Supporting vulnerable children and young people during coronavirus

The Ealing safeguarding process to help increase the number of vulnerable children and young people attending school.

Issue

As part of the response to coronavirus (COVID-19), educational settings have been asked to continue to provide care for children and young people who are vulnerable or whose parents/carers are critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response.

The latest Government guidance ([Supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, 20/4/20](#)) encourages vulnerable children and young people (Children in Need CIN, LAC, children with an EHCP or those with a Child Protection plan CP) to attend educational settings unless they have underlying health conditions that puts them at severe risk. However, in Ealing school attendance of vulnerable children remains low.

Why it is an issue and what improvement is needed?

For children and families, the current pandemic is an additional stress. For families who are already known to services this stress may mean an increased risk for some children, whether through increased likelihood of domestic abuse or exposure to risk online within the home, or additional risk to exploitation outside of the immediate family situation.

We know that for a lot of these children school can be a significant place of safety but also provides a break from stressors within the family and community. As such we want to encourage as many families as possible to have their children regularly attending school.

DSLs and social workers need to be working together and communicating regularly about children to ensure that, where possible and appropriate, children and families are taking up the offer of education.

What you can do?

As DSL, Deputy DSL or allocated DSL please follow the process outlined in the Figure 1 below to help you take a step by step approach to increase the attendance of your vulnerable pupils and refer to documents previously developed that can be useful when encouraging attendance of the most vulnerable.

Please also refer to the [Safeguarding FAQ](#) and the [PPE document](#) where there are ideas of what you can do or say if queries or issues arise in conversations with carers or parents that you are unsure of.

If ANY child or young person had attendance issues BEFORE school closures please liaise with School Attendance Team for additional support. You should also consider sharing information about level of engagement if the child is currently not attending school and not accessing remote learning. Please note that this is a supportive offer and would not carry any punitive measures for parents.[1]

---

[1] Please note that this offer of support is for all children not just those with an allocated worker. CME concerns, leavers and joiners should be referred in the usual way.
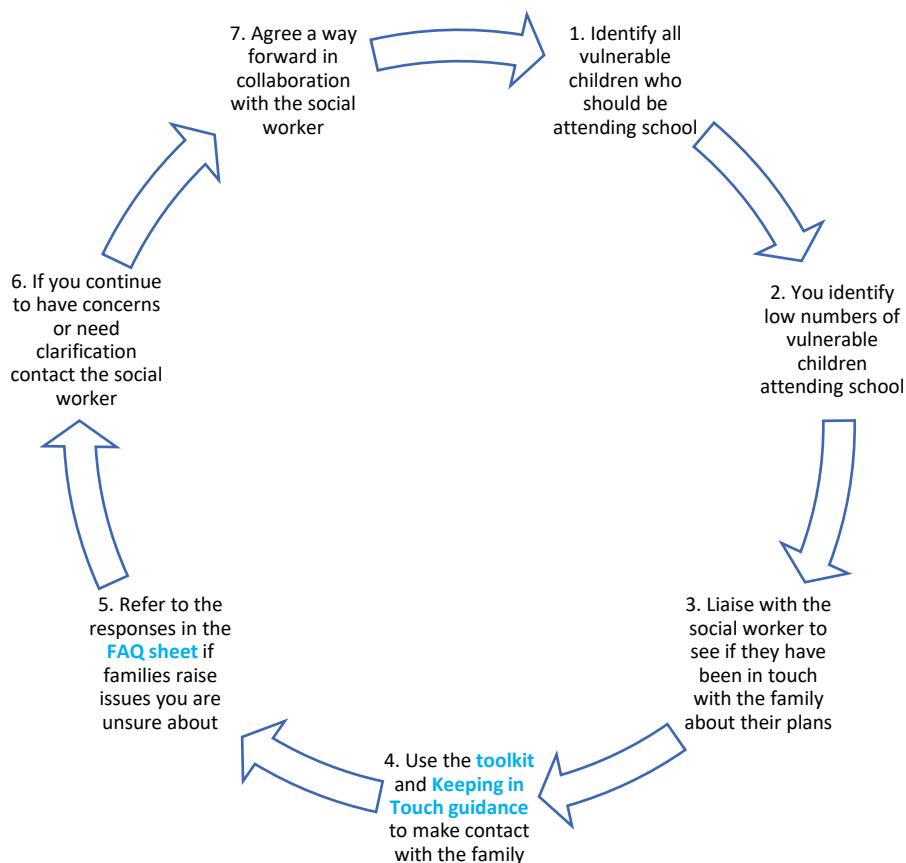
Ealing safeguarding process to help increase the number of vulnerable children and young people attending school (22/05/20)

Figure 1: The Ealing safeguarding process to help increase the number of vulnerable children and young people attending school

Please get in touch.

If you have any additional questions or concerns that are not answered within any of the documents, please contact the following people depending on your area of need:

- Safeguarding and Social Care: John Churchill, ChurchillJ@ealing.gov.uk
- Contextual Safeguarding: Christina Evers, EversC@ealing.gov.uk
- Safeguarding in schools: Sinead Galbraith, SGalbraith@ealing.gov.uk
- Safeguarding prevention: Karen Gibson, KGibson@ealing.gov.uk
- School Attendance: Lucinda Poole LPoole@ealing.gov.uk

Finally, if you currently have a high proportion of vulnerable pupils attending or the number attending has improved please can you share the techniques, ideas, resources or methods you have successfully employed to help boost attendance to Karen Gibson KGibson@ealing.gov.uk

Ealing safeguarding process to help increase the number of vulnerable children and young people attending school (22/05/20)