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

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/carer does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer. Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school and will be supported in their remote learning if needed.

All those children considered to be vulnerable will be contacted regularly. Dan Collis, DSL, will co-ordinate this. Other key pastoral staff will use their professional judgement to determine how frequently this is necessary; for some students, this will be daily. All contact with students and their families will be recorded.

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.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending. Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will then follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

To support the above, staff making phone calls to vulnerable children will confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will notify their social worker.

Safeguarding team at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch

The safeguarding team will be led by Dan Collis (DSL) with the support of Jennie Montgomerie (Deputy DSL) and Kendra Healy (Lead Safeguarding Officer)

The DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via email or phone. They will respond via phone or email - for example when working from home.

It is important that all Mulberry Academy Shoreditch staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). This might include updating and managing access to the child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy), and liaising as required with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school

The DSL (or deputy) will engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings (or ensure that there will be Mulberry Academy Shoreditch representation) which can be done remotely.

Reporting a Concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school's Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS or the Child Protection email childprotection@mulberryacademysoreditch.org which can be done remotely.

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

It might be the case that a student chooses to tell you something, clearly indicating that he/she is at risk, at a time when, or in a place where, there is no senior or named person available. You must then contact the Local Authority's Safeguarding Team via the Child Protection Advice Line or if they fail to answer, the Local Police. They are legally responsible for securing a place of safety for the student via Social Care. You must not deal with this on your own. You must inform the DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible after the referral has been made. (See Key Contacts)

Safeguarding Training and Induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst the school is closed.

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 school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL (or deputy) should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

If staff are deployed between schools in the Mulberry Schools Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's Child Protection Policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Children and Online Safety away from School

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate, referrals should still be made to children's social care and if required, the Police.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Protocols for Staff Communication with Students when supporting Remote Learning

1. Members of staff should not give students their home address, home telephone number, mobile or personal email address or have them as friends or contacts on their social networking accounts.
2. When e-mailing students or creating digital media to aid student learning, apply the same professional standards of language and content as expected for letters or paper publications
3. Copy in your line manager when e-mailing students and always use your school email address.
4. Always maintain clear and explicit professional boundaries for communication between students and adults and do not request, or respond to, any personal information from a student.
5. Alert senior staff to any digital material within, or accessed via, the school's ICT system that causes concern or may put students, the school or its community at risk. Immediately report any illegal or potentially harmful ICT use to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).

If teachers would like to use video recording, then the following protocols should be followed. Teachers should not stream live lessons:

1. If you wish to record yourself teaching, either your voice or any communication with students, then the staff code of conduct should be applied as if you are in a classroom at school.
2. If you wish to speak to students on the phone then the same professionalism is required as a conversation at work. You must withhold your number and should never share your personal telephone number with students. You should log details of the conversation (Time/Date/Reason).

There should be no communication with students outside of these protocols.

Supporting Children not in School

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the Safeguarding team have identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan must be recorded and will be logged by Kendra Healy.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the Safeguarding Team will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Teachers at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch 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 and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

Supporting with Bereavement

If any member of staff becomes aware that a student has suffered a bereavement in the family, or a member of the family is seriously ill or hospitalised, or the student themselves is seriously ill during the period of school closure, this should immediately be referred to Dan Collis, the Designated Safeguarding Lead at dcollis@mulberryschoolstrust.org. The report should include a full account of what the student or their family have reported as well as any response the member of staff has given.

Contact will be attempted via phone preferably by the DSL or Deputy DSL to send condolences and to establish whether there are any practical or emotional needs that the school can support with.

The attendance team and teaching staff should be notified by the DSL (or deputy) to adjust expectations for an appropriate amount of time in relation to online learning and tutor time.

The monitoring of the student will then fall to the DSL or Deputy DSL for that appropriate period of time.

A follow up can then be made (possibly by student email) signposting the student or their families to charities such as:

Winston's Wish: <https://www.winstonswish.org/> Freephone Helpline: 0808 802 0021

Grief Encounter: <https://www.griefencounter.org.uk/> Chat online or call: 0808 802 0111

The pastoral and safeguarding team will continue to monitor the student to ascertain whether ongoing support is needed.

Upon returning to school, any students who may have suffered bereavements or serious illnesses in their family, will be able to access long-term support from our pastoral team such as art therapy, counselling or mentoring. Mulberry Academy Shoreditch recognises the significant and long-term trauma that can be experienced due to the loss of a family member and will continue to offer support to students for however long it is necessary.

Section B

Staff Training and Safeguarding Induction

All staff and volunteers will have refresher training prior to students returning to Mulberry Academy Shoreditch. This will also take into account factors that may be relevant due to Covid19. All staff will be asked to re-read part 1 of [KCSIE](#). Staff will be made aware of any new local arrangements, especially if these are being reviewed/changed as a result of more young people returning to school, so they know what to do if they are worried about a young person.

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

Designated Safeguarding Leads and arrangements.

It is anticipated that either the DSL (Dan Collis) or the Deputy DSL (Jennie Montgomerie) will be on site whenever they are young people present. However, in exceptional circumstances

- a trained DSL (or Deputy) be available to be contacted via phone or email - for example working from home

Where a trained DSL (or Deputy) is not on site, the Senior Leader present should take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. Staff will be sent a weekly email updating them of who and how they can contact the DSL or Deputy DSL.

The DSL (or Deputy) will provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to school or college. Key staff will try and speak directly to the young person, to help identify any concerns. Staff will be encouraged (where possible) to make calls from the school or college site via school or college phones and devices. Where staff use personal phones to make calls, they should withhold their personal number.

Key Contacts

Dan Collis (Designated Safeguarding Lead) dcollis@mulberryschoolstrust.org - 07376 431 091

Kendra Healy (Safeguarding Officer) khealy@mulberryschoolstrust.org - 07487 268 446

Jennie Montgomerie (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) jmontgomerie@mulberryschoolstrust.org - 07780 110 247

Child Protection Advice Line

Tower Hamlets - 020 7364 3444 / 020 7364 5006

Hackney – 020 8356 5500

Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team

Tower Hamlets - 020 7364 4079 (5pm – 9am)

Hackney – 020 8356 2710

Reporting Concerns

Staff and volunteers may identify ***new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closures.***

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school's Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS or the child protection email childprotection@mulberryacademyshoreditch.org or in person to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

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

Concerns about a Staff Member or Volunteer who may pose a Safeguarding risk to children

If any member of staff has a concern about another member of staff member or volunteer, they should follow the process outlined in the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Referrals and the welfare of students

The DSL, Deputy and Lead Safeguarding Officer will be given time to support staff and young people regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as more children return. There will be dedicated time/s set aside where staff can discuss any concerns and there will be regular updates for staff via email or face to face contact.

All relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) will be updated and accurate. This will be managed by Kendra Healy, Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Partial return to school

To ensure the welfare, health and wellbeing of all students; students and their parents will be invited into school for a meeting before their child returns to school. Parents/carers will then be able to inform the school of any considerations that the school needs to take into account, to best support the young persons.

Protecting vulnerable children

Vulnerable children for the purposes of continued attendance during the coronavirus outbreak are those across all year groups who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment

- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Local authorities have the key day-to-day responsibility for delivery of children's social care. Social workers and virtual school heads will continue to work with vulnerable children in this difficult period. The safe-guarding team at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will continue to work with and support children's social workers, virtual school heads and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners to help protect vulnerable children.

A register of all vulnerable children is kept up to date by the DSL (Dan Collis) and the Lead Safeguarding Officer (Kendra Healy)

Attendance

We will encourage the attendance of vulnerable children, where it is appropriate for them to school (where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan).

The DSL or Lead Safeguarding Officer will notify the social worker where child with a social worker does not attend. If a child is categorised as vulnerable and does not attend school, a follow up phone call will be made with the parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch 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 and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

Children moving schools and colleges

Should a child from Mulberry Academy Shoreditch move school, we will ensure that we provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of [KCSIE](#).

Note - In response to coronavirus, 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. The Home Office and Immigration Enforcement have also temporarily adjusted the [right to work checks](#) due to the coronavirus outbreak.

We will continue to follow our 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](#).

We will also ensure that, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. This will be more important than ever as more children and staff return. As such, we will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in [KCSIE](#).

Mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. We will provide training for staff on how to recognise mental health issues and support for students through either

Mental health issues can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which can be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include for example being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or excessive clinginess. Support for students in the current circumstances may include using our existing provision in the (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone for those children still not attending provision) or from specialist staff or support services.

Online safety in schools and colleges

When students return to school, we will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online on the school IT systems. (Reference – Acceptable Use of ITC and E Safety Policy November 2019)

Young people and online safety away from school

Whilst some young people will return to school and college, others will continue to stay at home and, in many cases, will be continuing to engage with their school online.

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

Remote education

The Department for Education has provided [guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) to support schools and colleges plan lessons safely.

Protocols for Staff Communication with Students when supporting Remote Learning

1. Members of staff should not give students their home address, home telephone number, mobile or personal email address or have them as friends or contacts on their social networking accounts.

2. When e-mailing students or creating digital media to aid student learning, apply the same professional standards of language and content as expected for letters or paper publications
3. Copy in your line manager when e-mailing students and always use your school email address.
4. Always maintain clear and explicit professional boundaries for communication between students and adults and do not request, or respond to, any personal information from a student.
5. Alert senior staff to any digital material within, or accessed via, the school's ICT system that causes concern or may put students, the school or its community at risk. Immediately report any illegal or potentially harmful ICT use to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

If teachers would like to use video recording, then the following protocols should be followed. Teachers should not stream live lessons:

1. If you wish to record yourself teaching, either your voice or any communication with students, then the staff code of conduct should be applied as if you are in a classroom at school.
2. If you wish to speak to students on the phone then the same professionalism is required as a conversation at work. After you have spoken to students on the phone, log that the call took place on CPOMS or email the child protection line and include brief content of the call. This is the same for any group calls. You must withhold your number and should never share your personal telephone number with students.

There should be no communication with students outside of these protocols.

Online safety

We will continue to consider the safety of young people, when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct for staff. (sometimes known as a code of conduct) should be followed.

We will continue to ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection requirements.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school's online offer with support from online companies.

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

- [Thinkuknow](#) provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online
- [Parent info](#) is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support

- [Internet Matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [London Grid for Learning](#) has support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- [Let's Talk About It](#) has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services

The Government has also provided:

- [support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms](#), includes advice about specific harms such as online child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- [support to stay safe online](#) includes security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls