



THE WEBBER
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

SELF-HARM

POLICY 2018

MODERN
EDUCATOR



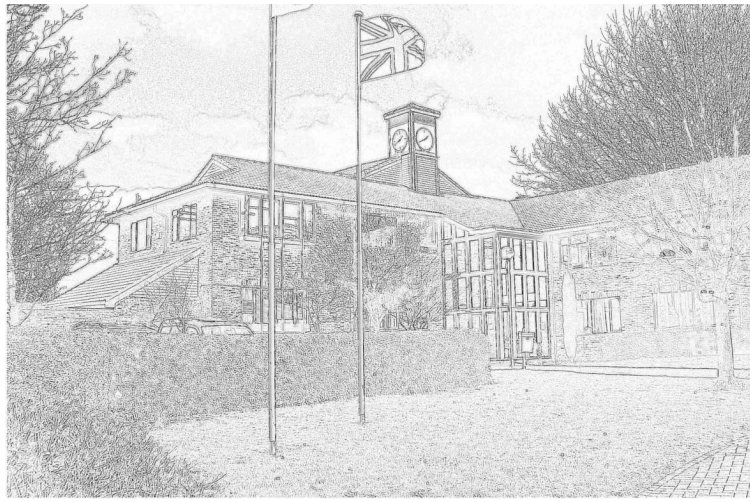


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Self-Harm Policy

March 2018



Written by M Chessum March 2018

Reviewed by Safeguarding Team: March 2018

Next Review: March 2019

This policy forms an essential part of the School's medical and Safeguarding group of policies. It should be viewed in conjunction with these.

Aim

The overall aim is to ensure that staff are able to recognise and act swiftly and appropriately to all cases of student self-harm.

Objectives

- To recognise any form of self-harm or mutilation
- To understand that self-harming is almost always a symptom of some underlying emotional or psychological issue
- To put in place a framework for intervention
- To be alert to the possibility that self-harm may arise from a history of abuse

What is Self Harm?

Self-Harm is when you hurt yourself as a way of dealing with very difficult feelings, painful memories or overwhelming situations and experiences that feel out of control. It can be the thing people turn to when they feel they have no other option (MIND 2016)

Forms of self-harm:

Harming behaviour

To act in a way that has long term impact on physical or emotional self

Eating disorders-anorexia, bulimia, over-eating

Promiscuity

Roasting

Drugs or alcohol misuse

Gangs

Over exercise

Warning signs

Self-Injury

Deliberately harm oneself causing immediate tangible or physical injuries

Cutting/scratching

Fighting/punching things

Burning

Hair pulling/eye lashes

Overdose/poison

Strangulation

Self-harm may be present as visible or invisible signs.

Staff, Parents and Students may become aware of warning signs which may indicate that a student is experiencing difficulties and may lead to self-harm or suicide. These warning signs must always be taken seriously and anyone observing any of these must seek further advice from the School Nurse or the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Warning signs may include:

- Visible signs of injury or scarring
- A change in dress habit that may be intended to disguise injuries
- Changing in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family; becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity or mood (becoming more introverted or withdrawn)
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking of self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing or image

Potential triggers of a student self-harming

Those who self-harm are usually suffering emotional or psychological distress and it is vital that all such distress is taken seriously to assist in alleviating that distress or to minimise the risk of increasing distress and potentially suicide.

Any young person who suggest they are experiencing suicidal feelings must be taken extremely seriously and safeguarding procedures put in place immediately; a young person showing this level of distress must NOT be left unsupervised.

Within the Webber Independent School, students are aware of who they can speak to if they are in distress, School Nurse, DSL, Safeguarding team.

Anyone concerned about a student must report it to the DSL or Safeguarding team immediately, who will follow it up with sensitivity, discretion, and within the Safeguarding policy.

Stress, anxiety, perfectionism, depression, bullying, relationship breakdown, trauma, loss, control, gender/sexuality, anger, low self worth/self hatred, disassociation distraction, bullying, abuse-sexual, physical, emotional or neglect.

There are several ways in which a staff member might discover that a pupil is self-harming:

- A staff member may witness or be informed of pupil self-harm by the pupil themselves or a friend.
- A staff member may suspect a pupil has self-harmed which may be in need of immediate medical attention, or may be recent or historical.
- A pupil might self-disclose self-harm, recent or previous, or a friend may disclose information.
- A pupil may disclose thoughts of self-harm or a friend may disclose this.

Signs and symptoms are sometimes absent or easy to miss. It is not uncommon for individuals who self-harm to offer stories which seem implausible or which may explain one, but not all, physical signs.

If a pupil says they are not self-harming or evades the question, you can keep the door open by reminding them that you are always available to talk about anything, should they so wish.

Try to stay connected to the pupil and look for other opportunities to ask, particularly if there are continuing signs that your suspicion is correct.

If you suspect that a person is self-harming it is essential you provide the opportunity for them to disclose.

If you receive a disclosure remember to ask open questions: TED

Tell me

Explain

Describe

Make accurate notes using the specific terminology and wording the student has used, note; What? Where? When? Then sign and date the information.

Pass on to the Designated Safeguarding lead straight away.

Do not promise confidentiality but explain that it is important that support is put in place for them and that this will require advice to be taken.

Advice will be sought from the DSL or the Safeguarding Team, support may be sought from a counsellor, G.P, CAMHS or Milton Keynes Children's Services.

An accident form may need to be completed – self injury

It is important to assess the level of immediate risk the student may be in. Is the student at immediate risk of themselves, what are they feeling now? Then consult the flow charts on the following two pages from (Model guidance: Schools responding to incidents of Self-Harm, Wiltshire Children and Young People's Trust)

Seek support for yourself if necessary

Process for managing self-harm (crisis situation)

Staff member witnesses or is informed of pupil self-harm by pupil themselves or a friend



Contact emergency services if injury is life-threatening or if pupil is suicidal. If the child/young person is taken to hospital, emergency protocols for treatment and care will be implemented and a CAMHS referral will be activated by hospital. On pupil's return to school, refer to process for managing recent/historical self-harm.

Staff member suspects a pupil has self-harmed and is in need of immediate medical attention



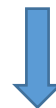
Locate pupil
Call for help from colleague/Emergency Services/GP
Administer First Aid
Keep calm and give reassurance – to the individual pupil and to those who might be affected by witnessing self-harm (staff and pupils)



Discuss with DSL
Inform parents/carers unless clear reason not to
Follow safeguarding procedures if necessary

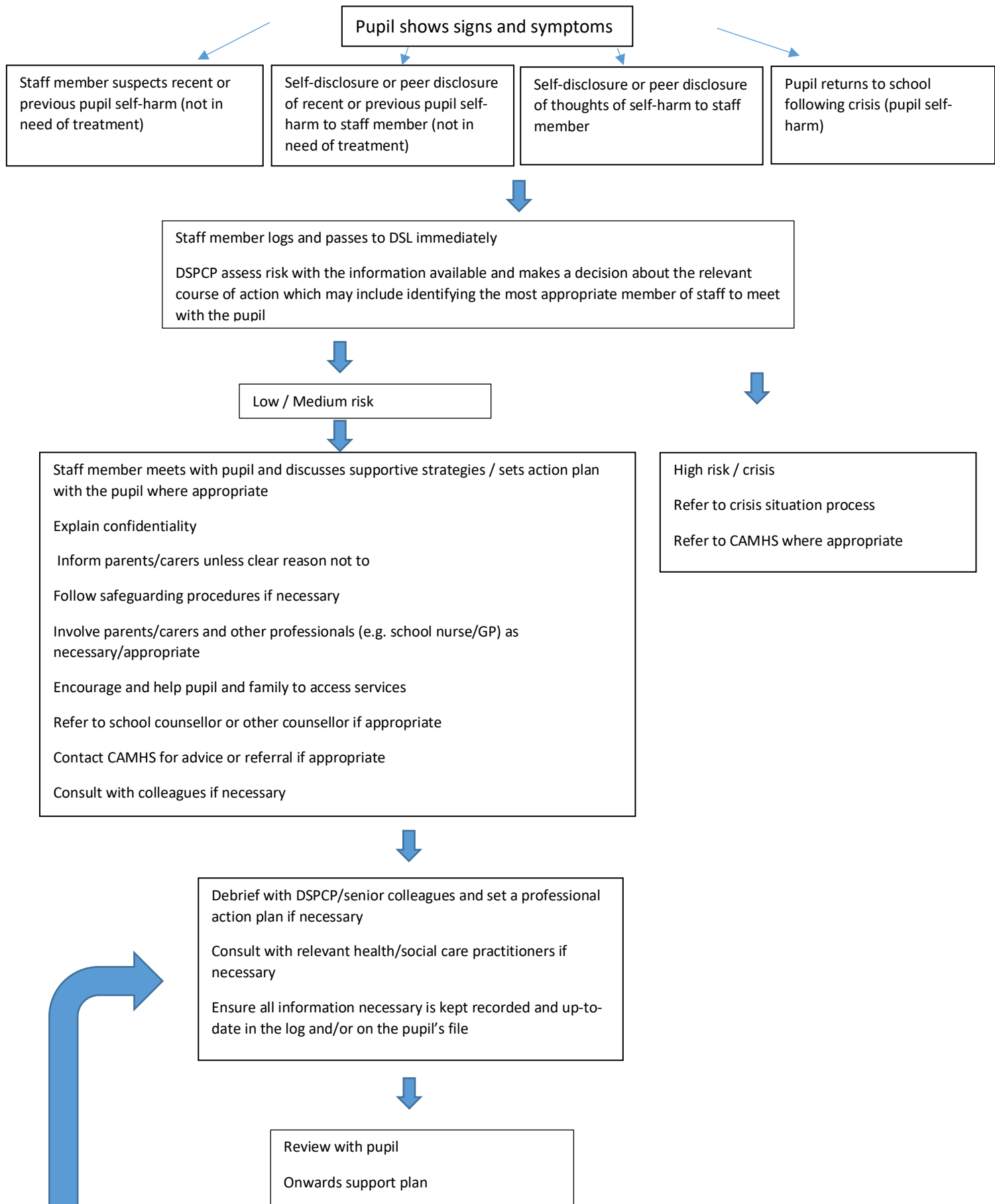


Log injury and inform DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the team)
Assess risk
Explain confidentiality



Where pupil is not taken to hospital, refer to CAMHS where appropriate
Refer process for managing recent/historical self-harm

Process for managing Self-harm (not in need of urgent medical attention)



Confidentiality

The member of staff who has received the disclosure or has discovered the self-harm must not promise confidentiality.

The child/young person must be involved wherever possible and consulted on his/her views.

Professionals should always take age and understanding into account when involving children and young people in discussions and decision making.

There should be clear explanations about what is going to happen and the choice and rationale for certain courses of action. It is important not to make promises of confidentiality that you cannot keep.

Professionals should tell a child/young person when they may have to share information without their consent but only with essential key staff who will need to support the student.

Information given to professionals by a pupil should not be shared without the child/young person's permission except in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances will include:

- A child is not old enough or competent enough to take responsibility for themselves
- Urgent medical treatment is required
- The safety and wellbeing of a child/young person is at risk or there is the possibility of harm to other (i.e. child protection or suicide)
- By virtue of statute or court order
- For the prevention, detection or prosecution of serious crime

If there is reasonable professional concern that a child may be at risk of harm this will always override a requirement to keep information confidential. If a child or young person reveals they are at risk, safeguarding processes must be followed immediately.

Prevention

The risk of self-harm can be significantly reduced by the creation of a supportive environment in which an individual's self esteem can be raised and healthy peer relationships are fostered. This is developed through the development of good relationships between all members of our school community and in particular our PSHCE programme in which Safeguarding and peer mentoring is included.

Staff awareness of issues leading to self-harm is increased through training and the production and training on Policies of Safeguarding, Anti-bullying and self-harm.

Students are provided with a wide range of internal and external sources of help and these are widely publicised through posters, displays, leaflets in planners. In addition to the Safeguarding and Pastoral team, students are informed about Childline and the NSPCC.

School staff are supported by SLT and the Safeguarding team in all matters regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Advice to Parents

Parents should not feel isolated if they know or suspect that their child (or one of their friends) is at risk or is actually self-harming. The advice contained within this policy provides a first source of useful information and guidance. If a parent has any concerns they should contact the school immediately for help, support and advice. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headmistress or one of the Safeguarding Team should be approached.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the DSL and Safeguarding Team (or earlier if necessary)

Linked policies

Safeguarding

Positive Behaviour, Anti-bullying policy

First Aid policy

Useful Resources and Helplines

Milton Keynes CAMHS – (Milton Keynes Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) supports families and professionals who are concerned about children and young people who may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

Referral and Advice line 01908 725372

Childline: 24 hr helpline for children and young people

0800 1111 (free from landlines) or 0800 400 2222 www.childline.org.uk

Young Minds – National Charity committed to improving the mental health of children and young people. Interactive website for advice and information

www.youngminds.org.uk

National Self-harm network – support for individuals who self-harm, friends and family.

0800 622 6000 www.nshn.co.uk

Self harm UK – An online support site for individuals and their families.

www.selfharm.co.uk

References: selfharm.co.uk, MK CAMHS, Wiltshire Children's and Young Peoples Trust



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The Webber Independent School
Soskin Drive
Milton Keynes
MK14 6DP

01908 574740
registrar@webberindependentschool.co.uk
www.webberindependentschool.co.uk

