



Annex to Child Protection Policy

COVID-19 changes to our Child Protection Policy

5.1.2021

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. Many young people are now at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, the school's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, staff respond to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure.**

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following [advice from government](#) and local agencies. It has been shared & discussed with staff and shared with parents/Governors.

Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:
Mrs C Parsons

The Deputy DSL/s are:
Ms Z Avastu
Miss S Pates
Mrs J Redpath

01453 822922
admin@eastington.gloucs.sch.uk

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always onsite and contactable while the school is open. All staff should report any concerns regarding any child working on/off site using the My Concern forms and by informing the DSL/Dept DSL in the usual way.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent approach in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are: **01452 426565 or by email childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk**

Further details can be found at [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive](#)

Identifying vulnerability

Schools relationships with the community mean we have identified children who may be classed as 'vulnerable'.

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups:

- **Children in Care** –agreements with carers involving weekly contact from someone in the school DSL team.
- **Children who have previously been Children in Care** – agreements with parent/carers involving weekly contact from someone in the school DSL team.
- **Children subject to a child protection plan/ Child in Need plan** – agreements with parent/s involving weekly contact from someone in the school DSL team.
- **Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker** – agreements with parents involving weekly contact from someone in the school DSL team.
- **Children with an EHCP** – Individual Risk Assessments undertaken if pupils are not in school and weekly contact with the SENCO to support.

More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. Contact arrangements will be agreed with parents/carers and member of the DSL team.

Where appropriate school will liaise with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Children in Care and those who have previously been Children in Care. We have been informed that Social workers will visit children & families if needed.

The following groups have specific arrangements around working on site, contact, support from the school.

For children remote learning in our school:

- Children in Autumn Term have learned about Internet Safety.
- Children are receiving 1-3 live lessons per day (minimum 1) from their class teacher to support wellbeing, engagement & learning.
- Children have a full daily timetable of learning uploaded to Google Classroom each evening at 6.00pm ready for the next day – to support routine for well-being.
- Children access the resources required to support their learning via Google Classroom as teachers upload activities/worksheets matched to need to the relevant subject folders – a safe learning platform.
- Parents/children upload/send work back via Google Classroom for class teachers to mark and return to support engagement.
- Class e-mail accounts facilitate parents seeking support with ease when needed. Teachers will call to support when needed too.
- Details of Social Care, Early Help Offer and local charities published in main policy (within the early help section) will be shared with parents to support accessing help if/when needed. Teachers will/can seek support on information from DSL as needed.

For children who are vulnerable/parents are critical workers in our school:

- Children identified as vulnerable for the reasons outlined above will be encouraged to work on site
- Children of critical workers can attend school (see RA) if no safe alternative arrangements can be made.

- Children on site receive the same work via Google Classroom, live lessons etc as the children at home.

Holiday arrangements

We have not been informed of whether the school needs to open for vulnerably/critical workers during February half term. If we do we will ensure a DSL and first aider is onsite/available at all times.

Attendance

The school is following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a child is expected on site and does not arrive the school will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family. If contact is not possible by 9:30am by the administrator officer, the DSL/HT will be informed. The DSL/HT will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent. If necessary, we will inform another appropriate agency/try to arrange a home visit by another appropriate agency.

For children working at home the school will keep a register of engagement. All children have at least one live lesson and we will encourage all children to attend to support their well-being as well as learning. Any children not engaged will be logged by teachers and they will contact parents by e-mail/phone to support the engagement of the child. The school can offer help with technology difficulties, hardware etc too and adapting/prioritising the curriculum if needed. If parents do not engage with teachers the HT will contact parents to support engagement.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, juggling workload with children, financial worry or health anxiety. These areas have been considered in our setting of work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will encourage a flexible approach to school work when talking with families to best support their child. Staff are aware of the mental health of both children and their parents/carers, and can signpost families to organisations that could support. Teachers will inform the DSL/SENDCo & Inclusion Leader about any concerns.

Incidences of Domestic Abuse are expected to significantly increase during the period of isolation as perpetrators will use this time as a “tool of coercive and controlling behaviour”, and victims and their children are consistently more vulnerable during periods of societal stress [see government guidance](#).

Operation Encompass will continue as normal with notifications being sent to the school's email address. (For further information school can contact Halah Shams El-Din on 01452 328953 or by email halah.shamsel-din@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school will use online approaches to deliver learning/training in and outside school. Staff are aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and [other risks online](#).

- Children in all years have been taught internet safety yearly. Our school curriculum is regularly enriched by additional opportunities such as PC Weedon working with Y6 children to explore online safety and Y4 Into The Net play. School will liaise with the LA/theatre company to support present Y5 and Y4 engaging in Into The Net remotely this year.
- Parents will be made aware of the unsuitable content on platforms such as YouTube if children click away from a designated link, such as Joe Wicks, to support them in supervising their children at home.
- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place for children/staff working in school.

- Parents with children at home have been offered the following links to support safe working using the internet too:
 - [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [South West Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
 - [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
 - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
 - Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).
- Staff have considered the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.
- We have set out the school's approach for teacher-parent contact via e-mail/calls: teachers to call from a place that ensures confidentiality, for teachers working at home to use 141 to protect their phone numbers; to log actions to ensure completed; to share concerns with DSL/SENDCo/HT as appropriate; to share sensitive information using Switch Egress; for staff to respond to all e-mails from children/parents by calling or e-mailing within 48hrs wherever possible; for staff to respond to parent e-mails between 8am and 6pm; for all class e-mail accounts to have the same password so SLT can access if concerns are raised.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements around schooling, children could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any new staff/volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned. However, at present we do not plan to have volunteers working with children to reduce the risk of transmission.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged and can be found at

The role of the LADO and the allegations management process - Safeguarding Children in Gloucestershire

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 using the address

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk .

New staff or volunteers

New staff/vounteers must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL. They must read:

the school child protection policy

the behaviour policy

the code of conduct

the Safer Working Practice Policy

Working Together to Safeguard Children document – DFE

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019 document – DFE - Part 1 and Part 5

The DSL will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure they are familiar with the child protection procedure.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity that the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting. We may undertake a new DBS if needed/wanted. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- People supervising volunteers must have undertaken the above checks
- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken.

- The school will decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with [DBS guidance](#).
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to [initially check these documents online](#) through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings.
- A record will be kept of who is working in the school each day in the signing in book.

