



Somerset SENDIAS
Special Educational Needs and Disability
Information, Advice and Support (0-25)

**A free impartial service for children and young people with SEND
(aged 0 – 25) and their parent/carers**

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

1. Somerset SENDIAS is a free, impartial and confidential service for all children and young people with SEND (aged 0 to 25), and their parent/carers. It has a separate identity to the local authority. Any information shared with the service is treated in confidence and is regulated in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2020).
2. The role of Somerset SENDIAS is to ensure that children, young people and their parent/carers have access to confidential, impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their own or their child's SEND. This is achieved by working in partnership with children, young people and their parent/carers and other services involved in providing SEND support.
3. This policy is a guide to SENDIAS staff and volunteers on best practice to ensure safeguarding procedures when supporting families involved with the service. It is compliant with Somerset County Council safeguarding guidelines.

Section 1: Role in Safeguarding

4. Somerset SENDIAS believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises it's responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by a commitment to follow all safeguarding practices and policies.
5. The service recognises that:
 - a. the welfare of children and young people is paramount;
 - b. all children and young people regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
 - c. working in partnership with children, young people, their parent/carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children and young people.



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Section 2: Purpose of this policy

6. To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should follow in the event they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
7. SENDIAS will seek to safeguard children, young people and parents by:
 - a. valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
 - b. following child protection guidelines through the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership' procedure's and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
 - c. recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary Disclosure checks are made;
 - d. sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parent/carers, staff and volunteers when appropriate;
 - e. sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people and their parent/carers appropriately;
 - f. providing effective supervision for staff and volunteers.

Section 3 - Training

8. Safeguarding is a part of Somerset SENDIAS induction and on-going training programme.
9. The SENDIAS Manager ('Designated Safeguarding Lead') will attend safeguarding training, organised through Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership, as required.
- 10.. All staff will attend the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' training every two years.
- 11.. Volunteers will receive 'Basic Awareness' training delivered by the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' every two years.



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Section 4 - Roles and responsibilities

12.. The **SENDIAS Manager** ('Designated Safeguarding Lead' within the service) is required to:

- a. attend relevant training to ensure that he/she can recognise the signs and symptoms of Child Abuse;
- b. attend relevant training every two years to ensure support can be given to staff or volunteers involved in a child abuse case;
- c. co-ordinate 'Basic Awareness' safeguarding training
- d. collate all relevant information regarding any safeguarding concern;
- e. consider the appropriateness of speaking with or involving parent/carers in any safeguarding concern;
- f. be aware of the impact of the situation and offer support to the member of staff or volunteer involved or organise appropriate support;
- g. seek support from the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' within the local authority's designated Safeguarding Lead's consultation helpline, as appropriate;
- h. write a full report of the situation;
- i. report concerns to **Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224**.

13. **All staff** are required to:

- a. attend relevant training to ensure that they can recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse;
- b. attend relevant training at least every two years to ensure that support can be given to any volunteer involved in a child abuse case;
- c. make themselves aware of the SENDIAS Safeguarding Policy and procedures;



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- d. report any safeguarding concerns, allegations or disclosures to the Manager. (If the Manager is not available, contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Somerset Direct);
 - e. keep written details of relevant action taken.
14. **Volunteers** are required to:
- a. attend relevant training (Basic Awareness) every two years to ensure that they can recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse;
 - b. make themselves familiar with SENDIAS Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;
 - c. report any safeguarding concerns, allegations or disclosures to their Area Co-ordinator. (If the Area Co-ordinator is not available, contact the SENDIAS Manager. In the SENDIAS Manager's absence contact **Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224.**)
 - d. if in doubt, and it's an emergency contact the Police on 999 or 101;
 - e. keep written details of any action taken.

Section 5 - Safeguarding procedures

15. If a child, young person or a parent/carer discloses a safeguarding concern or issue, or a staff member or volunteer suspects a child or young person is at risk of harm or a staff member or volunteer witnesses an abusive situation involving another practitioner:
- a. **Respond** without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock;
 - b. **Enquire** calmly about how an injury was sustained or why a child or young person appears upset;
 - c. **Confidentiality must not** be assured to children, young people or adults in this situation;
 - d. **Observe** carefully the demeanour or behaviour of the child or young person;
 - e. **Record** in detail what has been seen and heard;

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The Hollies Children's Centre, South Street, Taunton, TA1 3AG
01823 355578 SomersetSENDIAS@somerset.gov.uk www.somersetsend.org.uk



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- f. **Sign** and date the recorded information.
16. If a child or young person is potentially at immediate risk of significant harm, or is, seriously injured – **ring 999 immediately**.
17. All safeguarding records must contain:
- date and time of disclosure;
 - the information that has been disclosed, using the language of the child or young person if possible;
 - factual and accurate details;
 - the individuals who were present at time of disclosure;
 - what was disclosed and by whom;
 - conversations with other practitioners;
 - other relevant information, such as observations during home visit, if applicable;
 - sign the record of disclosure.
18. Specific safeguarding records will be kept separate and only persons directly involved in the case will have access to the records. Where information is requested by Children's Social Care, the SENDIAS Manager, in discussion with Children's Social Care, will ensure that the parent/carers are made aware of the content of any written contribution and ensure that information passed on is relevant.

Section 6 - Confidentiality

19. It will be necessary to keep information on children and young people in order to support parent/carers with gaining the appropriate education for their child.
20. All information is treated as confidential and either secured in a locked cabinet in the SENDIAS office or held on the SENDIAS Manager's electronic file
21. A child, young person or parent/carers permission must be given before sharing information with anyone outside of SENDIAS, except in **exceptional circumstances**, when there is a duty to disclose certain information to others.



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22. The **exceptional circumstances** when SENDIAS would have a duty to divulge information would be:
- if there is risk of significant / suspected harm to the parent/carer, child or other member of the family;
 - prevention of a serious criminal act.

Section 7 - Contributions of the service to investigations

23. Somerset SENDIAS will co-operate fully with enquiries carried out by Social Care, by providing relevant information about a particular incident or about the family. The service is not however, able to provide a professional opinion on what might be the best course of action for the child or young person.

24. Where there is a concern that a member of staff or volunteer may be a risk to children or young people or where a child or young person has made an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation must report it to the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead'. If the allegation is about the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' the report should be made to the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' to **Somerset Direct – 0300 123 2224**.

25. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegation management (LADO).

Section 8 - Safeguarding contact

26. Somerset County Council's LADO reached through Somerset Direct. The Safeguarding Advisor for Education is reached through Somerset Direct.

27. in the absence of any of the above officers, the matter should be reported directly to: **Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224**

For further information, visit the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board website: [SSCP](#) – [Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) (safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)

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Section 9 – Contact details

Somerset SENDIAS
The Hollies Children's Centre
South Road
Taunton
TA1 3AG

01823 355578
sometersendias@somerset.gov.uk
www.sometersend.org.uk

Section 11 – Administration

Date written: August 2022
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To request this Policy in Easy Read, Braille, Large print or Translated into other languages, please contact Somerset SENDIAS on 01823 355578 or email somersetsendias@somerset.gov.uk

Section 12 – References

Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership
Somerset County Council Safeguarding Procedures
GDPR (2020)

END.