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COVID 19 arrangements for safeguarding and child protection at High Ash C.E. School

The safety and welfare of all children remains the priority of High Ash C.E. School. The principles within the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2020 and our Child Protection Policy still apply. This appendix follows the KCSiE document of September 2020 and also latest DFE guidance on safeguarding during this national pandemic.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Our overriding principles remain:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

This appendix will be kept under constant review due the changing nature of events at this unprecedented time.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

In our school, this continues to be Mrs Sara Boyce, Headteacher and Mrs Kate Goodger as Deputy DSL.

A member of the DSL team will always be available during school hours. The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. If this is not the case (due to reduced provision or remote working), then a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video to update on any concerns.

In addition to the above, where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, a designated member of the SLT will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely. The DSLs have the contact details needed to make referrals to Social Care and those of the families. The DSL has the school mobile when working remotely in order to make calls. DSL training remains up to date.

Staff Reporting of safeguarding concerns during this time

We continue to take a whole school approach to safeguarding, and it remains the responsibility of all staff to report any concerns that they may have for the safety and/or welfare of any children with whom they have contact. This contact may be via email, through a phone call, or directly with the child.

Staff are to follow the same procedures as they would normally for any concerns. They are to complete a pink form if in school or to email or phone the DSL if they are not in school. With reduced provision there is currently always a member of SLT on site who will direct safeguarding concerns to the DSL or the Deputy DSL in DSL's absence. The SLT video call daily and update each other on families/concerns/vulnerable children.



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All staff continue to have a duty to report any concerns about the conduct or actions of any other members of staff. This report will be made to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Supporting vulnerable families

Vulnerable children include:

- Children who have a social worker
- Children with Child in Need (CIN) plans
- Children on Child Protection (CP) plans
- Looked after children
- Young carers
- Disabled children
- Pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

For High Ash C.E. School, reduced provision and a place in school is offered to those children who have social worker involvement. If this is not taken up by the parents, then the social worker is informed. DSL will make weekly welfare calls to the families and also to the social worker. High Ash School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Alongside this, Sara Boyce, Headteacher, will regularly review CP / CIN cases to determine vulnerability and prioritise resources accordingly.

Those with an EHCP will be risk-assessed in consultation with parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home.

Teachers also have email contact with families via a class email and know to report any concerns to DSL. Staff know to only email parents and not children directly. Parents have been reminded not to send photos of children with work to the teacher. However, if this happens the teachers know to immediately delete any photos of children with their work from their emails and not to save any of this work to their computer drive. All class emails can be accessed by the teams for monitoring purposes.

Supporting children on Child Protection and Child In Need Plans

DSL will still be in regular contact with these families and social workers. DSL will still be available to attend Child Protection conferences, Core Group Meetings and Strategy meetings remotely via phone or video as is deemed most appropriate.

Supporting families at home

Where a social worker is not involved with families, yet are known to school as needing extra support, then welfare calls are being made weekly by the school. This is monitored by the DSL.

Attendance

If parents of vulnerable children have agreed for them to attend school and they are absent, then school will follow that up on the morning they were due in and also contact social worker. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the DSL will notify their social worker.



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Safeguarding Training

All current staff have up to date safeguarding training and have been made aware of this appendix. We continue to follow the principles of the following guidance.

<https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Sept%202019.pdf>

Safer recruitment and induction

We will ensure that any staff recruited and/or inducted in this time are still subject to our usual safer recruitment procedures and checks.

On line safety

For children who are still in school, they remain supervised whilst on the internet and also the school's firewall is still in place.

For children who are at home, we have sent to parents reminders about how to keep children safe on line via UK Internet Safety Centre. One of our PHSE topics during school closure is on line safety which the children can access from home.

Home learning for children is all accessed via the school website which is password controlled. Any websites or on line tutorials suggested to the children in home learning packs have been checked by teachers. However, parents will be informed of how to report any concerns to us re websites should this arise.

Internet safeguarding reminders will be a standing item on our weekly newsletter during this period of partial closure.

Mental Health

As we do when school is open, we will continue to provide support and advice for children with mental health issues. Our weekly welfare calls also support this as well as positive messages going home to children with praise for their work and also some 'normal' school routines have been maintained such as the weekly newsletter going home to families, to Star Awards being emailed home as well as Birthday greetings.

We will continue to offer advice and support, in particular to children of critical workers and vulnerable children attending school. The government guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-inschools--2> will be referred to in order to support mental health issues that can bring about changes in a child'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.

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the events surrounding Covid-19, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. We will be planning for how best to manage our school re-opening to ensure that this considers the impact this period of isolation will have had on our children.

Peer on Peer abuse

High Ash School recognises that during a period of school closure, children may have more frequent access to online devices, which has the potential to lead to online peer on peer abuse. In accordance



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with this, a revised process may be required for managing any report of Peer on Peer abuse and supporting victims.

Where the school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, it will be addressed promptly and appropriately, following the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSiE and of those outlined within the Child Protection policy. Concerns and actions must be recorded, and appropriate referrals made. The school will listen and work with the child, parents/carers and multi-agency partners, including a report to the police if required, to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Site Security

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

Our usual school site security procedures remain in place. We have no plans at present to open our setting to other education providers. We are not inviting any contractors to work on site at present. School visitors are being asked to wait at the main school door and not enter the main building to ensure an additional level of security. Children who are in school remain supervised at all times. Staff have access to walkie talkies. Parts of the school have been closed off for cleaning and so this ensures children are safe as in less areas of the school.

Role of Governors

Governors have been informed of this appendix and the processes in place in school due to COVID 19. Safeguarding practices are reviewed and discussed at Governor meetings.

Sara Boyce
Headteacher

Policy appendix to be kept under regular review and updated accordingly