Hartington C of E Primary School

"Caring & sharing as part of God's family"

"Loving our neighbour as we love ourselves" - Luke 10:27

POLICY AND PROTOCOL FOR REMOTE COMMUNICATION/ONLINE LEARNING WITH CHILDREN

Date Written **May 2021**

To be reviewed **Annually**

Reviewed by **Tracy Blackwell**

Signed by

Chair of Governors …………………………………..

HeadTeacher …………………………………..

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

• That all parties are provided with a safe environment to conduct remote communication between staff and pupils;

• That all remote contact follows the same level of safeguarding that would be applied within school.

This policy and the protocols contained within apply to:

• Any contact between a staff member and a child when either party are not in school including:

• Telephone calls;

• Emails;

• Online communication using voice and/or video technologies e.g. Skype, Zoom, Facetime, Microsoft Teams etc.

Overarching Considerations:

• All remote communication should be considered in the same context as communication within school e.g. a member of staff would always avoid a situation where they were one to-one with a child in an area of school where they could not be seen or heard by other staff/children;

• All remote communication systems, including the software, should be agreed with the Head teacher prior to it taking place and should also have been trialled between the staff involved before using it with children;

• For all online communication, only school-registered accounts should be used by staff, never personal ones;

• All remote communication has the potential to be recorded. If this is to be used by staff, it must be with prior agreement of all parties involved;

• If a member of staff does not understand the system they are using, if it is not safe/reliable or if there is no clearly defined purpose for the communication, then DON'T DO IT;

• All remote communication/online learning should be considered in line with school GDPR/Data Protection Policies.

Considerations for Online Learning/Live Streaming of Lessons:

• Will some pupils be excluded? Do they have internet, a device and a suitable place to learn?

• Are 'chat' settings turned on and are they visible/able to be used when the staff are no longer part of the communication?

• How do pupils ask questions/get help during the session?

• What are the boundaries/expectations of all parties during an online lesson?

Before the communication takes place:

• For any individual contact, ensure that the pupil will have a parent or carer in the room with them during the entirety of the communication;

• For any individual contact, ensure that at least one other member of staff is involved in the 'call';

• Ensure that the communication has been scheduled in advance and that all parties have agreed to the protocols for that communication;

• Ensure that all parties are using an appropriate space e.g. not in bedrooms or places with inappropriate objects or information visible;

• Ensure that the communication used cannot be accessed by third parties (checked with the Head teacher or IT Just Done);

• Check the settings of the system that is being used to ensure that staff have control over who can join the communication (checked with the Head teacher or IT Just Done);

• Consider any vulnerabilities of pupils such as special educational needs, disabilities or child protection concerns;

• Do not start the communication without another member of staff already in the communication and the communication being agreed by the Head teacher;

• Ensure that clear boundaries have been set in advance with all parties: - The maximum length of time the communication will last for; - Who will be involved, including a parent/carer for all individual pupil communication and always a second member of staff; - The number of times that the communication will take place e.g. weekly, fortnightly;

• Have a means of logging the communication in advance of it taking place (a simple log of the purpose, date and time is all that is required);

• Agree protocols between the staff involved for the collection of any notes taken during the communication:

During the communication:

• Remind all participants about the 'rules' and set clear boundaries at the start as to how the communication will work;

• Remind all participants what to do if they have any concerns or safeguarding issues;

• Continue to monitor the environment for all parties – if something changes such as the parent/carer leaving the room during an individual pupil's communication, then finish the communication immediately;

• If any safeguarding concerns or other difficulties arise, finish the communication immediately and move to the 'After the Communication' section of this protocol.

After the communication:

• Ensure that all pupils have left the communication before staff finish;

• Ensure that the communication is completely finished, with no parties still part of the call/livestream;

• Log the communication in the agreed format ensuring that it includes: - Who was involved; - When it took place; - What was the purpose of the call; - Anything that went wrong; - Any concerns raised (if the concerns are of a safeguarding nature, these should be recorded and followed up using all normal school procedures and following the Child Protection Policy;

• Feedback any concerns raised from the communication directly with the Head teacher.