



# Alternative Provision

All local authorities are responsible for arranging alternative provision for students who would not receive suitable education because of exclusion, illness, behaviour or other reasons, such as accessing specific vocational qualifications.

In Sheffield the 'Alternative Provision Network' offers the following programmes:

- **Alternative Provision:** placements of up to a term for primary students at risk of exclusion
- **Re-engagement:** placements of up to a term for Key Stage (KS) 3 & 4 students
- **Progressions:** placements with one or more providers each week for a year or more for KS4 students

Good alternative provision should identify & meet the needs of the student to overcome barriers to attainment and improve motivation, self-confidence, attendance & engagement.

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

Responsibility for the alternative provision used rests with the school or college.

**All providers** must have safeguarding policies & processes which as a minimum should have:

- A robust process for **all** staff, Managers & the Designated Safeguarding Lead to record all discussions and actions about safeguarding concerns for students
- A secure, individual safeguarding file which includes all information & actions for each student where safeguarding issues have been identified ([Recording & File Transfer, Sept 16](#))

An **immediate** process for:

- Staff to pass on all safeguarding concerns about a student to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Provider Manager
- The DSL or Manager to refer **all** concerns about a student at risk of significant harm, to Children's Social Care **immediately**
- The DSL or Manager to share concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D) at the school or college and record that this has been done
- Referring any child or young person not on school roll to the **Children Missing from Education Team** tel.: **2736462** (see [Children Missing from Education, Sept 16](#))

**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.**

## Safeguarding students over 18 years old:

People who are over the age of 18 who have safeguarding issues are called '[vulnerable adults](#)'.

- Safeguarding issues for students over 18 should be discussed with the school or college DSL/D
- Safeguarding issues for other adults, e.g. a student's parents or carers, must be discussed with:

[Adult Access Team](#) tel. **2734908**, or  
**Safeguarding Adults Office**, tel. **2736870**

## Supporting students: school/college should:

Focus on the early assessment & identification of any issues or barriers for the student:

- before their behaviour has deteriorated to the extent e.g. that exclusion is the only option
- Prior to the alternative provision placement

## Personalised plans:

- The nature, objectives & timescales of the intervention should be agreed, clearly defined, recorded, monitored and shared appropriately
- Progress should be regularly reviewed including frequent visits to the provider
- Where reintegration to the school/college 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
- Should be linked to other relevant information e.g. 'Education, Health & Care Plans' for children with [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\)](#)



### The school or college should ensure that:

- All alternative provision referrals have been discussed with their Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL/D)
- Their DSL/D has shared all **appropriate** safeguarding information about the student with the Provider's Manager or DSL and parents or carers as appropriate
- The provider setting is visited regularly and the Provider Manager or DSL is updated about the student's welfare
- Where safeguarding concerns about the student are raised before or during the placement, these visits should be more frequent, and all concerns and actions followed up appropriately
- The student has a regular opportunity to talk to someone from the school or college about their placement & any issues that concern them & pastoral support is provided as needed

The student should remain on the school or college roll during the placement and should be encouraged to feel part of the school or college.

**If the school or college sets up a contract with a training provider other than those on the Alternative Provision Programme it should be good quality, registered where appropriate, and delivered by high quality staff with suitable training, experience and safeguarding checks.**

### The school or college & the provider should:

- Have an up-to-date safeguarding children policy that staff can access & easily understand
- Provide Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board approved training for staff every 3 years
- Have regular internal safeguarding briefings from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (see [Briefings and Guidance](#))
- Ensure good communication between the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the provider and the education setting throughout the placement period with agreed appropriate mechanisms of challenge
- Ensure all relevant information follows data protection guidance, is jargon free and addresses the students special educational needs, literacy & any safeguarding issues

### The alternative provision should ensure that:

- All contractual requirements concerning safeguarding, including following safer recruitment guidelines are complied with
- **All staff** receive Basic Safeguarding Children in Education training every 3 years
- A member of the management team is trained as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- The DSL attends Advanced Initial training **and** the Advanced Refresher training held each year
- The DSL regularly briefs staff about general safeguarding issues
- 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 have the power to 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

Although this does not apply to Academies, it can provide an example of good practice.

### Useful resources:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2016](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE 15](#)
- [Sheffield City Council Policy about Adult Abuse](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\), DfE](#)
- [Alternative Provision, DfE 13](#)

### Other useful policies & procedures on the [Safeguarding Sheffield Children website](#) include:

- Work & Study Placements, Sept 16
- Abuse of Trust, Sept 16
- Allegations of Abuse against Staff in Education Settings, Sept 16
- Behaviour Guidelines, Sept 16
- Educational Visits, Sept 16
- Vetting, Barring and Recruitment, Sept 16