



**Child Protection and  
Safeguarding Policy  
(Addendum Covid 19) –  
Updated January 2021**

**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at  
Mulberry Academy Shoreditch (January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021)**

**Context**

From January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021, 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 whilst students are asked to work at home.

**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 Academy Shoreditch.

**Key Contacts**

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

Kendra Healy (Safeguarding Officer) [khealy@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto:khealy@mulberryschoolstrust.org) - 07487 268 446

Jennie Montgomerie (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) [jmontgomerie@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto: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/ Hackney – 020 8356 271

## **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](mailto: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 (2020). 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](mailto: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.

