



### 1. Introduction

#### Our definition of self-injury

We regard self-injury to be a coping mechanism for young people who are attempting to cope with high levels of distress and emotional pain. It is any deliberate, non-suicidal behaviour, which causes physical pain or injury. The person self-harming often believes that it acts as a temporary measure to distract or relieve them from emotional pain and distress.

These behaviours are usually chronic, repetitive and habitual and may include:

- deliberate bone-breaking
- cutting
- bruising
- banging or hitting self
- burning
- medication overdosing with non-suicidal intent
- purposeful poisoning of themselves

Young people who self-injure will generally attempt to hide any scarring or injuries and can find it extremely difficult to discuss their behaviours and the emotions behind them. We understand these behaviours are not about 'attention seeking' nor is it suicidal behaviour. However, we will take all incidents of self-injury seriously, investigate them and attempt to provide the most appropriate emotional support possible using both school and external resources available.

### 2. Aims

Our school team is dedicated to ensuring the emotional, physical and mental well-being of all the students in our community. This policy makes clear to all staff, students, parents and carers the procedures followed in response to known incidents of self-injury by:

- Being pro-active in discussing this topic with students we might feel are deliberately harming themselves.
- Knowing how to respond to students who wish to discuss these behaviours with us and taking them seriously at all times.
- Providing students with information and reassurance regarding this sensitive matter.
- Being able to recommend, support and refer to external agencies as necessary.
- Providing the appropriate level of practical and emotional support for staff dealing with students who self-harm and ensure appropriate training and education is available to all school staff regarding this issue.
- Providing parents of all students with information and guidance regarding risk factors and self-harm behaviour.
- Ensuring the topic of self-harm is covered appropriately as part of our PSHCE Emotional Literacy curriculum.

### 3. Key responsibilities

Everyone in the school community has responsibilities to promote and adhere to this policy in order to help ensure the well-being of all within the community. This includes the Governing Body, the Headteacher, all teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers. These are outlined as follows:

**(a) Governing Body**

- Ensure this policy is upheld.
- Promote resources and support of teaching regarding self-harm within the curriculum.
- Ensure the existence of a Procedural Policy in case of self-harming incidents occurring within the school context and that it is reviewed as necessary.
- Ensure compliance of this policy with existing safeguarding policies.

**(b) Headteacher**

- Advise and inform Governing Body of school approach and ethos regarding self-harm.
- Appoint a designated member of staff to be responsible for all incidents of self-harm and be responsible for disseminating the policy and training to the whole school team.
- Be ultimately responsible for ensuring that designated staff receive appropriate training and supervision.
- Ensure that all staff in the school community are fully conversant with and adhere to our Self-Harm policy.

**(c) All Staff**

- Should act in an empathetic manner, assuring students that they are available to actively listen in a calm and non-judgmental manner and do not invalidate any students' concerns or emotional distress.
- Must know the protocol and procedures outlined in this document and use it.
- Must ensure that students know staff cannot make any promises to keep things confidential if they feel that the student is at risk in any way.
- Must adhere to our Health and Safety and Safeguarding policies.
- Must be committed to providing high quality PSHCE to promote mental and physical well-being.
- Must ask for help if they feel a situation falls outside of their emotional competency, skills or knowledge.

**(d) Designated Staff must:**

- Must ensure safeguarding forms are completed for all incidents of self-harm and overdose and keep records of self-harm incidents and concerns up to date.
- Must contact parents/carers regarding their child's self-harm behaviour, involving the student in this process. Inform parents/carers about appropriate available help and support. NB: the only situation in which this may not be possible is if the disclosure to parents/carers would put the child at risk in which case a consultation with Children's Services would be sought.
- Must continue to liaise with parent/carers as appropriate in order to ensure the safety and well-being of students in the school community.
- Should liaise with external agencies – specifically mental health – in order to refer to and provide the most appropriate support and information for the student and their family.
- Must report all suicidal intent or feelings immediately and refer to other professional agencies as appropriate.
- Should engage in appropriate supervision so as to ensure personal well-being.

**Named Designated Staff are Mrs Jane Whitlock (JSW) supported by the Headteacher, Mrs Maureen Johnson (MJ) and our school DSLs, Mrs Sophie Clarke (SC) David Marchant (DSM), Lisa Barker (LJB), Mrs Sarah Craig, Mr Chris Love.**

**(e) Parents or Carers**

- Should ensure that they both understand this policy and endorse the school's approach to self-harm education and pastoral care.
- Should ensure that school staff are kept informed of any changes or incidents that occur outside of school that may impact on the behaviour and well-being of their child and recognise that confidentiality of this information will be recognised and respected in all incidences.

- Should know how to access support and information from the designated staff member. Key staff members; **Mrs Jane Whitlock and the Student Services team will know how to access DSLs and are available on the school telephone number 01732 373500.**
- Should recognise that safeguarding procedures will be followed and standard procedure is to recommend referral of the child to see their GP for assessment and referral to the Children and Young Peoples Service (CHYPS - formerly CAMHS).

**(f) Students**

- Should ensure they know they can talk to any member of staff should they feel distressed or at risk in either the school or social context.
- Should know when confidentiality must be broken and alert a member of staff if they are at all concerned about a friend or peer who may be at risk of self-harming, engaging in these behaviours, or may discuss suicide or present as suicidal.
- Must seek medical and First Aid support whenever required or whenever they are in doubt as to the severity of wounds.
- Must not bring any dangerous objects or implements to school or show or offer harmful implements to others. If a student is found with any such object in their possession, or has supplied such implements to other students, disciplinary procedures will be followed which will result in exclusion.
- Should cover wounds from self-harm within any school context. Long sleeved T-shirts and trousers can be worn for PE.
- Must not engage in ‘sensationalised’ conversations with peers or staff, or talk about the methods they use to self-harm to other students. This is true whether in a face-to-face scenario or on social media because the effects are likely to interrupt other students’ ability to participate in school life and learning.
- Must never encourage others to participate in self-harm behaviours either directly or through manipulative behaviour or discussions.

**4. Links to other policies**

Our Self-Harm policy has direct links to (and should be read in conjunction with) the following policies:

- **Health and Safety policy**
- **Safeguarding policy**
- **Behaviour policy**
- **PSHCE policy**
- **Anti-Bullying policy – found in the school planners**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy/Report**

The policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and Governing Body and reviewed annually with the school community in consultation with school staff, parents/carers, students and professionals representing outside supporting agencies.

<b>Author:</b>	Jane Whitlock Lisa Barker	<b>Reviewed:</b>	March 2018
<b>Link Governor/s:</b>	Sheila Viola Julia Wilson	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	March 2021
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## PROTOCOL FOR STAFF IN ADDRESSING AND RESPONDING TO SELF HARM

1. Student discloses self-harm to a teacher.	2. You witness a significant incident of self-harm.	3. You have seen wounds or marks on a student that concern you or have other evidence that they have self-harmed.	4. A friend of a student discloses self-harm to you.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen, if the student is distressed you may have to evaluate immediate commitments and either rearrange or organise a more suitable time to discuss - be non-judgemental.</li> <li>Take notes if you wish.</li> <li>Ask what happened.</li> <li>If the wound is visible and severe, consider an instant referral to First Aid and accompany the student there.</li> <li>Explain that the school will offer support.</li> <li>Explain you will have to refer to Designated Lead (JSW).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call for help from Student Services and a First Aider immediately.</li> <li>Remain calm and reassure the student that they are not in trouble.</li> <li>Ask the student to put down any implement they are using.</li> <li>Do not pick up the implement.</li> <li>Keep other students away.</li> <li>If you are on a school trip you must follow safeguarding protocol and seek support and advice from Designated Child Protection Coordinators or Headteacher.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If it is an appropriate opportunity e.g. Form Time, in a lesson during student lead activities ask the student what happened, show concern.</li> <li>This may lead to a disclosure in which case. (SEE 1)</li> <li>They may have a reasonable explanation and you are no longer worried.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reassure them they have done the right thing.</li> <li>Listen and take thorough notes.</li> <li>Ensure they understand that you will pass the information on to the designated lead.</li> <li>You can agree not to reveal the friend's name to the student who has self-harmed but <b>MUST</b> tell the name to the designated lead.</li> </ul>
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Fill in a safeguarding form detailing the incident within 24 hours and send to AAsafeguarding team			
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An appointment will be made with the person who has self-harmed with JSW. This will be organised in order of priority depending on level of risk.			
The student will be asked about the self-harm and reassured of what can and cannot remain confidential. We will try to establish, when, where and how long it has happened, administer first aid and find out if parent/guardians know.			
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All parents will be informed and offered guidance and the recommendation of a GP visit. There will be some occasions where risk is seen to be low, where students will be given an opportunity to discuss it with their parents first. All parents will be contacted within 36 hours.			
The designated lead and DSL will decide whether it is the student's best interests to share information with staff. The designated lead will always endeavour to inform the original staff member about the outcome.			
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The school's offer may involve, referral to; CHYPS, GP, Early Help referral, School Counsellor or Inclusion Manager mentoring.			