

TO: ALL SCHOOLS

Dear Colleague

Updated version November 2020: Principles to support a coordinated approach to visiting or working in schools with children and young people or school-based staff during the Autumn term 2020.

SCC CYP Directorate has a duty to safeguard and support Suffolk's children, young people, and families. Parents, schools and CYP share a responsibility to minimise the risk of transferring the Covid-19 infection.

The following set of principles have been created to ensure CYP staff provide consistency of approach in deciding when to visit children or young people (C&YP) or school-based staff in a school, education or early years settings during the Autumn term.

The principles will remain under continuous review and reflect any new government guidance. As a minimum review will be undertaken half termly by CYP department leads.

Purpose: to provide a consistent approach for visiting C&YP in school, education and early years settings during the autumn term 2020 and minimise the risk of cross infection and breaking school bubbles.

The principles:

1. Practitioners work with schools and settings to support and safeguard Suffolk's children and young people and act in their best interests to promote their physical, mental health and wellbeing.
2. Practitioners will continue to see the most vulnerable C&YP in schools and settings to ensure they are safeguarded and appropriately supported, when the welfare of the child/YP is at risk.
3. Children and young people will be encouraged to express their views, wishes and feelings, and their voice will be paramount in considering the need to see them in a school/education setting.

4. Digital/ virtual means of contact/engagement will continue to be the primary form of contact during the autumn term and this will be supported by face to face work when assessed as necessary (*i.e. to undertake statutory visits, to secure the immediate safety of a child or to meet a specialist education or health need where it is agreed this cannot be done effectively virtually*).
5. When it is deemed a virtual contact is not appropriate or digital delivery options are not sufficient, alternative venues where a risk assessment has deemed it safe, like the C&YP's home, garden, children centre, park visit, or school / education setting will be considered.
6. Wherever possible visits and appointments in agreement with the school/education setting will be pre-booked and planned and have management approval, a risk assessment will be completed. An agreed SCC protocol which is available to the school will be followed (please refer to the attached link for the School Nurse protocol). <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/school-nursing/>
7. All visits will be assessed in the context of the school's/education setting's own risk assessment, current government guidance and the approach being taken in the autumn term. This includes any visits to the home or to other alternative venues, as suggested above.
8. To minimise the risk of transmission, wherever possible practitioners will aim to focus support in one school / education setting each day, where this is not possible a risk assessment and appropriate use of PPE will be completed to support staff safely undertake visits in one day.