

Highcliffe School

Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

COVID-19 addendum

*Based on DfE Guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers
Published 27 March 2020*

During the organisation changes due to the national response to COVID-19, the guidance found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) continues to apply. The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (05.12.2019) also applies, **in which full details of signs of safeguarding concerns and how to report concerns are outlined.** This can be found in the 'Policies' section of the school website, www.highcliffeschool.com.

It is the duty of all staff and volunteers working in the school to keep the safeguarding of our students as the highest priority, both children still attending school and those working at home and off site.

As long as the school remains open to certain children, or if the school in future acts as the hub in a cluster, it will continue to provide a safe environment, keep children safe and ensure staff and any volunteers have been appropriately checked and risk assessments carried out as required.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL/DDSLs)

On days when the school is open to selected children, there will be a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), or member of the School Senior Leadership team on site. There will always be a DSL/DDSL available for telephone contact during school hours, should one not be in school that day.

The DSL/DDSL/Senior Leader on site each day will have responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This may include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL/DDSL and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

Through My Concern and through the allocated member of staff in school each day, all staff and volunteers will have access to safeguarding support.

Vulnerable children

During the COVID-19 period, school staff will continue to work with and support vulnerable children.

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and children with EHC plans. These children will be offered support in school during this period, along with the children of parents who are Key Workers. The school has the flexibility to offer a place in school to children on the edges of receiving children's social care support or those the school might view as vulnerable for other reasons

Local authorities have the key day-to-day responsibility for delivery of children's social care. Social workers and Virtual School Heads will continue to work with vulnerable children in this period and

should support these children to access this provision. The school will work with social workers in encouraging children with a social worker to attend provision, unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding support for students

Years 7- 11 are supported by the Heads of Achievement, Deputy Heads of Achievement and Pastoral Leads. In Years 12-13, students are supported by Heads of Year and the Sixth Form Study Mentor. While the school is closed to the vast majority of students, all students will be regularly emailed by pastoral staff with support and guidance. Each year group holds a list of those students identified as the most vulnerable, and these students will be further supported through individual contact by pastoral staff.

Staff interacting with students working off site are encouraged to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the school child protection policy.

All students have named members of staff that they can contact for support and advice and have the facility to do this through school email.

Online safety and off-site learning

During this period the majority of children will not be physically attending school. Staff will continue to interact with children online, and will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns will be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals will still be made to children's social care and as required the police.

Through the setting of work to be completed at home and online communication with students, school staff will, at all times, act within the boundaries and expectations of the Staff Code of Conduct. Use of online learning tools and online communications will be in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Throughout the period of COVID-19 restrictions, regular communication with parents will include advice and guidance on how to stay safe online and how to report any concerns. Both students and parents will be signposted to sites and outside agencies that offer support in this area.