



COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Southam College

Updated – June 2020

Adopted by Trustees: 2nd June 2020

Person responsible for overseeing the implementation: CEO

Chair of Trustees signature: *C.L. Chevassut*

Southam College

Policy owner: Sam Godfrey

Date: 3rd June 2020

Date shared with staff: 3rd June 2020

Context

From 20th March 2020 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 are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This updated version of the COVID-19 Addendum reflects the change in context to expect more pupils to attend the academy in the coming weeks and months.

This addendum of the Southam College Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sam Godfrey	07724371488/ 01926 812560	tarling.s@welearn365.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Mel Mason	01926 812560	mason.m@welearn365.com
Headteacher	Ranjit Samra	01926 812560	Ranjit.samra@stowevalley.com
Trust Safeguarding Manager	Louis Donald	07527760408	Louis.donald@Stowevalley.com
Chair of Governors	Steven Crane	01926 812560	crane.s_g@stowevalley.com
Safeguarding Governor / Trustee	Kyle Ferguson	Via Louis Donald	Kyle.Ferguson@stowevalley.com

The Stowe Valley Multi-Academy Trust also has a Safeguarding Helpline for professionals and an email address: **svm_safeguarding@Stowevalley.com**

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 to be vulnerable if they

- have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989;
- are identified as young carers;
- are not accessing education.

Southam College will also consider any pupils who we feel to be vulnerable, as those who could benefit from continued attendance (from any year group).

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself 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.

Southam College 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. The lead person for this will be: Sarah Cumberbatch/

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 does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Southam College will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Southam College or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Southam College will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

Children with an EHCP

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.

Attendance is expected where it is determined, following a risk assessment, that the pupil's needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment.

Attendance monitoring

Vulnerable pupil's attendance is expected, 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 and young people - regardless of year group - that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to nursery, early years, school or college provision where this would now be appropriate for them to do so.

Southam College and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Southam College will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Southam College will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

There is a government expectation that vulnerable children will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Southam College will explore the reasons for this, directly with the parent and record the outcome on CPOMS.

Southam College will now resume taking an attendance register on SIMs and will use the codes suggested by the Government to record attendance and absence in the attendance register.

- X** - Not eligible for a place
- Y** - Eligible but shielding/isolating
- I** - Covid symptoms (or illness)
- C** - choosing not to attend Pupils who are attending other schools

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

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Southam College has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Samantha Godfrey

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mel Mason

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as

required 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 Southam College staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

We understand that there will likely be an increase in disclosures from children and young people as they return to the School and have prepared for this by increasing capacity to support those people and make appropriate referrals.

Pupils and their families have been contacted regularly to discuss welfare, health and wellbeing during periods of non-attendance and they will be asked to share any changes to the pupil's welfare, health or wellbeing as they start to attend the School once more to allow us to maintain accurate records and respond appropriately to individual needs.

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 CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher and the Trust Safeguarding Manager. 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 use a yellow form to 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 to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Karen Boucher.

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

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 Southam College, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, 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 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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

School staff will be provided with refresher CPD as more pupils return.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Southam College will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, 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.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, 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 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

Where Southam College are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

During this period - DBS checks for current staff will not need to be re-checked, waiving the '3-month-rule'.

Southam College 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 163 of KCSIE.

Southam College will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE 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

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, Southam College will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

Southam College 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.

Children and online safety away from school and college

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 Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

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

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

All colleagues that interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns will be dealt with as per the safeguarding and child protection policy and where appropriate referrals will continue to be made to children's social care and as required the police.

Supporting children not in school

Southam College 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.

Southam College 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.

Southam College 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 at Southam College need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Southam College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Southam College 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.

Southam College 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 COVID19.

Southam College will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS.

Where Southam College has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the trust.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Southam College 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 of 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.

The context within which referrals and disclosure of peer on peer abuse or bullying may come to us is different enough for us to acknowledge that our usual procedures (based upon face to face interaction) may not be possible, however we will always ensure that the following procedures take place:

- Statements will be sought from both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator and the academy will do everything possible within the new context to establish the most truthful version of events.
- Unless there is a very strong reason not to engage parents, they will be contacted and the situation explained.
- Support will be offered to both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator and consequences will be considered where appropriate in line with our behaviour policy.
- Where appropriate we will seek to support the pupils in understanding each other's point of view and offer additional sessions (face to face or remotely as required) to help them to overcome their situation.
- The process and outcomes will be recorded on CPOMs and appropriate timely referrals made as the need arises during the process. The process will be overseen by the DSL, though other colleagues will likely support the process.
- The incident will not be closed until both pupils agree that they are happy with the outcome. Until then, the academy will continue to address the pupils concerns as far as possible and work towards a resolution to address their concerns. The academy will agree with the pupils how often they feel able to review the situation but no longer than monthly.
- Where all those involved with an incident agree that the issues have been resolved; the case will remain open for at least a further six weeks to allow staff to seek pupil voice after a reasonable time has passed to ensure that the issues have not resurfaced or to seek to offer support if they have.

Concerns, disclosures, referrals and actions will be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate further referrals made if necessary. Student voice will be recorded when the incidents are followed up after the initial support and interventions have been implemented in line with the above procedure.

Mental Health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff are made aware of this when considering the setting and expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. We will follow the DfE's guidance on providing education remotely.

The DfE's guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem.

This can include for example being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or excessive clinginess. The guidance sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem.

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.

We will refer to the Government's guidance and seek support from local partners to help us identify pupils who might benefit from additional support and to put this in place.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Central Safeguarding Team will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

The MAT will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.