

Educational Services

Updated Guidance for Schools on Support for Vulnerable Families (COVID – 19 School Closures)

31 March 2020

Support for Vulnerable Families (COVID-19 School
Closures/Version 2



Version Control

Version	Date Issued	Author	Update Information
1	24/03/2020	S Mulholland	Advice regarding vulnerable children (email)
2	02/04/2020	S Mulholland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated advice for schools – highlighting the role of social work teams - Providing reference materials and links to information for parents/carers - Practical arrangements regarding provision of free meals and school staff supporting this - Additional Scottish Government correspondence
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Introduction

Following the update sent to schools last week on provision for vulnerable children there has been extensive discussions with colleagues in social work regarding the our arrangements moving forward. The following guidance seeks to outline expectations and suggestions regarding support moving forward. This is set out with consideration to proportionate levels of support that children may require and can be considered in terms of universal, targeted and enhanced supports. All schools already have approaches in place to maintain contact with families and provide direct support where it may be required. This update seeks to ensure that there is consistency across services.

1. Levels of Support and Contact

1.1 All planned support should be proportionate to the level of vulnerability for children or families. It may be useful to consider the [GIRFEC National Practice Model](#)¹ – in particular the [Vulnerability](#)² and [Resilience](#)³ Matrix when identifying what support or contact may be required.

1.2 In order to categorise different levels of support, school staff should consider the support required under the following three headings. During the current crisis, movement between levels of support will likely be fluid with greater or reduced levels of support being required at different times. You are best placed to work alongside other education services, social work colleagues and third sector organisations to determine what support can or should be offered. If there is any doubt regarding the support you are able to provide due to staff illness or availability please contact your school Coordinator (Inclusion), Virtual School Head Teacher, Child Protection Officer or Link Social Worker for advice.

1.3 Universal Level Supports

For the vast majority of children impacted by poverty, additional support needs or other factors that increase their vulnerability, schools should take the following action:

1.3.1 Contact plans will be agreed and regular telephone contact will be made. Plans should be available to all members of the school leadership team – with designated staff identified to call families in larger schools. This will ensure that contact can be maintained if staff become ill.

1.3.2 Learning materials will be made available to families and arrangements put in place for those without access to online learning resources. Access to activities should be monitored by school staff and families contacted if concerns around lack of engagement exist.

1.3.3 Parents/Carers should be made aware of how to make contact with the identified member of school staff by phone or email if they require further support or guidance.

1.3.4 Signpost families to other services that could offer support at this time i.e. money and advice services through the Information and Advice Hub, Crisis Grants etc. A list of contacts and online resources can be found in Section 5.

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/girfec-national-practice-model/>

² <https://bit.ly/3aGLzTS>

³ <https://bit.ly/2X20QBx>

- 1.3.5 Free meals will continue to be delivered to family homes – parents should be encouraged to contact schools if any issues arise. From Thursday 9th April 2020, food boxes will start to be delivered instead of daily packed lunches.

1.4 Targeted Level Supports

Where increased levels of concern exist further targeted support is required. This will undoubtedly include a number of children not known to social work where concerns regarding vulnerability continue at this time. In these circumstances schools should consider the following in addition to the steps outline above:

- 1.4.1 Schools should liaise with Home Link Workers, Welfare Officers, School Counsellors or services/organisations supporting families to ensure increased levels of contact. Coordination of contact should be achieved through agreement with the other service to avoid duplication or a disproportionate level of contact with families.
- 1.4.2 **Volunteer school staff can be involved in supporting the delivery of free school meals. This provides an opportunity to check in with families and see children. By next Thursday 9th April 2020, lunches will move from a daily delivery to a food parcel being provided once per week. Head Teachers should contact the CLD Team Leader for their area to be added to the deliver rota⁴. A number of schools are already supporting this and have identified it as a good opportunity to check in with families. A generic risk assessment can be found below⁵ to support home visits and access to appropriate PPE. This should be completed by Head Teachers as required.**
- 1.4.3 Humanitarian Assistance Centres & Shielding: At this stage the Local Resilience Partnership are responsible for the HAC although much is being directed nationally. A list has been provided from the NHS nationally to the Council and the H&SCP. The list will be worked through to determine who needs immediate support. If school based staff or resources are required, someone will be in touch with you.

1.5 Enhanced Level Supports

The focus of our discussions with social work have been on the need to deliver enhanced supports to children in families with the highest levels of need. Primarily this will focus on children in the following categories:

- Children on the Child Protection Register or those alerted to the Register;
- Looked After Children;
- Children on the edges of care i.e. children with allocated social worker or those looked after at home at the highest risk of becoming accommodated; and
- Children with severe and complex additional support needs.

⁴ Please note that lunches are being delivered by teams in localities which do not always match school catchments or take account of placing requests. If you are unsure which Team Leader to contact please email Heather.Anderson@south-ayrshire.gov.uk



Risk Assessment

⁵ Door Step Visit.docx

The following arrangements are now being put into place to provide enhanced supports to these groups and should be considered as additional to the supports outlined at the universal and targeted level:

1.5.1 Locality social work teams will start a rota system whereby two social worker/family support workers will cover each area, each day. They will visit families where child in categories 1 – 3 and above and provide on call services. Schools will be provided information regarding the families social workers will visit.

1.5.2 A link social worker will be identified for each school.

On a weekly basis, the link social worker will co-ordinate with their school and will discuss with the appointed person (most likely to be the Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher) any concerns that they have had around a child who attends the school or who is within that household. This may be an allocated social work family or one that education have increasing concerns around. The link social worker will offer a level of advice to education staff and should it be agreed that further assessment of need is required, this will be referred as usual to the Initial Response Team.

Where child protection concerns exist the child protection process should be followed without delay using the Child Protection Concern Form.

1.5.3 School Nursing and Health Visiting staff will be available to provide advice and support as required. Nursing staff will continue to support childhood immunisations and may be redeployed to other health roles.

1.5.4 Regular communication regarding contact plans and the children being visited should be shared with the school and updates will be provided through AYRshare. This will include visits attempted, whether successful or not and any other relevant information.

1.5.5 Social Work Service Managers will be in regular contact with central staff over the coming weeks to review these arrangements.

1.5.6 Children with severe and complex needs will access services e.g. respite, where these are still available, as determined by the children with disabilities social work team's ongoing assessment of need and risk. In addition to this, the most vulnerable children will begin to access short respite sessions in Southcraig initially followed by an expansion of this support after Easter. Education supports will be viewed alongside the wider supports offered to families by the multiagency team supporting children in these settings.

These arrangements will be reviewed in the coming weeks and when possible, we will move to a model which enables increased contact with vulnerable children in schools.

2. Accessing AYRshare and SEEMIS

2.1 AYRshare and SEEMIS can only be accessed remotely using any corporate laptop.

2.2 In order to access these systems, the following steps should be taken:

2.2.1 Open Citrix receiver (or Citrix workspace, depending on which is installed) by clicking on the icon in your system tray (see screenshot).



2.2.2 Enter your username and password (same as you use to log into your computer). Save details if available. **Please note that users provided with a new login for remote access should use that login to access Citrix Receiver.**

2.2.3 Once opened, click on the “Apps” menu, and access AYRshare or Click & Go using your usual login details.

3. Child Protection

3.1 Child protection concerns will still be actioned in the usual way with the Initial Response Team continuing to fulfil their role for unallocated cases. Supplementary [updated guidance](#)⁶ from Scottish Government on Child Protection arrangements has been provided. Our approaches to contacting families and escalating concerns have not changed.

Given this position, should you or your staff require to escalate any concerns to social work or to call the Police or other emergency service, dependent upon the concern, you should:

- Instruct your staff to raise concerns remotely using the CP concern form and telephoning the allocated social worker; or
- If not available, speak to the workers team leader or member of Social Work Admin Team to share this concern; or
- If the child is unallocated, call the Initial Response Team on 01292 267675 in the first instance to allow the social work teams to assess the concern or risk; or
- If out with normal hours, call the Social Work Out of Hours Service on 0800 328 7758, but if an urgent incident is ongoing and requires an immediate response by police or ambulance telephone 999 or 101; and
- Send the completed Concern Form⁷ electronically to the allocated social worker, the Initial Response Team mailbox, Jim Hendrie and to the Education Secure Mailbox.

4. General Points to Note

4.1 It is essential that open and fluid communication exists between schools and other services.

4.2 Situations may arise where single parents become unwell and are unable to care for their child. If school staff become aware of such a situation they should contact the social work Initial Response Team or allocated social worker (as appropriate).

4.3 Records of all contacts with families must be maintained. Many of you have developed detailed procedures for your school staff which supports the need to maintain clear records. Pastoral Notes and AYRshare should continue to be used. Social work staff will also update AYRshare and provide necessary updates directly to you as required.

4.4 If Head Teachers are considering use of school budgets or Pupil Equity Funding to support families, they should discuss this with [Scott Mulholland](#)⁸ (01292 612504) in the first instance.

⁶ <https://bit.ly/3bHSBi7>



CHILD PROTECTION
CONCERN FORM 201


⁸ Scott.Mulholland@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

- 4.5 The provision of free meals for children will continue during the Easter break.

5. Contact Information

Education	
Scott Mulholland	01292 612504
Jim Hendrie	01292 612719
Kimberley Keenan	01292 612309
Laurence Brown	01292 616698
Ian Leishman	01292 612292
Julieann Miller	01292 612007

Social Work	
All Locality Social Work Teams and the Initial Response Team	01292 267675

Health Visiting/School Nursing
 HV contacts - ED March 2020.docx

South Ayrshire Psychological Services	
Contact should be made with your link Educational Psychologist in the first instance.	
<p>Psychological Services are establishing a telephone contact service for staff or parents seeking advice or guidance. Further details will be provided in due course.</p> <p>The Psychological Services website includes information for children/ young people (including those experiencing ASN) and Parents around coping with the COVID 19 outbreak. Please direct parents to www.eps.south-ayrshire.gov.uk</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">01292 612819</p> <p style="text-align: center;">eps@south-ayrshire.gov.uk</p>

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS)	
<p><i>CAHMS Update 02/04/2020</i></p> <p>CAHMS have a hub duty team based in North CAMHS at Ayrshire Central Hospital and should anyone have any urgent issues or require to speak to CAHMS staff they should use this contact number. No face to face appointments will take place at this time and Neurodevelopmental and ADHD clinics have been suspended.</p> <p>Routine assessments are still being accepted and will be triaged as per normal and the family will receive a call from a staff member to assess the referral and if</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">01294 323419</p>

appropriate, they will then get a telephone consultation from a nurse.	
Should there be an urgent need, patients can still be seen but this will take place at Ayrshire Central CAMHS base.	

South Ayrshire Council	
Contact details for a range of local organisations including Women's Aid, foodbanks etc.	Contact Numbers ⁹

6. Advice and Guidance for Families

6.1 [South Ayrshire Covid-19 Advice](#)¹⁰

This includes advice that may be helpful to support parents and families e.g. welfare and benefits advice.

6.2 [South Ayrshire Psychological Services](#)¹¹

Advice and support guides for children and parents. This includes a range of strategies and resources to support additional support needs at home and mental health and wellbeing.

6.3 [Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists](#)¹²

A range of support materials for school staff and families – including support for mental health and wellbeing.

6.4 [NHS Inform](#)¹³

6.5 [Scottish Government Updates](#)¹⁴

6.6 [COSLA Advice and Guidance for Families](#)¹⁵

Includes a range of links to materials for children with additional support needs, mental health and wellbeing concerns and families impacted by poverty.

6.7 [Education Scotland](#)¹⁶

Education Scotland continue to produce a range of materials that may be of interest. This includes support for practitioners on the National Improvement Hub¹⁷.

⁹ <https://bit.ly/341DQnK>

¹⁰ <https://beta.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/coronavirus>

¹¹ <http://www.eps.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/>

¹² https://www.aspep.org.uk/?page_id=744

¹³ <https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

¹⁵ <https://www.cosla.gov.uk/sites/default/files/private/covid19adviceforsupportingchildrenandyoungpeople.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/>



ES Signposting to

¹⁷ Supports and advice :