



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy: Annex 1

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for safeguarding and child protection at Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre

1. Context

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the pandemic. Many young people are now at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation. From 4 January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend. Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children: children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents/carers are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Despite the changes, the school's child protection policy is fundamentally the same: children and young people always come first, and 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.

2. Key contacts

The school arrangements continue in line with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. 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 DSLs during school closure and should report any concerns via phone contact in person, in line with the current policy. Staff should not leave a voice message and ensure they speak with one of the named staff below, in person. A member of SLT will be on site at all times while school closures are in operation.

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.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/SPOC: Sally Groves, Assistant Head

Contact email: sal@bournside.gloucs.sch.uk

Mobile: 07971181670

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Mike Stratford, Deputy Head

Contact email: ms@bournside.gloucs.sch.uk

Mobile: 07984 118149

Safeguarding Officers

Bev Dixon: 07984117972

Clare Lloyd: 07971181672

Claire Davis: 07971181671

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](#).

Local authority safeguarding contact details

During office hours: 01452 426565 (option 1) for urgent concerns or childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Out of office hours: 01452 614194 or 101.

Outside of office hours, you should contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) or, if you have concerns about the immediate safety of the child or you believe a serious criminal offence has been committed, please contact the Police at any time on 101.

Practitioner advice line: 01452 426565 (option 3).

From 26 March 2018, professionals need to make referrals to the Front Door for Children's services by completing a MARF on the new Liquid Logic portal: <https://children.gloucestershire.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>.

If you are unable to see a Safeguarding Officer in school and a professional has urgent concerns, they should always contact the Children's Helpdesk on 01452 426565 (option 1) and send the MARF within 48 hours as written confirmation of the verbal request.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Cheltenham Bournside School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL. The DSL will be available to be contacted via phone or online video conferencing and will be in school. They will be coordinating safeguarding. This will include updating and managing access to SIMS, Provision Map and liaising with key pastoral staff. They will be working with the DDSL and Safeguarding Officers on a daily basis. In addition, they will be liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all Cheltenham Bournside School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or Deputy). Staff will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them, and informed if this changes due to health reasons. The DSL and Safeguarding Team will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

3. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability. Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Cheltenham Bournside School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent/ carer does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Cheltenham Bournside School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/ carer.

Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Cheltenham Bournside School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with them following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Cheltenham Bournside School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed. Cheltenham Bournside School have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups, with the aim of ensuring all vulnerable students/families have contact and support from staff with any concerns reported and recorded.

Red – most risk of harm or neglect and fewest protective factors (would include those with a Child Protection Plan)

Amber – a moderate risk of harm, but with some protective factors (would include those identified as ‘Child in Need’, and those with a social worker)

Blue – some concerns escalating or unmet needs, or have been red or amber and need monitoring.

Current child protection concerns

- Phone contact at least twice per week
- Liaising with all necessary professionals as usual
- Use Provision Map (Meetings Log) to record and report.

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 and/or visits will be undertaken twice weekly (to be agreed with social worker as to who will undertake the visits).

Vulnerable families

- Phone contact at least once per week
- Use Provision Map (Meetings Log) to record and report.

This may include 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.

Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and social worker, mostly involving twice weekly contact. Children who have previously been Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and social worker, mostly involving weekly contact.

Financial difficulties/food/ welfare concerns

- Phone contact at least once per week
- Use Provision Map (Meetings Log) to record and report.

Students with an Education Health Care Plan

- Phone contact at least once per week (even if they are in school)
- Use Provision Map (Meetings Log) to record and report
- Individual Risk Assessments undertaken, and consultations held with parents/carers, SLT and SENCO, in addition to weekly contact.

Students highlighted with an emerging need/previously amber or red

- Contact once per week
- Use Provision Map (Meetings Log) to record and report.

Safeguarding Staff will ensure they:

- use SIMS to access student information
- always endeavour to speak with the child as well as the adult
- ensure all communications are recorded using Provision Map
- contact the DSL/ DDSL if there is an immediate danger/safety risk in the school day or contact the Children’s Helpdesk on 01242 426565 (option 1)

- contact the DSL or DDSL in the first instance if they are struggling to get an answer or there is a complete lack of engagement
- submit a MARF and let the DSL know immediately, or at the start of the next working day
- contribute to Child Protection and CiN meetings in the usual way but this must not be in person – you should engage by either an email report submission or via a safeguarding mobile on loudspeaker, if permitted in the meeting
- share the safeguarding school mobile number with vulnerable families and children (these should only be answered within the school day)
- use the Welfare folder on P: Staff information/ Welfare/Spreadsheet and filter by lead professional to see the children allocated to you.

These groups also 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 if the child has no access to technology. Work set via our main school website and children’s individual Frog account. Staff will use a combination of resources including Showbie, Frog and school email.

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

Holiday arrangements

School will not be open over the February half term. Emergency details of Social Care, Early Help Offer and local charities are on the school website

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. If Cheltenham Bournside School has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent/carer(s) are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>. If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

Cheltenham Bournside School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. The school will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not, and with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend. To support this, the school will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Cheltenham Bournside School will notify their social worker. 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.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. They should phone the DSL immediately. If they are unable to speak in person to them, then they should contact the DDSL or Safeguarding Officers. They must speak in person to an identified member of staff. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately. 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.

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](#).

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email. All staff and 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.

The school will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 179 of KCSIE. The school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and the TRA's teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst COVID-19 remains a threat. For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read these documents, found on our safeguarding page on Frog.

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 Part 1 and Annex A
- What to do if a child is being abused – DfE
- Handling a disclosure
- Cheltenham Bournside School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2020
- Cheltenham Bournside School E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.

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 safeguarding and 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 take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing 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 the documents identified above
- 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 43 of KCSiE 2020) 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)
- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual.

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 of who is working in the school each day will be kept by SLT.
- The school will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of KCSiE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

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.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Cheltenham Bournside School

will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164 to 171 in KCSIE.

Online safety in school

Cheltenham Bournside School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

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 and 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 are receiving guidance and 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](#) – support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [South West Grid for Learning](#) – support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) – support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Thinkuknow](#) – advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – advice for parents and carers.

And advised to download the following app:

- [National Online Safety](#) – free app for parents and educators

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](#).

Online safety away from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police. Online teaching should follow these principles, as set out in the safeguarding guide for teachers.

Safeguarding yourself during remote learning

- Only use pre-agreed channels for communication: Showbie, Frog, zoom and school email
- Never share private emails, social media profiles or personal phone numbers
- Do not, under any circumstance, engage with remote or live video lesson/calls, even if requested by a student and/or parent/carer.
- Apply the same approach you would in a classroom and do not put yourself in a compromising position. You are providing learning for the student not pastoral care.

Cheltenham Bournside School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Supporting children not in school

Cheltenham Bournside School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people. 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@bournside.gloucs.sch.uk). For further information, please contact Halah Shams El-Din on 01452 328953 or: halah.shamsel-din@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan is kept centralised on P: Drive and all records of contact must be recorded on Provision Map. The communication can include: phone, email, and text contact. In extreme cases there may need to be doorstep visits.

Cheltenham Bournside School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages. Cheltenham Bournside School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Cheltenham Bournside School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. The school will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate to maximise safety.

Cheltenham Bournside School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Cheltenham Bournside School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on Provision Map.

Where Cheltenham Bournside School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Peer on peer abuse

Cheltenham Bournside School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions must be recorded on Provision Map and appropriate referrals made.

Mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where they are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, schools and colleges should ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Senior staff are in a position to support our students and to work closely with the DSL and Safeguarding and SEND teams to ensure access to appropriate support.

Advice and support for pupils and students in the current circumstances can include existing provision in the school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone) or from specialist staff or support services. The [guidance](#) on mental health and behaviour in schools clearly sets out that schools have an important role to play in supporting mental health and wellbeing of their students and that schools have a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their students, which includes preventing impairment of children's health or development, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

Prevention – creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively.

This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos:

- Identification – recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible
- Early support – helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions
- Access to specialist support – working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Cheltenham Bournside School will continue to work with existing professionals to continue appropriate provision and support (although this will be delivered in different ways). The school will also ensure all parents have access to updated guidance and resources in relation to wellbeing and mental health where appropriate.