



KING EDWARD VI HANDSWORTH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Self-Harm Policy 2022

Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Implemented:	11.12.19
Version:	3	Date Modified:	February 2022
Revision due date:	February 2023		
Governor Committee and date (where applicable)	Welfare Committee 23rd March 2022		
Reviewed by:	Jane Glendenning	Sign and Date:	
Authorised by:		Sign and Date:	

Related Documents/Policies

Title
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022 consultation document)
Mental Health First Aid England, Youth MHFA training
Suicide-Safer School Policy (2022)
Let's Talk About Self-harm. Southend, Essex and Thurrock Council
The Truth About Self-harm: for young people and their friends and families. Mental Health Foundation (based on findings of the National Inquiry into Self-harm)
STEM4-SH developing a self-harm policy

Jane Glendenning (DSL) is responsible for reviewing and updating this procedure.

We fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Education Act 1996 and 2011

Children Act 1989

Human Rights Act 1998

The Equality Act 2010 (Part 6)

Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice

and in line with our **EDI mission statement** below:

We celebrate diversity and value fairness and equal treatment for everyone at the school regardless of their race, age, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability. We promote equality through our rich and diverse curriculum, equipping students with the skills, knowledge and understanding to succeed in a diverse world outside and beyond school. We challenge discrimination in all its forms so that all members of the school community feel safe and valued.

Unconscious Bias Key definitions:

There are two types of biases

1. **Conscious bias** (also known as **explicit** bias) and
2. **Unconscious bias** (also known as **implicit** bias)

Conscious bias is an inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.

Unconscious bias is implicit bias. It is unintended and subtle, based on unconscious thought. People may have unfair beliefs about others but not be aware of them. Typically unconscious bias happens involuntarily without any awareness or intentional control. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups

Under the 2010 Equality Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of nine areas termed in the legislation as protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

How to overcome unconscious bias

- Be aware of unconscious bias.
- Don't rush decisions, rather take your time and consider issues properly.
- Justify decisions by evidence and record the reasons for your decisions
- Ensure that everyone knows what kind of behaviour is expected of them.
- Ensure that everyone knows how to report prejudice related incidents.
- Encourage people to work with a wider range of people and get to know them as individuals.
- Focus on the positive behaviour of people and not negative stereotypes.
- Employers should implement policies and procedures which limit the influence of individual characteristics and preferences.

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AIMS AND VALUES

King Edward VI Handsworth School for Girls will endeavour to provide an environment where every student can feel:

- safe;
- healthy;
- able to enjoy and achieve;
- able to contribute to future economic well-being; and
- able to make a positive contribution.

This policy is intended for students, parents/carers and staff and will contribute to the protection and safeguarding of our students and promote their welfare by:

- increasing understanding and awareness of self-harm;
- alerting staff to warning signs and risk factors;
- setting out clear guidelines on the school's procedures for dealing with those who self-harm whilst the student is in our school;
- providing support to staff dealing with students who self-harm;
- providing support to students who self-harm and their peers and parents/carers.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The UK government outlines six key principles of safeguarding that can be implemented to protect young people:

1. **Empowerment:** it is important for caregivers to create an environment that empowers children to have autonomy over their own decisions, allowing them to say 'no' or speak up when faced with uncomfortable positions.
2. **Protection:** children, especially those who are victims of abuse, need to be provided with the support they need to prevent further abuse/harm.
3. **Prevention:** caregivers need to ensure that they prevent abuse or harm of any kind from happening to children in their care.
4. **Proportionality:** some individuals may face different levels of risk and this needs to be understood and mitigated as much as possible in order to create a safe space and prevent further harm.
5. **Partnerships** allow for everyone to work together in creating a safe environment within and beyond school.
6. **Accountability:** we are all accountable for the safety of the children around us. Everyone has a role to play towards ensuring the safeguarding and protection of the most vulnerable members of our communities. As such, accountability is about taking responsibility for our actions and ensuring that we remain aware of abusive actions/harm.

The school will also apply long-term strategies to enhance self-esteem and develop emotional literacy through the PSHCE and form time curriculum. Students will be made aware of the policy and who the named staff and Young Wellbeing Leads are if they wish to report a concern.

INTRODUCTION TO SELF-HARM

Self-harm is defined by the World Health Organisation as “an act with a non-fatal outcome in which an individual deliberately initiates a non-habitual behaviour, that without intervention from others will cause self-harm”. Whilst it is defined as having a ‘non-fatal’ outcome, often there are shared risk factors for both self-harm and suicide, which will be discussed later in the policy.

The Good Childhood Report released in 2021 by the Children’s Society found that over 24% of children, and 28% of girls surveyed had self-harmed over the past year, compared to the 2018 report of 15% and 22%, respectively.

Because there may be some temporary relief at the start, self-harm can become someone’s normal way of dealing with life’s difficulties. This means that it is important to talk to someone as early as possible to get the right support and help. Learning new coping strategies to deal with these difficulties can make it easier to break the cycle of self-harm in the long term.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

- Support the school Senior Leadership Team in awareness and understanding of self-harm and how it should be approached within the curriculum and training for staff and, where appropriate, parents;
- Support the development of the school policy around self-harm.

Headmistress

- To lead whole school culture of positive mental wellbeing, including awareness of emotional wellbeing, mental health issues and self-harm, and be supported to do so;
- Support training for staff on emotional wellbeing and mental health issues including self-harm;
- Decide if it is appropriate to communicate with parent/carer cohorts if there is a concern about self-harm contagion in a year group, so that parents/carers can monitor their children;
- Ensure School adherence to the Ofsted Common Assessment Framework which identifies students having “knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy, both emotionally and physically, including through exercising and healthy eating” as one of the criteria in the “personal development” section of the framework.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Develop and implement the Self-Harm Policy ensuring all staff (including non-teaching) are aware of and understand the policy and what procedures to follow;
- Ensure that all students know that they can talk to members of the Pastoral Team, including the DSL, if they are experiencing or thinking about self-harming, or are aware of another student who is thinking about self-harming/has self-harmed;
- Ensure all students, parents and staff know where to access [resources](#) about coping with and understanding self-harm;
- Maintain up to date records of students experiencing self-harm, incidents of self-harm, concerns surrounding the issue and support provided to students and share appropriate information with the Academy Trust at yearly Mental Health and Wellbeing meetings;
- Communicate, where appropriate, with the Headmistress and the Local Governing Body, on a regular basis and keep them informed of incidents and developments;
- Liaise with the relevant Pastoral Leaders and Deputy Heads to manage the return of a student to school after a period of in-patient treatment or period of time off school in a way that is supportive to the individual student but also supportive of the rest of the pupils;
- Be confident and up to date in understanding of self-harm including training where required;
- Be aware of what organisations and key services in the area can support young people who self-harm;
- Be aware of information sharing and confidentiality arrangements, including when it is essential to share information with relevant staff in school and other organisations;
- Inform student’s parents/carers, or support the Pastoral Team to do so, and liaise with them as to how to best manage the situation;
- Respond to any mention of suicidal feelings or behaviour as a matter of urgency;
- Ensure that all first-aiders are well informed about self-harm;
- Take care of their own and the Pastoral Team’s emotional wellbeing and seek support/supervision as and when necessary, including signposting to employeeassistance.org.uk.

[INFORMATION INCLUDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF](#)

[INFORMATION INCLUDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/CARERS](#)

[INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS](#)

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The DSL will ensure this policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Local Governing Body regarding this. The DSL will also ensure this policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals to external agencies may be made and our role in this.