

**Severndale**  
Specialist Academy



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

**Policy Updated: Spring 2021**

**Policy Review: Fortnightly**

## Contents

Important contacts .....	2
1. Scope and definitions .....	3
2. Core safeguarding principles .....	4
3. Reporting concerns.....	4
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements .....	4
5. Working with other agencies .....	4
6. Monitoring attendance .....	5
7. Peer-on-peer abuse.....	5
8. Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer.....	5
9. Contact plans .....	5
10. Safeguarding all children .....	7
11. Online safety .....	7
12. Mental health .....	8
13. Staff and volunteer recruitment .....	8
14. Safeguarding induction and training .....	8
15. Monitoring arrangements.....	9
16. Links with other policies.....	9

## Important contacts

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## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020. It reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) and local authority (LA) Shropshire.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of Coronavirus, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who:

- Are assessed as being in need, including children:
  - With a child protection plan
  - With a child in need plan
  - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:

- On the edge of receiving support from children’s social care services
- Adopted
- At risk of becoming NEET (‘not in employment, education or training’)
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Young carers
- Considered vulnerable by the school and/or LA

## 2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- › The best interests of children must come first
- › If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately
- › A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 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

## 3. 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 at school and those at home.

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.

From September 2020, Severndale Specialist Academy will introduce the following processes to its current safeguarding framework:

1. ‘Personal Safety, Door Knocks and Home Visits’ policy. This policy outlines procedures for Academy employees to follow during door step visits. This includes guidance of how to use the Stay Safe app which the Academy will launch in September 2020.
2. ‘Safe and Well, Red Folder’ process. This process outlines the actions employees should follow should they feel they are at risk during a home visit.

## 4. 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.

## 5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children’s social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

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

- › Our local safeguarding partners

- › 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

## 6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

All pupils of compulsory school age will be expected to attend school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is unable to attend because of clinical and/or public health advice, is absent for a necessary religious observance).

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- › Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by telephone calls, online Zoom meetings and Door Step visits.
- › Notify their social worker, where they have one

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.

## 7. 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.

## 8. Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher 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/supply teachers/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](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## 9. Contact plans

We have contact arrangements for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

Each child has an individual arrangement, which sets out:

- › How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- › Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- › How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these arrangements with children's social care where relevant, and will review them as arranged on a case-by-case basis.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

### **Risk Assessing & Associated Actions:**

Section 1	A.	B.	C.	D.
	RAG Rating	Threshold	Manage *	Action
	Red	Child Protection Section 47 Look After Children Significant health needs Significant behaviour needs Child in Need Attendance below 80% Patterns of non-attendance	Daily phone call-Class teacher to ask 3* key questions and assess response.  1 visual check (Zoom, Teams, DL/DC Whats app video call)	If process outlined in section 1.C is compromised or Teacher is concerned by key question, response- Safeguarding actions are initiated-immediate doorstep visit.
	Amber	Moderate health needs Moderate behaviour needs Child in Need-Short breaks Early Help/Early Help Referral Looked After Children Attendance below 90 %	Daily phone call-Class teacher to ask 3* key questions and assess response.  1 visual check (Zoom, Teams, DL/DC Whats app video call)	If process outlined is section, 1.C is compromised or Teacher is concerned by key question response- Safeguarding actions are initiated-Phone call home, if satisfactory outcome not reached in 24hr-immediate doorstep visit.
Green	All Students that do not meet Red or Amber criteria	Daily e-mail contact  1 visual check (Zoom, Teams, DL/DC Whats app video call)	If process outlined is section, 1.C is compromised or Teacher is concerned by key question response- Safeguarding actions are initiated-Phone call home, if satisfactory outcome not reached in 24hr-immediate doorstep visit.	

\*Severdale academy aspires for its students to engage with daily video learning opportunities. The Academy recognises that due to the complex needs of some students and addition pressures imposed on families due to Covid-19 this is not always feasible. Section 1.C outlines the minimum level of contact the Academy requires in order to meet the needs of all students in line with statutory requirements.

Door Step Visits	
Section 2	First visit 1. Check on the wellbeing of young person. 2. Check on the wellbeing of the family. 3. Remind/explain to family the statutory requirements for young people accessing education 4. Refer family to Early Help/Family Webster assessment or signpost to DCT for social work assessment. Share signposting information. 5. If no contact made during home visit contact young persons social worker. If young person not assigned to social worker complete MARF. In addition, report to LA SEND team. 6. Inform EWO of non-attendance 7. Record all above on My Concern
	Second visit In the event where 2 or more home visits are required 1. During visit follow steps 1-3 of first visit guidance. 2. Check to see if family are receiving input from Early Help or Social care. 3. If family are not accessing Early Help or Social Care complete MARF, reference threshold document: <b>Parents/carers are habitually late or miss appointments, not engaged or do not attend appointments.</b> 4. If no contact made during home visit contact young person's social worker. If young person not assigned to social worker contact 101 and submit MARF if required. 5. Inform EWO of non-attendance. 6. Record all above on My Concern.
Weekly Multi Agency Meetings	
Section 3	Early Help Red, Amber, Green students who are non-compliant with section 1.C of this document and are not assigned to the DCT will be discussed and actioned at a weekly Early Help meeting under the standing agenda item RAG Rating non-compliance.
	DCT Red, Amber, Green students who are none compliant with section 1.C of this document and are assigned to the DCT will be discussed and actioned at a weekly DCT meeting under the standing agenda item RAG Rating-non-compliance.

Severdale Weekly Safeguarding Meeting		
Section 4	Severdale safeguarding meeting.	Red, Amber, Green students who are non-compliant with section 1.C of this document will discuss and assigned to the appropriate multi agency meeting (Section 3).

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## 10. 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 3 above.

### 10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

They will also liaise with the school nurse(s) to gather relevant information about any support provided by school nursing services while children have not been in school.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

### 10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home.

Staff and volunteers 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 11 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

## 11. Online safety

### 11.1 In school

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

### 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children 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 3 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.

### **11.3 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, where relevant, 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 teaching and resources our school provides
- › Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

## **12. Mental health**

### **12.1 Children returning to school**

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

### **12.2 Children at home**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home.

## **13. Staff and volunteer recruitment**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff 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.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

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 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## **14. 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 in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## **15. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum and is reviewed every 2-weeks by Michelle Hill and Lorna Matley (Lead DSLs). At every review, it will be approved by

## **16. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Remote Working
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Communications policy