

## **Addendum to MST Schools' Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in light of COVID-19**

**Updated on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020**

### **MULBERRY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

COVID-19 school closure and phased reopening arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Mulberry School for Girls

#### Context

From 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

From 1 June 2020, the expectation is that Mulberry School for Girls will make arrangements to be able to offer some face to face contact with year 10 and year 12 pupils. This will not be a return to full timetables or pupils back in school full time, rather some support to supplement pupils' remote education

This addendum of the Mulberry School for Girls Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements.

#### **Safeguarding arrangements during the phased reopening**

Mulberry School for Girls staff may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closure. Where this is the case, staff will use CPOMS to record and report their concerns, this will be picked up by the relevant pastoral staff. There is a continued importance of all staff to act immediately on any safeguarding concerns and if concerns are urgent these should be reported to the available Designated Safeguarding Lead in person or by phone.

Mulberry School for Girls understands the importance of ensuring relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate. During the period of closure, children have continued to be monitored so that parents and carers can advise relevant staff of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing. This will continue to be the case as the child returns.

If not on site, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead continue to be available via telephone and email during school hours.

During the phased reopening Mulberry School for Girls staff will continue to follow the guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, this includes in relation to reporting peer on peer abuse or concerns about a staff member who may pose a safeguarding risk children

Mulberry School for Girls staff understand the continued importance for school staff to work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners.

Mulberry School for Girls will continue to keep arrangements in place to keep children not physically attending the school safe, especially online.

## **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.

Children can also be assessed as vulnerable by Mulberry School for Girls or local authorities (including children's social care services), and therefore judged to be in need of continued education provision - this might include children on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, or those who are young carers, and others at the provider and local authority discretion.

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.

Year Learning Co-ordinators and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to these students and to offer respite to students in challenging circumstances or those who may have mental health concerns.

Mulberry School for Girls 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: Rebecca Higgs and Saffia Rawat

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 School for Girls will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Mulberry School for Girls or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. Mulberry School for Girls 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 more than once a week. 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. Lists of those children considered to be vulnerable will be kept by YLCS, discussed in SIPS meetings and updated as necessary. This information will be shared as requested with the borough. Reports will be generated from CPOMS weekly to track contact with the vulnerable cohort. These reports will be monitored by YLCs and the DSL.

### 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 School for Girls and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending. Mulberry School for Girls will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. This will be done by SLT onsite in liaison with Saffia Rawat.

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, or discontinues, Mulberry School for Girls will notify their social worker.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Rebecca Higgs, [rhiggs@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto:rhiggs@mulberryschoolstrust.org), 07375876761

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Saffia Rawat, [srawat@mulberryschoolstrust.org](mailto:srawat@mulberryschoolstrust.org), 07375877544

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home. It is important that all Mulberry School staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). A weekly rota, identifying who the DSL for that day will be, will be distributed to all staff.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

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 YLCs, will engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings (or ensure that there will be Mulberry School for Girls 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 Safeguarding 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 Rebecca Higgs, Saffia Rawat, Jill Tuffee and the relevant YLC. 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 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 girl 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)

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report this verbally to the headteacher and followed up with an email.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Alice Crawley

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.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Mulberry School for Girls, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the MultiAcademy 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.

## **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Mulberry School for Girls will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, 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.

Where Mulberry School for Girls are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Mulberry School for Girls will continue to follow the 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.

Mulberry School for Girls will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Mulberry School for Girls will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **Online safety in school**

Mulberry School for Girls will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

## **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 School for Girls 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 School for Girls is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSLs and the YLCs 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 YLCs will consider any referrals as appropriate.

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

Mulberry School for Girls recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of the whole school community; staff, pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Mulberry School for Girls need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. An organisation dedicated to the mental health and wellbeing of education professionals is: [www.educationsupport.org.uk](http://www.educationsupport.org.uk) / 08000 662561

## **Supporting children in school**

Mulberry School for Girls is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Mulberry School for Girls will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Mulberry School for Girls will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Mulberry School for Girls will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS.

Where Mulberry School for Girls has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the Headteacher.

## **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Mulberry School for Girls 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 and YLC 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, Deputy DSL or YLC 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. Mulberry School for Girls 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.