



Annex v 4 to Child Protection Policy

COVID-19 Further changes to our Child Protection Policy

January 2021

Response to COVID-19

In March 2020, a number of changes were required to our school and Kindergarten in response to the global pandemic. Initially many young people were now being educated at home and staffing was potentially going to be affected through illness and isolation. Annex v1 to the School's Child Protection Policy was drawn up to reflect the changes to safeguarding at that time. Following the gradual return of identified year groups in June 2020, annex v2 was drawn up. Following the full return of children to school from September 2020, annex v3 was drawn up. On 4th January 2021, the Prime Minister announced another national lockdown which resulted in all early year settings remaining open and all schools being closed to pupils other than those children of critical worker and identified vulnerable pupils from Tuesday 5th January 2021.

Now that the government has outlined the need for schools to close for a second time, we need to make additional amendments to the policy to reflect current safeguarding considerations. These are contained in this annex and based on the [DfE Schools national restrictions guidance](#)

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

Reporting arrangements

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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Katie James (Head teacher)**
head@charltonkings-inf.gloucs.sch.uk 07388126423

The Deputy DSL/s are:

Jo Jones senco@charltonkings-inf.gloucs.sch.uk (until 12/02/21)

Anna Price a.price@ckis.org.uk

Neil Owens n.owens@ckis.org.uk

Gemma Howie GHowie@ckis.org.uk

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a Deputy is always contactable while the Kindergarten and school is open. Due to the fact that our early years provision remains open and the high numbers of children of critical worker and vulnerable pupils remaining at school during the enforced school closure, the school will ensure

that the DSL or at least one DDSL is on the school site at all times during school hours. If, in exceptional circumstances this is not possible, the DSL (Sue Selwood – Head teacher) at Charlton Kings Junior School can be contacted by phone (01242 526171) or email head@ckjs.org.uk

All staff remain aware of the contact details for DSLs and should continue to report any concerns via CPOMS (our school online management system) in line with the current policy. This will provide the DSL and DDSLs with email information regarding the concern/s. However, the staff member should also speak to the DSL if immediate information/advice/action is needed.

The DSL (or deputy) will provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who remain at home during the period of enforced school closure. A detailed remote education offer is available for all children and shared with parents/carers on a weekly and daily basis. This offer is also outlined on our school website [here](#) . Class teachers/Teaching Partners or assigned family liaison leads will make contact with families and children accessing their learning from home in a range of appropriate ways, including:

- Daily live zoom stories in each class
- Teachers providing feedback and response to learning posted on our virtual learning platform 'Purple Mash'
- Weekly book and resource 'drop offs' to children's homes
- Email
- Weekly/daily phone calls
- Individual live feedback and teaching activities (as appropriate and targeted towards individual needs)

If we are unable to make contact with a family following email and phone calls, we will make a door step visit with two members of staff and in exceptional circumstances, we may contact the police to request a welfare visit.

The DSL (and deputies) continues to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

As a school with an attached early years' setting, we continue to face unique challenges at this time as we teach those children accessing our early years (Kindergarten) and school provision (critical worker and vulnerable pupils) whilst also ensuring high quality remote education for all pupils remaining at home. Where reasonably possible and where relevant, the DSL (or deputy) will consider these challenges in a child protection context.

Staff will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures 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 by staff due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Following the enforced school closure for most children, our school recognises:

- that staff may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person if they are accessing early years or school provision or on line through our remote education offer.
- we recognise that our DSL (and deputies) will need more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children and families face increasing pressure (particularly related to mental health and well-being, financial anxieties and prolonged periods of time that families are spending together).
- we understand the importance of ensuring relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children remains accurate. In our school (led by the Head teacher/DSL and deputies) we will continue to do all that we reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise us of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing needs that we should be aware of. The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system (CPOMs).
- If required, we will revise our process for managing any report of peer on peer abuse given the different circumstances the school is operating in. The principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE will continue to inform any revised approach to managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.
- Our current arrangements will remain in place to keep children not physically attending the school safe (due to the national lockdown), especially online.
- Staff will continue to read updated advice received from the local authority regarding children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need
- We recognise there is continued importance for our school staff to work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for children in care and previous children in care and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners

Children's services will continue to 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 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](#)

Should a child, in the school's view, be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children executive escalation procedure, available here:

[Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive](#)

Identifying vulnerability

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

- Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and Social Worker, mostly involving fortnightly contact

- Children who have previously been Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and SW, mostly involving fortnightly contact
- Children subject to a child protection plan/ Child in Need plan – places offered, if not taken this must be agreed by Social Worker and family. Visits will be undertaken 3 times weekly (to be agreed with Social Worker as to who will undertake these visits).
- Children with an EHCP – Individual Risk Assessments undertaken and consultations held with parents/carers, SLT and SENCO.
- Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker – Where required these children will be offered a place at school or individual contact plans will be agreed.

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

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.

Attendance

The school is following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a child has been allocated a critical worker or vulnerable child space at school, is expected 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 the DSL must be informed. The DSL will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent, but if necessary, will arrange a home visit by the school or another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider and manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

These arrangements will only be in place for children who have enrolled and are eligible for school provision.

The school will continue to take a daily attendance register and complete the online Educational Setting Status form which gives the Department for Education daily updates on how many children and staff are attending.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below).

Mental Health

Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns. Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children, their parents and staff.

The school will use guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools to help identify children and staff who might need additional support, and to put this support in place. The guidance sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a child or adult's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include for example, being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or excessive clinginess. Support for pupils and staff in the current circumstances can include existing provision in the school or from specialist staff or support services.

Domestic Abuse

Evidence demonstrates that incidences of Domestic Abuse have significantly increased during the period of isolation as perpetrators have used 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](#). Staff are aware of the impact of domestic abuse on children and support available for children and families as part of the school's offer of 'Early Help'.

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

Risk online

We recognise that young people will continue to be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and [other risks online](#) and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place in school.
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate.
- The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium.
- Staff have discussed 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.
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance.

Parents and carers have information via the website about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. *Parents have been offered the following links:*

- [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 carers 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](#).

Allegations or concerns about staff

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

At present, we are not accepting any staff or volunteers from outside our setting. However, should we need to accept staff from other settings or volunteers in order to meet staffing requirements, we will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

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 2019 using the address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk .

New staff or volunteers (volunteers will not be invited into the school during the national lockdown, unless absolutely essential)

All existing school staff will already have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 and part 5 of KCSIE 2020. The important thing for these staff will be awareness of any new local arrangements, especially if these are being reviewed/changed as a result of all children returning to school, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy 'Building Positive Relationships', the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure that new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure. Our child protection procedures for the safer recruitment and induction of all new staff remain vigilant.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. This will be more important than ever as all children and staff return. As such, the school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in KCSIE 2021.

In the event that the school needs to recruit new staff during this period, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE. In response to coronavirus, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. 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 Home Office and Immigration Enforcement have also temporarily adjusted the right to work checks due to the coronavirus outbreak.

All staff and volunteers are aware of this new policy and are kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy will continue to be made available publicly.

This policy will be approved by Governors on 10th February 2021 and is available on the safeguarding section of our school website [here](#) .