Annex to Child Protection Policy

COVID-19 changes to our Child Protection Policy

31.03.20

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 should respond robustly 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.

Reporting arrangements

The school's arrangements continue in line with our child protection/safeguarding policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:	Hayley McGoldrick head@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk 01594 822171 (staff have access to personal phone numbers)
The Deputy DSL is:	Laura May lmay@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk 01594 822171 (staff have access to personal phone numbers)
The Deputy DSL is:	Suzanne Webb swebb@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk 01594 822171 07309 945995 (work phone)

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always contactable while the school is open. All staff will be re-issued with contact details for DSL's during school closure and should report any concerns via My Concern in line with the current policy. This will flag up the concern to the DSL and DDSL's who will be able to carry our any subsequent actions as necessary.

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 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
School's 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 – individual agreements with carers and Social Worker, weekly contact
- Children who have previously been Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and SW, mostly involving weekly 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. Contact will be made with the family at least twice per week.
- 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

Other children the school considers vulnerable. 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.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of critical workers who may attend school if no safe alternative arrangements can be made.
- Children at home – work packs sent home with regular updates provided by school website and Twitter.

The plans in respect of each child in these groups will be reviewed regularly.

Holiday arrangements
School will be open over Easter. Emergency details of Social Care, Early Help Offer and local charities will be published on the website.

Attendance
The school is following the attendance guidance issued by government. Where a child 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 arrange a home visit by the school or another appropriate agency will be contacted to carry out a welfare check. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider 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 Emergency Childcare. For all other children school is closed.

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). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL 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 (encompass@...). For further information please 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 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
- 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 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.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements, young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. 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.

Any staff or 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.

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
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, 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 the new starters 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 and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a written risk assessment (see flowchart on Page 40 of KCSiE 2019) to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.
- The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to 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. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by SLT of who is working in the school each day.

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.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on 01.04.20 and is available on the school website at www.littledeanprimary.co.cuk .