



COVID-19 school re-opening arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at The Cherwell School

School Name: The Cherwell School

Policy owner: Barb Timms

Date: 3rd June 2020

Context

The Prime Minister has announced that the government's 5 tests have been met and the decision, based on all the evidence, to move forward with wider opening of education and childcare settings.

From 15 June, secondary schools, sixth form and further education colleges are required to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 students alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups.

Despite the unusual situation we find ourselves in, it remains essential that we continue to be a safe place for children, whether they are attending school or working remotely.

The way we are operating in response to coronavirus continues to be different to business as usual. However, as more children return, it is important to remember that a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online



This addendum of The Cherwell School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy has been written in response to DfE guidance and contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Key safeguarding contacts
2. Designated Safeguarding Leads
3. Reporting a concern
4. The role of the local authority
5. Staff training
6. Symptoms of trauma in teenagers
7. Vulnerable children
8. Attendance
9. Safeguarding students returning to school
10. Safeguarding students who cannot attend school
11. Multi-Agency working
12. Transfer of Safeguarding records/files
13. Online Safety
14. Safer recruitment
15. Other documents

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) is the statutory safeguarding guidance that we will refer to to inform and support our safeguarding practices.

1. Key safeguarding contacts

Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Barb Timms	btimms@cherwell.oxon.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kim Young	kyoung@cherwell.oxon.sch.uk
Headteacher	Chris Price	head@cherwell.oxon.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Chukwudi Okeke	



LADO	Alison Beasley	01865 810603
MASH	Mutli Agency Safeguarding Hub	0345 050 7666

2. Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Cherwell school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Ms Barb Timms

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Mrs Kim Young

A trained DSL (or deputy) will be available on site. In addition, three additional members of the Senior Leadership Team have completed DSL training (Mr Price, Mr Jarvis and Dr Hawes). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL and deputy will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely. They will also update and manage access to our child protection online management system (CPOMS) making sure that all safeguarding/child protection files are up to date, including actions and outcomes

Every school will face unique challenges at this time, including as they welcome back more children. Where reasonably possible and where relevant, the DSL (or deputy) should consider these challenges in a child protection context and reflect them in the child protection policy as appropriate.



3, Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via email or phone. All staff have the contact details for the safeguarding team.

<https://cherwellschool.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/document/Child-Protection-Policy-Nov-2019-.pdf?t=1591347317>

Members of staff should email both Barb Timms and Kim Young, this will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher via email or phone.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mrs Nicola Small

The River Learning Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

4. Role of the local authority

Local authorities have the key day-to-day responsibility for delivery of children's social care. Social workers and virtual school heads will continue to work with vulnerable children in this difficult period. School and college staff (supported by the DSL or deputy) should continue to work with and support children's social workers, virtual school heads and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners to help protect vulnerable children.

5. Staff Training

All staff will be required to complete safeguarding training prior to students returning to school whether they are working as part of the in-school or working from home team. The training will take the form of materials provided by the DSL that relate to Cherwell School specifically as well as approved resources from external providers and will include:

- How to identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closure.
- How to raise a concern



- The importance of working with children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners.
- Raising concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children

6. Symptoms of trauma in teenagers

The COVID-19 pandemic is a traumatic event for everyone and has affected all our lives in different ways. Teenagers can be deeply upset by events like this. Our students will handle trauma differently to younger children or adults. A younger child depends directly on their family, whereas many teenagers look to their peer group for support. In order to help them.

Returning to school after this extended period of closure may cause anxiety for some students and school staff should be vigilant for signs that students need extra help and support. They should be aware that students who were not vulnerable before school closure may be so now.

Staff need to understand the ways in which teenagers manage distress. Every young person is different, but common symptoms of distress include:

- strong emotions such as sadness, anger, anxiety and guilt
- overreacting to minor irritations
- repetitively thinking about the traumatic event and talking about it often
- disturbed sleeping patterns
- withdrawing from family and friends
- wanting to spend more time alone
- being very protective of family and friends
- returning to younger ways of behaving including giving up responsibilities or a sudden return to rebellious behaviour
- increased need for independence
- self-absorption and caring only about what is immediately important
- loss of interest in school, friends, hobbies, and life in general
- pessimistic outlook on life, being cynical and distrusting of others
- depression and feelings of hopelessness
- difficulties with short-term memory, concentration and problem solving.

Staff recognising any of these symptoms in students should follow our usual pastoral and safeguarding protocols

7.. Identification of vulnerable children



The DfE advises that vulnerable children for the purposes of continued attendance during the coronavirus outbreak are those across all year groups who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment ([risk assessment guidance](#)), that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion

8. Attendance

Vulnerable children are expected to attend, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan), so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of attending.

Vulnerable children – regardless of year group – that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to school where this would now be appropriate for them to do so and The Cherwell school will work with other relevant partners to support the relevant families and students to return to school

We will continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend. We will also continue to follow up with any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't.

Parents and carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend educational provision.

We will resume taking their attendance register from 15 June 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.



9. Safeguarding students returning to school

We understand that some families who may not have been known to us as vulnerable previously but due to circumstances (unemployment, financial issues, bereavement and home related stresses) may require additional support.

Through our regular wellbeing checks parents and carers will be asked to advise pastoral teams of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that we should be aware of before their child returns. These will be recorded confidentially on CPOMs and required actions implemented.

Students should be given an opportunity to ask questions about safety and wellbeing before they return to school for example those who have suffered loss and grief, and those concerned about parents or siblings at home. Pastoral Teams and key workers will provide this support.

Students may have been separated from the services they had previously attended, as well as the social networks they had through school, youth clubs and other community groups. Some children/young people may have become accustomed to the constant closeness and care that they have been receiving whilst working at home.

A clear exit strategy from lockdown is needed for young people, these children/young people may need support to distance themselves from home and return to school. Pastoral Teams and key workers will provide this support.

Students returning to school will most probably have a new teacher and so risk assessments must be reviewed and made available to all staff working with the students.

The DSL and pastoral teams will update individual staff on any changed circumstance relating to students in their care/class/group

10. Safeguarding students who cannot attend school

The Cherwell School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

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 must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

The Cherwell 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.

The Cherwell School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of students and their families. Resources to support students are available in their 'My Work from Home' folder on Google Drive.

Teachers also need to be aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

It is crucial that you report any concern immediately and without delay.

This short video (6 minutes) from Andrew Hall (Safeguarding Consultant) explains key aspects of safeguarding guidance when working remotely and is really useful

<https://vimeo.com/409569640>

11. Multi-Agency working

DSL should contact all professionals working with students and their families to advise of plans on re-opening to ensure that full support is put in place. This includes School Health Nurse, social worker, Family support worker, CAMHs, MHST, school counsellor, YOT, Virtual school,



Students who are young carers will need support from school to manage their school and caring responsibilities.

12. Transfer of Safeguarding records/files

This is a significant transition point for students and schools should ensure safeguarding information is passed to the next school or college setting securely and promptly taking care to ensure the child has transferred to the school/college we expected them to before sending any information.

13. Online Safety

During school closure, some students may have had more unsupervised time on tablets, Phones etc. Staff will be vigilant to signs that some may have been groomed online. Staff should report any concerns immediately following the procedure in the schools safeguarding and child protection policy which also contains signs to look out for.

The Cherwell 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.

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 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 CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

14. Safer Recruitment

The Cherwell School is committed to ensuring the development of a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our students and staff.

The Cherwell School recognises that usual recruitment processes may not be possible during this time of partial school closure and the rules related to social distancing. Online platforms will be used for interviewing purposes and questions will explore thoroughly the reasons the candidate has applied. All references will be followed up with a phone conversation



The Governing Body and Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance.

Staff will be asked to confirm that they have completed and have understood the guidance.

15. OTHER DOCUMENTS

Health & Safety risk assessment for staff and students returning to school after the closure

Behaviour for learning annex

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#)

Departmental advice

What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NAbfS1KIETcwNmJbf9ShmAstN4Ess_C0cu4BHAr8kNo/edit

Below is the link to the latest DfE guidance:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#)

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