

Severndale
Specialist Academy



**Child protection and
safeguarding:
COVID-19 addendum**

Policy Approved: Summer Term 2020

Policy Review: Fortnightly

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Important contacts

| ROLE | NAME | CONTACT DETAILS |
|---|--|--|
| Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) | Patrick Jones | patrick.jones@severndaleschool.co.uk |
| Deputy DSL | Tracey Mullinder Debbie Campbell Michelle Hill Lorna Matley | tracey.mulinder@severndaleschool.co.uk debbie.campbell@severndaleschool.co.uk michelle.hill@severndaleschool.co.uk lorna.matley@severndaleschool.co.uk |
| Headteacher | Sabrina Hobbs | sabrina.hobbs@severndaleschool.co.uk |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) | Ellie Jones | lado@shropshire.gov.uk 0345 678 9021 |
| Chair of Trustees | Lyn Hough | lyn.hough@severndaleschool.co.uk |

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP). It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
- With a child protection plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Each pupil in the identified group will have a Risk Assessment (RA) completed by the Academy, cross referenced to the Shropshire Local Authority RA document and with input from their parent(s) / carers which will be shared verbally with the Local Authority and Social Care teams on a weekly basis. It is recognised by the DfE that schools know their children best and are in the best position to consider their safeguarding vulnerabilities.

For example the RA will look at, but not exclusively, the risk of exposure to domestic abuse, child criminal / sexual exploitation, gang affiliation, medical issues, challenging behaviours etc.

Pupils will be assessed into three categories:

1. Pupils safer at home
2. Pupils potentially at risk who should be offered provision

3. Pupils potentially at risk, who should be offered provision, but whose evidenced Complex Autism/SEMH needs prevent them from observing social distancing, and therefore increase the risk of virus transmission.

3. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 5 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

4. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home. Where possible the process for reporting concern remains the same

- (Figure 1 page 10- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures).
- If it is not possible to follow the process detailed above, concerns should be reported to safeguarding@severndaleschool.co.uk

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

5. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

6. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- The local authority about 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.

7. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

8. Distance Learning

- All learners will have access to their class teacher via two daily on line video calls
- For those children who are unable/ choose not to engage with video calls other daily contact arrangements will be made by the class teacher and/or the Department Lead/Coordinator.
- Contact is monitored on a daily basis. If there is no contact with a learner for a period of more than two days (without good reason) the Department, lead will liaise with the DSL to make arrangements for a safe and wellbeing check.

We are using the Department for Education’s daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details and additional contact details where possible.

9. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

10. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

11. Support for children who aren’t ‘vulnerable’ but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don’t meet the Department for Education’s definition of ‘vulnerable’, but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers, social workers and the Local Authority to make the necessary arrangements for such circumstances.

If these children will not be attending school, we will make arrangements through Distance Learning , as explained in section 8.

12. Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils’ mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 4.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems

- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 13 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

13. Online safety

12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children/Parents/Carers online, they will continue to follow our existing policies

- Acceptable use of ICT
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Remote Working
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Communications Policy

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 4 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school and signpost them to other sources of support too.

14. Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

15. Staff recruitment, training and induction

15.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

15.2 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

15.3 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

16. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving provider is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) or DfE is updated, and as a minimum and is reviewed every 2 weeks by Patrick Jones. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

18. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures: Child protection policy, Positive Behavior Management policy, Staff code of conduct, IT acceptable use policy, Health and safety policy, Online safety policy, Remote Working Policy.