**POLICY TEMPLATE**

**Self-Harm & Suicide (within Safeguarding policy)**

**{Insert name of setting}** is aware that suicide prevention is a key part of our role in safeguarding children and young people, and that we will take a holistic approach to ensuring that pupils are as suicide-safe as possible.

(delete if no such policy exists) This policy should be read alongside the school’s Mental Health or Wellbeing Policy.

**{Insert name of school}** acknowledges that:

* Many young people will experience thoughts of suicide and self-harm and young people might self-harm with or without suicidal intent.
* **Suicide is complex.** There are many contributory factors surrounding a suicide and reasons are often complex and individual to that person.
* **Stigma inhibits learning.** We recognise that the stigma surrounding self-harm, suicide and other mental illness can be both a barrier to seeking help and a barrier to offering help. We are dedicated to tackling suicide stigma and will ensure staff use [appropriate language](https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/words-matter-suicide-language-guide.pdf) when talking about suicide.
* **Self-Harm and Suicide is everyone’s business**, and we want to facilitate the reporting of any risks and concerns.
* **Self-harm and suicide are difficult things to talk about.** By encouraging staff to complete the [zero suicide alliance training](https://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/suicide-awareness-training-uni-students) (or other suicide prevention and intervention training) and whole school awareness of mental ill health, we will provide adults in school who are able to identify when a pupil may be struggling with thoughts of suicide.
* **Talking about suicide does not create or increase risk.** Contrary to common belief, this type of questioning does not encourage young people to pursue suicide ideation. Rather it signals that you care and that you are ready to talk to them about it. The opportunity to discuss feelings around suicide can provide a great relief.

**We will ensure we develop active person-centred self-harm and suicide prevention, and intervention policy. (An example policy developed by a school in Hampshire can be requested by emailing publichealthhampshire@hants.gov.uk).**

* We have a named individual who is responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of this policy. **{insert name, job title of named lead here}**
* We will endeavour to ensure that all our staff are self-harm and suicide aware. This means that we have ensured that staff undertake zero suicide training, that they are aware of the resources listed in the Southern Health and [Solent MIND](https://www.selfharmsupporthubhants.org.uk/) webpages and of the [HCSP Self-Harm Pathway](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fhipsprocedures.org.uk%2Fassets%2Fclients%2F7%2FFINAL%2520HIPS%2520self%2520harm%2520pathway%25202022.pptx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) as part of all staff inductions.
* We will ensure that Staff are aware of their responsibilities around suicide prevention as outlined in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and we will continue to reinforce the message to all staff that we ALWAYS believe children and young people. We will teach about mental wellbeing as a [statutory part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1090195/Relationships_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)[[1]](#footnote-2), aiming to build young people’s knowledge, skills, and resilience through regular, high-quality lessons. We will ensure learning materials are age-appropriate and preventative and ensure we do not give information on methods of self-harm or suicide, or use emotive language, videos, or images.
* We will provide clear pathway(s) for pupils to raise concerns to school staff.
* We will ensure that peers and school staff are supported and able to access services when self-harm or suicide has affected them.
* We recognise that the need to protect someone’s life overrides confidentiality and will report our concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Mental Health Lead immediately.
* We will endeavour to put in place mechanisms which allow staff that have regular interaction with the pupils to be able to flag or review any concerns about the individual pupils, including suspected suicidal thoughts.
* When we identify a pupil at risk of self-harm or suicide we will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Mental Health Lead and if a pupil is in crisis we will dial 999.

**Where a death by suspected suicide has occurred we will have a named Postvention Response Team with the following roles:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| {insert name of school/college} Postvention Response Team | |
| Role | Named Staff Member |
| **Postvention Team Chair**  This may be the Headteacher/Designated Senior Leader | Primary:  Designate: |
| **Family Liaison Officer**  This may be The Pastoral Lead(s)  A sensitive and compassionate manner is crucial | Primary:  Designate: |
| **Administrator** | Primary:  Designate: |
| **Communications Lead**  A member of the senior leadership team | Primary:  Designate: |
| **Care for students lead**  This may be the designated safeguarding lead; head of year | Primary:  Designate: |
| **Care for staff lead**  This may be the wellbeing/mental health lead, safeguarding lead or other member of the senior leadership team | Primary:  Designate: |

* All primary and designate members will be familiar with the 7 stages of postvention response outlined within the [Hampshire Suicide Prevention & Postvention Protocol](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/assets/clients/7/23-05-18%20Postvention%20Protocol%20for%20Education%20Settings.pptx)
* All primary and designate members will have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as outlined within the [Hampshire Suicide Prevention & Postvention Protocol](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/assets/clients/7/23-05-18%20Postvention%20Protocol%20for%20Education%20Settings.pptx)

**In the event of a serious incident, whereby someone has attempted or died by suicide.**

* We will work in partnership with the Local Authority to implement our postvention response
* We will also be mindful of the impact that supporting an inquest can have on staff and their wellbeing and will signpost to appropriate support, including suicide bereavement support through [[Amparo](https://amparo.org.uk/)](https://amparo.org.uk/) (which provides support for anyone affected by suspected suicide)
* We will ensure effective partnership working to support pupils returning school after a serious incident of self-harm or attempted suicide, whereby the child/young person is at the centre of decision making and determines who is best to support them in school

1. For post-16 education settings there is no statutory requirement, but many deliver PSHE as part of their Personal Development Learning (PDL) or tutorials. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)