



Cheshire College
South & West

Suicide Prevention Guidelines

Key Information	
Policy Reference Number	CCSW - SPG
ELT Post responsible for policy update and monitoring	Vice Principal - Organisational Development & Learner Services
Date approved by ELT	19 January 2021
Date approved by corporation board (if applicable)	[Committee Date]
Date of next policy review	19/01/2024

I. Introduction

I.1 The College is aware that:

- I.1.1 suicide is the leading cause of death in young people; and
- I.1.2 it plays a vital role in helping to prevent young suicide

I.2 The College endeavours to make sure learners and staff at the College are as suicide-safe as possible and that learners, governors, staff and key stakeholders are aware of the commitment to be a suicide-safer college.

2. College Beliefs About Suicide and Its Antecedents

2.1 The College acknowledges that:

2.1.1 Suicidal Thoughts Are Common

It is acknowledged that thoughts of suicide are common among young people.

2.1.2 Suicide Is Complex

The College believes that every suicide is a tragedy. There are a number of contributory factors surrounding a suicide and the reasons are often complex and individual to that person. However, the College believes that there are lessons that may be learned from each death that may help prevent future deaths.

2.1.3 Stigma Inhibits Learning - Stigma Can Kill

The College recognises that the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness can be both a barrier to seeking help and a barrier to offering help. The College is committed to tackling suicide stigma. In its language it uses and in its working relationships it will promote open, sensitive talk that does not stigmatise and perpetuate taboos. This includes avoiding the use of language which perpetuates unhelpful notions that suicide is criminal, sinful or selfish. The College understands that unhelpful myths and misconceptions surrounding suicide can inhibit young people in seeking and finding appropriate help when it is most needed.

2.1.4 The College Has a Responsibility to Support

The College community recognises that its learners may seek out someone whom they trust with their concerns and worries. The College wishes to play its part in supporting any learner who may have thoughts of suicide.

2.1.5 Safety Is Very Important

The College understands that learners who are having thoughts of suicide may or may not also be behaving in a way that puts their life in danger (suicide behaviours). People who experience suicide thoughts are potentially at risk of acting on these thoughts. Those who are already engaging in suicide behaviours are also clearly at risk of death or harm. The College will work with its learners who may be thinking about suicide or acting on their thoughts of suicide. The College will support them, sometimes working in partnership with parents/carers, and other professionals where this may enhance suicide safety.

2.1.6 Suicide Is a Difficult Thing to Talk About

The College understands that a young person who is suicidal may find it difficult to make their feelings known and speak openly about suicide. The College will equip identified staff with the skills to identify when a pupil may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. These staff will be trained to keep young people suicide safe.

2.1.7 Talking About Suicide Does Not Create or Worsen Risk

The College will provide its learners with opportunities to speak openly about their worries with people who are ready, willing and able to support them. It will make it possible for young people and those who support them at the College, to do so safely. This will be in a way that leads to support and help where this is needed. The College will do all it can to

refrain from acting in a way that stops a learner seeking the help they need when they are struggling with thoughts of suicide.

3. The College Team and Its Responsibilities

- 3.1 If a member of staff is concerned that a learner may be feeling suicidal or becomes aware they are displaying suicide behaviours, they will follow the procedures outlined in the College Safeguarding Policy and make a referral to the Be Safe Team.
- 3.2 The member of the Be Safe team will act accordingly, which may involve liaising with one or more of the following: parents/carers, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Local Safeguarding Children/Adults Board, Social Workers, GPs and other voluntary organisations. The Be Safe Team will manage the sharing of information in a way that enhances safety.
- 3.3 The learner will be referred to one of the Inclusive Learning Advisors (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) and if necessary, they will sign post to, or make referrals to external agencies.
- 3.4 The Learner Services team will provide on-going support to those learners who have been identified or self-disclosed as having suicidal thoughts or suicide behaviours.
- 3.5 The College will ensure that the Inclusive Learning Advisors (Emotional, Social and Mental Health), the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads and other identified members of the Be Safe team receive suicide awareness training and ensure this refreshed every three years.

4. Ongoing Support and Development of Strategy and Practice

- 4.1 The College Leadership team will keep the College's practice up to date by maintaining contact with best practice and ongoing training.