

Annex to Child Protection Policy

COVID-19 Further changes to our Child Protection Policy

Revised January 2021

Response to COVID-19

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

Despite changes, the schools Safeguarding 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 procedures.**

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 arrangements continue in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Kay Selwyn 07807159980 or email address: ksselwyn@newentfed.org

The Deputy DSL/s are: Tony Lerner head@pauntley.gloucs.sch.uk or Ollie Tuck otuck@newentfed.org

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always contactable while the school is open. All staff know how to contact the DSL's during school closure and should report any concerns to DSL Kay Selwyn in line with the current policy. A member of SLT will be available at all times while school closures are in operation.

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.

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

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 – individual agreements with carers and Social Worker, school place available
- Children who have previously been Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and SW, mostly involving regular 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.
- Children with an EHCP – Individual Risk Assessments undertaken and consultations held with parents/carers, SLT and SENCO, school place available.

- 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 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 cannot work from home and do not have a support bubble may attend school if no safe alternative arrangements can be made.
- Children at home – weekly work packs and Oak Academy in line with the curriculum, home learning zoom meetings and some children are having 1:1 sessions a week.

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

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 will 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. 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.

The school will resume taking an attendance register from this date and continue to 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).

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@newentfed.org. 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 accessing remote learning receive guidance around safeguarding and any concerns are reported to the DSL

Parents and carers have information via the website and in newsletters 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, children 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.

Any staff 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 procedures and report 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

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.

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school policies around safeguarding. 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.

School will not be using volunteers at this present time.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on (include date) and is available on the school website www.pauntleyschool.com