



HIGHSTED GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Issue 0017 April 2022

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Safeguarding Mission Statement

In accordance with the Children's Acts of 1989 and 2004 and the Education Act 2002, and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, Highsted Grammar School has a duty to assist local authority specialist children's services departments acting on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse. Highsted Grammar School follows a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding. A 'Culture of Vigilance' has been fostered, where it is agreed by all that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Highsted Grammar School firmly believes that it has a strong pastoral responsibility to promote the welfare of children and that children have a right to be protected from harm; this is consistent with our overall aims to educate the whole pupil and foster personal as well as academic development.

Safeguarding Responsibilities and Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Tiernan-Powell
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Miss Anne Kelly
Telephone: 01795 424223
Email: safeguarding@highsted.kent.sch.uk
Website: www.highsted.kent.sch.uk/safeguarding

Safeguarding Calendar

Oct 2021: Black History Month
Nov 2021: Anti-bullying Week
Jan 2022: LGBT History Month
Jan 2022: Holocaust Memorial Day
Feb 2022: Children's Mental Health Week
Feb 2022 NSPCC Numbers Day
Feb 2022: Safer Internet Day
Feb 2022: Online Safeguarding Evening
Mar 2022: Eating Disorders Awareness Week
Mar 2022: Women's History Month
May 2022: Mental Health Week
June 2022: LGBTQ Awareness Week

Signs of depression or anxiety in children

Knowing how to talk to your child about their mental health, or recognising the signs that they might be struggling, can be really hard. Signs of depression or anxiety in children can sometimes look like normal behaviour, particularly in teenagers who can keep their feelings to themselves.

It's also natural for children or young people to feel stressed or anxious about things like exams or moving to a new school. But while these experiences can be very difficult, they're different from longer term depression or anxiety, which affect how a child or young person feels every day.

It can help to think about what's normal for your child and if you've noticed signs that they've been behaving differently recently.

Signs of depression in children and teenagers can include:

- persistent low-mood or lack of motivation
- not enjoying things, they used to like doing
- becoming withdrawn and spending less time with friends and family
- experiencing low self-esteem or feeling like they are 'worthless'
- feeling tearful or upset regularly
- changes in eating or sleeping habits.

Realising that your child may be struggling with their mental health and experiencing anxiety or depression can be hard to accept. Sometimes parents can feel like it's their fault or want to know why their child is struggling with a mental health problem. This is completely understandable, but the most important thing you can do is to reassure your child and not judge them for how they're feeling.

Ways to help a child who's struggling include:

- letting them know you're there for them and are on their side
- try talking to them over text or on the phone if they don't feel able to talk in person
- being patient and staying calm and approachable, even if their behaviour upsets you
- recognising that their feelings are valid and letting them know it's okay for them to be honest about what it's like for them to feel this way
- thinking of healthy ways to cope you could do together, like yoga, breathing exercises or mindfulness
- encouraging them to talk to their GP, someone at their school or Childline. Especially if they're finding it hard to talk at home.



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- take care of yourself and get support if you need to. Try not to blame yourself for what's happening and to stay hopeful about your child's recovery.

Getting mental health support for your child

Speak to their GP

Supporting a child with a mental health problem like depression or anxiety can be really hard and it's important for a young person to speak to their GP about professional help if they're struggling. This should be the first step you take if you're worried a child may have a mental health problem. Sometimes a GP will prescribe medication to help a child or young person with depression or anxiety symptoms.

Your child may want to speak to their GP on their own or they may want you to be there with them. It's important for you to support their decision if they'd prefer to talk to a GP alone, as sometimes young people can find it easier to talk about their feelings with someone they don't know.

Speak to a member of staff at Highsted. The Pastoral Team will be happy to provide someone who your child can speak to regularly about their mental health. Ask your child if there's a teacher at their school they might feel comfortable speaking to.

Ask about a referral to Camhs

If your child has been feeling unhappy or anxious for a long time, or is showing signs of self-harm or suicidal thoughts, it's important to consider professional help so that they can get the support they need.

Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) is a free NHS service for children and young people under 18. CAMHS can help young people who are struggling with serious mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, self-harm, panic attacks or eating problems.

Referral is usually done through your child's GP and unfortunately it can take up to several weeks for an initial assessment. Social services can also refer young people to CAMHS if they're already supporting your child. Sometimes parents come to the first appointment with their child, or may be offered family therapy but often your child will see a CAMHS worker on their own. This is important as it can help children to be more honest about how they're feeling.

Parental Support

As part of our work with the [Place2Be](#), the Mental Health Charity, we would like to offer parents the opportunity to explore a range of resources to help navigate through their child's transformation into adulthood.

Free School Meals

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals. Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- younger than the [compulsory age for starting school](#)
- in full-time education

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they'll remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they're in on 31 March 2023.

To apply, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Kent Community Foundation Grants

Please find a link for the Kent Community Foundation grants which are available to disadvantaged individuals and families in Kent that meet the criteria, along with details of how they can be nominated. The individual or family being nominated must be a resident of Kent or Medway and there must be a demonstrable financial disadvantage underlying the request (e.g. the family are reliant on benefits or out of work for whatever reason). <https://kentcf.org.uk/>

Useful Links

NSPCC:

Call: 0808 800 5000 (24-hour free helpline)

Text: 88858

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Web: www.nspcc.org.uk

Samaritans:

Call: 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Web: www.samaritans.org



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National Self-harm Network:
Call: 0800 622 600 (7pm-11pm)
Web: www.selfharm.co.uk

Stop Hate Crime:
Call: 0800 138 1625 (24-hour helpline)
Web: www.stophateuk.org

Stop LGBTQ Hate Crime:
Call: 0808 801 0661 (24-hour helpline)
Web: www.stophateuk.org

National Domestic Violence Helpline/ Women's Aid:
Call: 0808 2000 247 (24-hour free helpline)
Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk
Web: www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
Web: www.womensaid.org.uk

NWG Network (Stop CSE):
Call: 01332 585371
Email: jointhefight@stop-cse.org
Web: www.nwgnetwork.org

FGM/HBV Helpline:
Call: 0800 028 3550 (24-hour free helpline)
Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
Web: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm

EACH:
EACH has a Freephone Actionline for children experiencing
homophobic bullying
Call: 0808 1000 143 (Monday to Friday 10am-5.00pm)
Web: <http://www.eachaction.org.uk/>