

Waltham Forest Early Years Guidance

Guidance for Early Years Designated Safeguarding Leads contacting vulnerable families during Covid-19

We have created some guidance for Early Years Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) on keeping in touch with vulnerable families who are caring for children at home due to:

- the setting being fully or partially closed due to an outbreak of COVID-19 as advised by local health protection teams
- the family having to self-isolate as advised by NHS Test and Trace
- the family deciding temporarily not to take up their child's current place during COVID-19.

Keeping in touch with families remotely allows you to continue having a relationship with the child and provides you with an opportunity to identify any concerns before they escalate.

Key things to remember

- You should always ensure that the allocated Social Worker and or Early Help Practitioner is notified of the closure of your setting/school if you have vulnerable children located at your setting.
- When the setting/school is closed or partially closed it is important to ensure that you have put in place secure and consistent arrangements to contact families via telephone or video call.
- As part of your safeguarding role, please ensure all conversations, had with children, parents/carers and professionals are recorded on your safeguarding log.
- Should you identify any concerns having contacted the family please ensure that these are conveyed to MASH and or the allocated Social Worker/ Early Help practitioner as soon as possible



Example of a contact conversation

Good morning/afternoon

This is (your name) from (setting name)

Am I speaking to (insert parent/carer name)?

Are you free to talk or would you prefer to be called back on another number at a specific time?

Are you, (child's name) and your family well?

- Physical health?
- Emotional/mental health?
- E.g. how are stress and anxiety levels, do you have any specific concerns about you/your child/other family members?

On a scale of 1 to 10 how worried are you about you/your child/your family with 1 being extremely worried and 10 being not at all worried?

What is working well?

- What support networks do you have in place?
- Are you finding anything particularly challenging?

Do you have access to enough food?

Have you been able to follow a routine/structure?

I thought (child's name) could share something positive that he/she is proud of this week – work or experience – is (child) there?



For more information:

[Help and support for the most vulnerable](#)

[Staying at home](#)

[Test and trace: what you need to know](#)

[Working with families \(0 - 5 years\)](#)

Further information can also be accessed via

[Early Help Support for families](#)

Email: earlyhelp@walthamforest.gov.uk

[Guide to threshold and practice: information for professionals](#)

Useful Waltham Forest contacts to Food & Meals food banks

- [RukhsanaFoundation: rukhsanakhanfoundation@outlook.com](#)
- [Eat or Heat: info@eatorheat.org](#)
- [Hornbeam Centre: info@hornbeam.org.uk](#)
- [PL84U Al-Suffa: pl84ualsuffa@gmail.com](#)
- [Highams Park Food Aid: highamparkfoodaid@gmail.com](#)

If you have any concerns or queries regarding the contact made or any other safeguarding concern, please contact:

Safeguardingineducation@walthamforest.gov.uk

Mobile: 07866314144

Duty Phone: 020 8496 3646