

Sheffield Local Authority (SCC) oversees & maintains the Alternative Provision Network (APN) to support schools who direct a pupil off-site for education to improve behaviour, by offering a number of programmes for key stage 1 to 4 pupils.

Alternative provision (AP) should identify & meet the needs of the student to overcome barriers to attainment and improve motivation, self-confidence, attendance & engagement.

Responsibility for safeguarding pupils in alternative provision rests with the referring school or college.

Many of these students will be vulnerable & all will require good safeguarding practices to be in place.

## Supporting students - schools should:

- be satisfied that the alternative provider is meeting the needs of the pupil
- obtain written confirmation from the provider that all necessary vetting & barring checks have been carried out on provider staff

[Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 21](#)

All students should have a regular opportunity to talk to someone from the school or college about their placement & any issues that concern them, in a safe, private, and comfortable environment.

## Personalised plans:

- The nature, objectives & timescales of the intervention should be agreed, clearly defined, recorded, monitored, & shared appropriately with the provider, school, parents & student
- Pupil progress should be regularly reviewed including frequent visits to the provider
- Where reintegration to the school is an objective, there should be an assessment of when the pupil is ready to return and an appropriate package of support provided by the school to assist their reintegration
- Plans should be linked to other relevant guidance e.g. 'Education, Health & Care Plans' for children with [Special Educational Needs and Disability](#)

Visit our web pages for

['Alternative Education Providers \(SCC\)'](#)

to find out more about training, the DSL/D role and online-safety provision

All providers **must** have safeguarding policies & processes which include:

- A robust process for **all** staff to record safeguarding concerns for students
- This information should be kept in a secure, individual paper or electronic safeguarding file
- The safeguarding file should include all information & actions for the student where safeguarding issues have been identified
- An **immediate** process for:
  - Staff to pass on all safeguarding concerns to their Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) or Provider Manager
  - The DSL/D or Manager to refer **all** concerns about a student at risk of significant harm to Children's Social Care
  - The DSL/D or Manager to share all concerns with the **school** DSL/D & record as done
  - Referring a child not on roll to the **Children Missing from Education Team tel. 0114 2736462** (also see '[Children missing from education, home or care](#)').
  - All documentation **must** follow data protection guidance, be jargon free and address all special educational needs, literacy & safeguarding issues.

## Training:

The Quality Assurance & Involvement Service (QAIS) only provides safeguarding training, advice, guidance and support to the Alternative Education Providers, SCC.

**If a school sets up a contract with an independent provider, the school MUST ensure it is:**

- Registered & of good quality
- Delivering services through high quality staff with suitable safeguarding training, policy, experience and employment checks in line with DfE regulations

For further information contact the Progression Team via: [Daina.Cummings@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:Daina.Cummings@sheffield.gov.uk)

## Safeguarding students over 18 years old:

People who are over the age of 18 who have safeguarding issues are called '[vulnerable adults](#)' and are covered by different guidance and legislation to children.

Issues for students over 18 and for e.g. their parents or carers, must be discussed with the school DSL/D & referred to:

[Report Adult Abuse](#) tel. 0114 2734908

## The school or college should ensure that:

- **All** students considered for alternative provision should be discussed with your Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) prior to referral to identify historic & current safeguarding needs & placement suitability
- Your DSL/D has shared all **appropriate** safeguarding information about the student with the provider DSL and parents or carers before the placement begins
- The student is visited at the provider setting **regularly** by safeguarding trained staff who are aware of the safeguarding needs of the student
- Staff accompanying primary school pupils must have had appropriate safeguarding training and be aware of the pupils safeguarding needs
- Where safeguarding concerns are raised, visits should be more frequent, and all concerns and actions followed up appropriately
- The student has a regular opportunity to talk **privately** to school staff about their placement & any issues that concern them
- Pastoral support is provided to all students on placement as needed
- All students on the school roll are supported to feel part of the school whether they attend the school regularly or not
- **Daily** checks of student attendance at the provider are made through the online register and concerns & absences followed up

## The school & the provider should:

- Have an up-to-date safeguarding children policy that staff can access & easily understand
- Provide Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) 'basic' training for all staff every 3yrs
- Provide SSCB 'Advanced' initial & refresher training to their Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy each year
- Have regular internal staff safeguarding briefings from their DSL/D's
- Ensure good safeguarding communication between the DSL/D's for both settings throughout the placement period with agreed appropriate mechanisms of challenge

## The SCC Progressions Team ensures that:

- All contractual requirements concerning safeguarding policies, training and recruitment are complied with by the provider
- **All provider staff** have access to Basic Safeguarding Children in Education training every 3 years
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed from the provider management team & has access to regular advanced training
- Staff receive regular briefings about general safeguarding issues from the DSL
- The Provider Manager or DSL will share safeguarding information with their staff **only** on a 'need to know' basis

## Alternative provision to improve behaviour:

Governing bodies of maintained schools can direct a pupil off-site for education to improve their behaviour. They must ensure that:

- parents are given clear information about the placement and how it will be reviewed
- the local authority (where the pupil has a statement of special educational needs) is given clear information about the placement
- the placement is regularly reviewed and parents are involved
- Issues about attendance are discussed immediately with the school the pupil is on roll with and shared with the school DSL/D

Although this does not apply to academies, it is an example of good practice.

## Useful resources:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2021](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE 18](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\), Gov.uk](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school, DfE May 2013](#)
- [Alternative Provision, DfE 2016](#)

**All safeguarding policies & procedures for education settings are available from:**

**[Safeguarding Sheffield Children website, education policies & procedures](#)**