



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

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.

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

This addendum of the Mulberry UTC Child Protection policy contains details of our safeguarding arrangements.

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

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

Vulnerable children

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.

Directors of Progress and 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 and to offer respite to these students or those who may have mental health concerns.

Mulberry UTC 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 staff for this will be: Sally Brian

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 Mulberry UTC will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Mulberry UTC or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. Mulberry UTC 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. 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 on CPOMS.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-today attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Mulberry UTC and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending. Mulberry UTC will then follow up on any pupil 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 UTC will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sally Brian, sbrian@mulberryschoolstrust.org

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: mbruce@mulberryschoolstrust.org

The DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via email and can respond via phone or email - for example when working from home. It is important that all Mulberry UTC staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

The DSL will continue to support DoPs, will engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings (or ensure that there will be Mulberry UTC 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 Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email Sally Brian and the relevant DoP. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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

It might be the case that a pupil 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 young person via Social Care. You MUST NOT deal with this on your own. You must inform the DSL as soon as possible after the referral has been made.

CP Advice line – 020 7364 3444 / 020 7364 5006

Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team on 020 7364 4079 (5pm – 9am)

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Sue Barrow

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and Induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, 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 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 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 as required, the police.

Mulberry UTC 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 pupils when supporting remote learning

1. Members of staff should not give pupils 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

If Key Stage 5 teachers would like to use video recording, then the following protocols should be followed. Teachers should not live stream 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 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 pupils.

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

Supporting children not in school

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

Where the DSLs and the DoPs 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 on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made.

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 DSLs and DoPs will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

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

Peer on Peer Abuse

Mulberry UTC 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 multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS 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 the DSL using CPOMS. 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 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: 08088 020 021
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 UTC 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.