Policy reviewed by: Caroline Browne / Edward Browne
Date: July 2025
Next review date: July 2026

Severnvale Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Severnvale is a language school offering English tuition to international students. As well as providing academic support Severnvale has a responsibility to ensure a child's safety, welfare and protection during time spent in our care on the summer course. This policy is in accordance with the main legislation and guidance surrounding child protection and safeguarding, including Working Together to Safeguard Children Every Child Matters, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). As a priority and regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs Severnvale is committed to protecting all children from harm by:

a. treating all students equally;
b. ensuring the prevention and protection from child abuse;
c. investigating and responding to any such allegations in a comprehensive and efficient manner; and
d. complying with legal duties.

Severnvale endeavours to meet its safeguarding responsibilities in the following ways:

- ✓ To ensure each member of staff or volunteer who is in contact with children (up to 18 years old) or vulnerable adults consider and act on the 5 "Rs" – Recognise, Respond, Report, Record, Refer.
- ✓ To ensure each member of staff or volunteer who is in contact with children (up to 18 years old) or vulnerable adults receives comprehensive training to be updated every 2 years or when legislation is amended;
- ✓ To ensure each member of staff or volunteer who is in contact with children (up to 18 years old) or vulnerable adults must be familiar with the following governmental publications Every Child Matters, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2022), The Prevent Duty for Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- ✓ To observe safe recruitment, selection, and interview procedures at all times
- ✓ To make this policy available in hard copy to all staff, volunteer or host family who are in contact with children (up to 18 years old) or vulnerable adults and ensure signed acknowledgement is received
- ✓ To make this policy available to all students of up to 18 years old or vulnerable adults, with further explanation during course induction to combat any language barriers
- ✓ To comply with current legislation and adapt to subsequent new legislation
- ✓ To read this policy in conjunction with other Severnvale policies on health and safety, anti-bullying, protection of children online and photography

Different categories of abuse

Abuse can take the following forms: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.

RECOGNISE signs of abuse

Recognising signs of abuse can be assisted by looking for the following indicators that give cause for concern in a child who:

- is frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed;
- seems afraid of parents/carers/adults;
- is severely bruised or injured;
- displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age may all be examples that abuse is relevant.

RESPOND to signs or suspicions of abuse

If you are worried about signs or suspicions report this information immediately.

REPORT to:

Stephanie Howarth
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Student Accommodation and Welfare Manager
Stephanie.howarth@severnvale.co.uk
+44(0)7525 863361

If the allegations concern the DSL, or you are unable to contact the DSL contact immediately

Ed Browne, Managing Director
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) ed.browne@severnvale.co.uk
+44 (0)7968 192158

RESPOND to allegations of abuse

If you receive any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, host family, another child, parent or volunteer report this information immediately to the above staff. If the accused has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she would pose a risk of harm to children
- such allegations will be referred by the DSL to the Local Authority Designated Officer

Shropshire's Safeguarding Children's Board (LADO) **0345 678 9021**

RECORD Information

The person who has concerns/whom the child approaches should record full details of the conversation including the date, time, place and actual words used by the child and how the child appeared. Be as specific as possible. Complete the Safeguarding Report Form immediately, keep all information confidential and pass on to the DSL immediately, at the latest within 12 hours. The DSL will then take the case forward.

Confidentiality

Severnvale sees the welfare of the child is paramount and ensures that any information about a child at risk will be saved electronically, password access only available to the Child Protection Team.

REFER The DSL will decide if referral is appropriate & to which agency referral is made.

If the situation is not classed as child abuse but you still have concerns, you can get help by using the Common Assessment Framework.

Practicalities: How to respond when a child tells you about abuse

Receive: Listen to what is being said. Do not display shock, disbelief or make any judgement. Take all information seriously.

Reassure: Give honest and reliable reassurance to the child. Do not make promises of confidentiality or ones that you can't keep e.g. that "everything will be ok now".

React: Listen carefully, quietly and patiently. Do not make assumptions. Do not interrogate or investigate or decide if the child is telling the truth. Do not ask leading questions. Do not discuss the case with anyone except the child protection team below.

Record: Make notes at the time, keep them and write them up as soon as possible. Record actual words used. Keep it factual.

Review

Safeguarding and protection is an ongoing duty and this policy is to be monitored and reviewed annually by the Managing Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Severnvale and Prevent

Severnvale Academy understands its responsibilities under the **Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015** to prevent people of all ages being radicalised or drawn into terrorism.

What is prevent?

Prevent is part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy that aims to stop people becoming terrorists. It is a multi-agency approach to safeguard people at risk of radicalisation. The full Government Prevent Strategy can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

How does prevent work?

It looks at building a deeper understanding of how individuals become radicalised. This helps to identify ways of preventing people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism.

Typically, a radicalisation process includes exposure of an individual to extremist viewpoints that may eventually influence the person to carry out an act of violent extremism or terrorism. This could take weeks, months or even years. It is possible to intervene during this process and stop someone becoming a terrorist or supporting violent extremist activity.

Violent extremism is where people seek to justify or promote terrorism or encourage others to commit such acts.

One of the main elements of Prevent is a programme called **Channel**, a process developed to support people at risk of being drawn towards terrorism or violent extremism. Partners work together to support individuals vulnerable to radicalisation and provide tailored safeguarding measures to support their needs. Channel Partners include Local Authority, Healthcare providers, Probation, Police, and members of the community.

A range of options are available including mentoring, welfare support and access to key services.

So what does this mean for Severnvale?

Extremism in itself is not illegal, but we still encourage all staff, volunteers and host families to be aware of potential signs of it because it can act as a 'pathway' to terrorism. Prevent does not aim to criminalise people for holding extreme views; instead, it seeks to stop individuals from encouraging or even committing violent activity.

We all have a role to play in Prevent within our organisations and communities by helping people understand what the strategy aims to achieve.

It is the role of the safeguarding lead to:

- ✓ Ensure that staff understand the issues of radicalisation, are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability of radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- ✓ Receive safeguarding concerns about children and young people who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation
- ✓ Making referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation
- ✓ Liaise with partners, including the local authority and police
- ✓ Offer support and advice to staff

It is the role of staff/volunteers/host families to understand the issues of radicalisation, to be able to recognise signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer concerns to the designated lead promptly.

To fulfil our prevent duty we must:

Actively promote and exemplify the fundamental **British values** of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
Be aware of/challenge signs of extremism. Extremism is defined as "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces".

www.legislation.gov.uk

SAFEGUARDING REPORT FORM

See guidance notes at end of form*

Name	
Age/DoB	
Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility	
Telephone	
Own/others concerns	
What has prompted the concern?	
DATES/TIMES of incidents	
Has the young person been spoken to	
If so, what was said?	
Has any individual been identified in the allegation?	
If so, record details	
Who has the info been passed on to for appropriate action	
Has anyone else been consulted?	
If so, record	
ACTION TAKEN: must be recorded	

GUIDANCE ON HANDLING A DISCLOSURE FROM A CHILD

Receive-Reassure-React-Record

What should you do if a child comes to you and tells you that they are being abused? It's normal to feel overwhelmed and confused in this situation. Child abuse is a difficult subject that can be hard to accept and even harder to talk about. Children who are abused are often threatened by the perpetrators to keep the abuse a secret. Thus, telling an adult takes a great amount of courage. Children have to grapple with a lot of issues, including the fear that no one will believe them. So, care must be taken to remain calm and to show support to the child throughout the disclosure phase.

The following guidelines will help lessen the risk of causing more trauma to the child and/or compromising a criminal investigation during the disclosure phase.

Receive: Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. A common reaction to news as unpleasant and shocking as child abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a child, or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down. Accept what is being said without judgement. Take it seriously.

Reassure: Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "everything will be all right now". Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong and that you take what is said seriously. Don't promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns. Tell the child that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect children. Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk. It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse.

React: Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions. Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the child is telling the truth. Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation. Let the child explain to you in his or her own words what happened, but don't ask leading questions. Do ask open questions like "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?" Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for children with disabilities and for children whose preferred language is not English. Do not ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Refer directly to the named child protection officer or designated person in your organisation (as set out in the organisation's child protection policy). Do not discuss the case with anyone outside the child protection team.

Record: Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up in detail as soon as possible. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by Court. Record the date, time, place, words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang. Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.