



HIGHSTED GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Issue 0011 December 2019

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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 2019, 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

Twitter: @SafeguardingHGS

Safeguarding Calendar

Oct 2019: Black History Month

Oct 2019: Hate Crime Awareness Week

Nov 2019: Anti-bullying Week

Jan 2020: Safeguarding Fortnight

Feb 2020: NSPCC Numbers Day

Feb 2020: Safer Internet Day

Feb 2020: Online Safeguarding Evening

Mar 2020: Eating Disorders Awareness Week

Mar 2020: Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day

May 2020: Mental Health Week

June 2020: LGBTQ History Month

Own It App Launched

The BBC has created a "wellbeing" smartphone app called 'Own It', available through app stores, aimed at supporting children and young people to interact safely and responsibly with friends and family online and through messaging apps. The app enables users to install a special software keyboard which monitors the tone of the words being typed and language used. The app evaluates children's moods so it can offer advice, encourage them to talk to trusted adults, or prompt them to think again if they are about to share sensitive data or send an upsetting message. The app is not a monitoring or reporting system and does not report to parents about children's activity, however it is designed to enable children to develop resilience online and offers targeted help and support when necessary. The 'Own It' app also has its own content to help children manage the amount of time they spend looking at their screen and shares advice about responsible online behaviours.

Children's Mental Health –Support at Christmas

The MindEd online resource provides information and advice concerning children's mental health and wellbeing. The MindEd online resource is for concerned children and their families to seek help and advice. MindEd directs visitors to sections including 'risky behaviour', 'eating disorders', 'sexual orientation and gender' and 'being a parent in the digital age' for expert advice. Topics on the website include:

- Should I be worried?
- What to do in a crisis
- Death and loss (including pets)
- Trauma and coping
- Talking to my child
- Who can help us?
- Building confidence and resilience
- Parenting in a digital world
- Refusal to go to school
- Bullying and what to do as a parent
- Sexual orientation and gender
- Eating disorders.

minded.e-lfh.org.uk/.../index.html

Unhappy Holidays...?

Christmas is approaching, and it's the time of year we associate with happiness and light, family and friends, joy and peace. For most children, the vision of Christmas morning is one of excitement: finding presents from Santa beneath the tree, eating stocking-filler sweets before breakfast, and being surrounded by loved ones ready for a day full of fun and holiday cheer. It's the picture-perfect moment in so many of our minds...but for some children, that vision never becomes a reality.



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The NSPCC estimates that over half a million children are abused every year in the United Kingdom alone. It is very common for child abuse to be carried out by a relative or close family friend—exactly the sort of people who are likely to be visiting on Christmas Day or during the run-up to Christmas and the New Year. With this in mind, Christmas can be a very difficult time for children who have experienced or who are experiencing abuse or neglect.

The worrying truth is that children who have experienced one form of abuse are more likely to experience other forms of abuse. For example, a child who has been sexually abused may also be victim to, or witness of, domestic violence. Behind closed doors in many homes across the UK, abuse is happening, and Christmas morning is going to be far from exciting for the children who are enduring it.

Christmas Risk Factors

For many children experiencing abuse, it is likely that they are at risk every day of the year, not just at Christmas time. However, the reinforced promise of a Happy Christmas can trigger all sorts of emotions in the mind of an abused child, which can make the festive period even more difficult to endure.

So, what are the specific risks that Christmas can bring to a child?

Feelings of loneliness

Neglected or abused children might feel extreme loneliness at Christmas time, when they do not have school to escape to during the day or friends to socialize with at all because ‘everyone else’ is spending the busy holiday season with their family. Without a happy family unit, abused children can feel extremely cut-off from the rest of the world, and these feelings can lead to depressive episodes, feelings of despair, and can leave a child with the confusing question, “Why me?”

Everything in excess

It is common for abusive family members to become violent or aggressive and more likely to abuse a child when they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. At this time of year, when everything is in excess, abused children could be even more at risk than normal because of the presence of alcohol at Christmas parties and at the dinner table.

More time at home

If a child is being abused by a family member who is home from work for the holiday period, the respite that the abuser’s work schedule might have offered will now be stripped away, leaving much more opportunity for abuse or violence. The same can be the case for school holidays, as without the excuse of going to school, a child might not have any reason at all to leave the house or their abuser.

Feelings of inadequacy

It can be extremely difficult for children to hear about all the wonderful presents their friends received for Christmas, and all the happy moments shared with loving families over the

festive period. Even portrayals of Christmas on TV can give a child the sense that there is something wrong with them if they do not have the same ‘family’ experience. That’s not to mention the frustration that comes when a child learns that their friends have received expensive and abundant gifts from Santa on Christmas morning, while they received little to nothing. All of this can lead a child to blame themselves for issues that are out of their control, and these emotions can cause depression, feelings of inadequacy, or much darker thoughts.

Spreading Light

While it may not be possible for you to step into a child’s life and offer them the emotional support that they need this Christmas time, you can empower yourself by learning the signs of child abuse and neglect, so that you can raise the alarm for a child who might be at risk this Christmas season.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, so it doesn’t matter what your relation to the child is, or how long you have known them for—if you suspect abuse or neglect, you should report your concerns in the first instance.

If you are concerned about a child over the Christmas Break call the police on 101

If you think a child is at immediate risk call 999

Free School Meals

Your child must attend a maintained school (most schools in Kent are maintained schools) or receive alternative education approved by Kent County Council.

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

- 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)
- 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.

If your child is eligible for free school meals with an active application on the 31 March 2018, they will remain eligible until 31 March 2022.



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You can apply online at:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals#tab-1>

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/>

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/>

Useful Links

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SPCC:

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

Text: 88858

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Web: www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline:

Call: 0800 1111

Online: www.childline.org.uk/registration

Web: www.childline.org

Samaritans:

Call: 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Web: www.samaritans.org

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