



Whole School Well Being Policy

(Including our Suicide-Safer Policy)

St Christopher's Church of England High School

Approved by:	Mrs S Parkinson & Mrs L Williamson	Date:	September 2023
Compiled by:	Mrs S Parkinson, in liaison with SMT, HOYS, Well Being Team, Governors' Well Being Committee and School Council (pupils) and focus pupil panel	Last reviewed on:	September 2023
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St Christopher's CE High School Mission Statement

St Christopher's is a Church of England Academy where pupils and staff work together, in the knowledge and love of God. We try to act out our faith in daily life, with Christ as our example.

Within our strong Christian, Anglican context, we seek to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of our pupils, growing together as a caring and supportive community whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of their adult lives.

We aim to achieve our mission by providing an environment which

- recognises that each member of the school community is an individual with specific needs and strengths
- fosters mutual respect and concern for others
- values the contribution made by each member of the school community
- encourages and celebrates positive achievement
- actively supports those in need.

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Roles and responsibilities

The Head Teacher will:

- oversee the maintenance of a school culture where calm, dignified and structured support is in place and a clear vision of positive mental wellbeing is embedded
- liaise with the Well Being Team:
 - DSL - Mrs L Williamson
 - Deputy DSLs – Miss H Davies, Mrs S Holmes, Mrs B Mulhall, Mr R O’Doherty, Mrs S Parkinson
 - Well Being Lead – Mrs B Mulhall
 - School Counsellors - Mr Costigan, Miss McGuigan
 - Intervention & Inclusion Officer - Mrs Gallagher (LAC)
 - Well Being Officer - Miss Blackburn (Deputy LAC)
- ensure that these staff receive appropriate training and support
- oversee appropriate delegation of SEND and PP funding and resources to support young people with mental health needs.

The Governing Body will:

- support the inclusion of age-appropriate information for pupils
- ensure that education about mental health or self-harm neither promotes nor stigmatises
- be kept aware of provision for people in need, such as parental information and wide-ranging pupil support initiatives, through termly meetings of the Governors’ Well-being Committee.

All staff and teachers will:

- listen to young people in emotional need calmly and in a non-judgmental way
- report self-harm to the DSLs or Heads of Year the same day, both verbally and using the confidential area of Pastoral Logs and always ‘sharing’ with key staff
- not make promises to young people e.g. not assuring confidentiality
- enable the use of ‘time out’ cards as required
- discourage, challenge and report any issues regarding stigma associated with mental health issues
- develop knowledge about self-harm and emotional health and well-being through continuing professional development.

The Well Being Team will:

- maintain a high profile in school, through display, clubs and activities
- liaise with the DSLs, Heads of Year and the attendance officer in the monitoring of known and potentially vulnerable young people
- assess each case according to the needs and wishes of the individual at their weekly review meeting
- attend Monday Forum pastoral meetings with the Heads of Year and SLT Wellbeing Lead
- give priority to potentially vulnerable pupils for appropriate support e.g. PP, ACEs, CLA and vulnerable new pupils
- coordinate a suitable programme of support, including long-term monitoring, liaising with the NHS funded Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and other outside support agencies
- know when other agencies should be involved and liaising closely with our CFWS link person - Louise Carr
- inform staff of adjustments and flexibility necessary to support individuals, especially where mental health issues impact on behaviour and progress
- keep centralised records of mental health concerns and self-harm incidents through Synergy
- keep up-to-date with mental health information
- contact parents at appropriate times, providing support information and home visits where suitable (involving the HOYs and young person in this process)
- meet regularly as a wider team to review practice and discuss individual cases (including DSLs and SENDCo)
- liaise with the Head Teacher and Governors through the Governors' Well Being Committee
- know when and where to seek help to deal with their own well-being.

Pupils and students will:

- be made aware of the Well Being Team and wider well-being support through assemblies and the high profile display board
- be encouraged to talk to any member of staff if they are in emotional need, or a senior pupil e.g. a Year Seven Mentor
- be encouraged to tell a member of staff if they suspect that another person is in emotional need.

Parents will be encouraged to:

- work in partnership with St Christopher's staff
- share concerns regarding children's well-being
- seek support from their GP on advice from school staff
- access information from newsletters and the school website.

Structures which support the well being of our pupils

Spirituality:

Assembly and communion services, Year Chaplain support, Spirituality Days, Christian Union, Sixth Form Spirituality working party, Archbishop of York Award, Youth Church.

Transition:

Primary visits, Intake Evening, Year Seven and Sixth Form Taster Days, Pupil Welcome Booklet, Year Seven team-building trip, Sixth Form Information Evening, Sixth Form Taster Days, Sixth Form Anderton Centre trip.

Pupil voice:

School Councils, Year Councils, Anti-Bullying Week survey, Year 9 School Nurse Health Needs Assessment, Eco Rep meetings, Sixth Form Social Committee, Sixth Form Spirituality Committee, staff interview pupil panels.

Safe and healthy lifestyles:

National Anti-bullying Week, PSHEE SoL including drugs and alcohol, resilience education, RSE guidance (making safe choices), Staying Safe days, well-being days, Year Ten Study Skills Day, online safety assemblies, well-being assemblies, pupil mindfulness workshops, School Nurse drop-in, Year Nine Health Needs Assessment follow-up, Sixth Form health stalls, healthy diet education, healthy catering, Healthy Week, Activity Day, QUEST Award.

Lunchtime and after school activities:

Clubs to encourage a sense of belonging, developing social skills and interests e.g., QUEST Award, Year 7 Well-being Club, Lunchtime Quiet Room, SEND mindfulness space, Chess, Craft, Table Tennis, Art, Drama and GCSE Art clubs, D of E Award, non-competitive sports activities, Year Seven Well Being Club, School Dog scheme etc.

Peer and Staff Mentoring:

Form teacher reviews, Year Seven Mentors, Sixth Form coaching programme, Year Eleven staff mentors, Year Eleven De-Stress (exam stress support), Pupil Premium mentoring, Sixth Form Subject Ambassador support, Sixth Form ILP and UCAS meetings.

Counselling:

The Well Being Team provides flexible personalised support e.g. one-to-one and small group counselling. Further support worker meetings will be arranged as necessary through outside agencies such as the Mental Health in Schools Team, Child and Family Well being Service, Child Action North West, Victim Support, HARV and NEST.

Rewards and responsibilities:

Form, subject and senior pupil roles of responsibility, Synergy Credits, attendance and CLUE card positive recognition, Year Seven disco, Year Eleven and U6 valedictory celebrations, Sixth Form Christmas Party and Alton Towers trip, Year Seven Blackpool trip, Activity Day, year group rewards trips (also see the Whole School Behaviour Policy – Rewards).

Additional structural support:

Effective use of PP, CLA and SEND funding; recording, analysis and action re. bullying incidents via Synergy; monitoring of Pupils/ Students In Need (vulnerable pupils/ACEs), monitoring of the attendance of Persistent Absentees.

Targeted support

We recognise that some children and young people are more at risk of experiencing mental health difficulties.

Staff alert colleagues both directly in person and through Synergy logs, sharing concerns with the DSL team. Further personalised support can be accessed through referral to the Well Being Team and external agencies.

Young people's needs and progress are reviewed in SLT meetings, regular Well Being Team reviews, weekly Pastoral Team meetings and external agency meetings. Intervention is also monitored via a working Pupil In Need document.

Young people have access to the School Counsellors, Wellbeing Officers, and outside agencies including ELCAS, CFWS, CANW, HARV, NEST, Young Carers and Victim Support. In school, access to 'safe havens' can be arranged, such as the Nurture Room/Quiet Room and the Well Being Room.

Early identification of young people potentially at risk of emotional need helps to support our most vulnerable pupils and to avoid escalation to more serious mental health concerns e.g. new pupils, CLA, ACEs etc.

Pastoral and Well Being staff maintain a live directory of resources and outside agency support for children and families.

Dealing with self-harm

We recognize that some young people respond to their personal feelings by choosing to self-harm.

In support of St Christopher's caring, Christian school ethos, this policy aims to address the issue of self-harm by:

- clarifying procedures for dealing with pupils who self-harm and how to offer short- and long-term support for them and their parents
- providing support depending on pupils' individual needs
- helping all affected pupils improve their self-esteem
- supporting staff who come into contact with pupils who self-harm
- educating pupils, parents, staff and governors about self-harm issues.

Two members of the Well being Team are trained to support pupils using the Lancashire and South Cumbria self-harm tool kit. Model and practice.

Definition of self-harm

Self-harm can involve:

- cutting, often to the arms or thighs
- burning
- punching and bruising
- head banging
- hair pulling
- restrictive or binge eating
- inserting or swallowing objects
- overdosing
- problematic substance misuse
- risk-taking behaviour.

Why some people self-harm

- family relationship difficulties
- peer relationship difficulties
- bullying
- significant trauma e.g. bereavement, abuse, impact of the Covid pandemic
- difficult times of the year e.g. anniversaries
- trouble in or out of school
- feeling under pressure to conform/achieve
- significant change e.g. divorce, new school, new area
- low self-esteem

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

Feedback from pupils, parents and staff as to how self-harm incidents have been dealt with inform policy and procedure developments. This is regularly shared and discussed with the Well Being Team and Governors' Well Being Committee half termly and with the Pastoral Team at weekly meetings.

Suicide-Safer Policy

(With reference to guidance from the charity 'Papyrus- Young Suicide Prevention')

Statement of purpose

St Christopher's is aware that suicide is the leading cause of death in young people and that we play a vital role in helping to prevent young suicide.

We want to make sure that pupils at St. Christopher's are as suicide-safe as possible and that our governors, parents, teaching staff, support staff, pupils and other key stakeholders are aware of our commitment to be a 'Suicide-Safer' school.

Our beliefs about suicide and contributory factors

At St. Christopher's we acknowledge that:

- Suicidal thoughts are common
- Suicide is complex - we believe 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, we believe that there are lessons that may be learned from each death that may help prevent future deaths.

Stigma inhibits learning – stigma can kill

We recognise that the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness can be both a barrier to seeking help and a barrier to offering help. St. Christopher's is dedicated to tackling suicide stigma. In our language and in our working relationships, we will promote open, sensitive talk that does not stigmatise or perpetuate taboos.

Suicide is everyone's business

As a school community, we recognise that pupils may seek out someone who they trust with their concerns and worries. We want to facilitate the reporting of any risks or concerns and encourage this through everyday conversations and well-being assemblies.

Safety is very important

We want to support our pupils, working in partnership with family, external agencies and other professionals where this may enhance suicide-safety.

Suicide is a difficult thing to talk about

We know that a young person who is feeling suicidal may find it very difficult to make their feelings known and speak openly about suicide. We will provide trained adults who are able to identify when a pupil may be struggling with thoughts of suicide.

Talking about suicide does not create or increase risk

Those with personal experience have a unique role to play in the development and refinement of this Suicide-Safer Policy. We will endeavour to involve anyone from our community who has personal experience of suicide, either having struggled themselves or supported someone with thoughts of suicide.

How we help ensure an active person-centred suicide prevention and intervention policy

Through the Senior Leadership, Pastoral and Well-Being Teams, St. Christopher's has a team whose members understand this policy. Policy and practice will be informed by maintaining links with the Lancashire Suicide and Self Harm Partnership.

We will ensure that a range of appropriately trained staff are available during our school opening hours. These staff will be the point of escalation for any safety concerns about a pupil or young person. Confidential records will be kept on Synergy, of pupils at risk of suicide and serious mental health concerns to ensure continuity of care.

We will endeavour to ensure that staff are suicide aware. This means that staff induction will include self-harm, mental health and suicide awareness within safeguarding training, i.e. how to spot signs, what to do and how to escalate any concerns to the appropriate staff.

We will ensure that pupils are suicide aware. This means that we will ensure there is an annual programme of awareness-raising events and education that equip our pupils to know how to spot signs of worrying mental health, what to do and how to escalate any concerns to key staff. This will take place through the PSHE programme and well-being assemblies.

We will be clear about how we enhance the physical safety of our environment.

We recognise that the need to protect someone's life must be balanced against the need to protect their confidentiality and will therefore routinely ask students over 18 for permission to share any serious concerns for their welfare with an emergency contact on the staff.

Should any pupil who is known to have suffered from suicidal thoughts leave St. Christopher's unexpectedly for whatever reason, we will endeavour to inform their emergency contact of their vulnerable state.

We recognise that young people may experience periods of poor mental health while attending St. Christopher's. Staff who have regular interaction with these pupils are required to inform the DSLs, pastoral or Wellbeing staff immediately of any concerns including suspected suicidal thoughts. This should be immediate and verbal in the first instance then logged confidentially (the same day) as a safeguarding concern on a Synergy Pastoral Log and 'shared' digitally with the DSLs. Concerns flagged in this way will be reviewed regularly and routinely by nominated staff so that patterns of concerning behaviour can be spotted and the necessary steps can be put in place to keep them safe, including meeting them face to face. Where necessary, we will engage external services, such as a hospital A&E department or ELCAS.

We recognise that some young people with suicidal thoughts may need to spend periods of the year at home. We will look at ways we can help make the medical support they need (medication, counselling) consistent so that the pupil has a continuity of care. We will also be sensitive to the appropriate level of academic support suitable to each individual case.

How we help ensure a sensitive and safe suicide postvention provision

St. Christopher's has staff (SLT, HOYs, WB Team) who will respond in the event of a suicide, including leadership, family liaison and any communications with external agencies, including the media, guided by LCC and e.g. Papyrus guidance.

We are aware there will be an inquest after someone has died by suicide in our school or college. We will support the authorities in their work but will be mindful of the distress an inquest causes to the bereaved people. We will be mindful of the impact supporting an inquest can have on staff and other pupils.

We will record and monitor deaths by suicide and the impact on the community. This will include on-going monitoring of pupil deaths including suicides, suspected suicides and, where possible, self-harm. Monitoring of self-harm might include information from pupil support services and pupil health services. This information will be shared with the Senior Leadership Team and Governors.

We will also consider:

- Recording and monitoring the uptake of bereavement support services by pupils after a suicide
- Surveying pupils regarding how supported they feel
- Assessing the impact of interventions on staff
- Reviewing lessons learned and any suggested changes to procedures and provision of well-being services

- Identification of multiple events, such as two suicides in a relatively short period of time (e.g. one school term) which may indicate a possible suicide cluster, including investigating possible connections between individuals, their circumstances and their suicidal behaviour. Multiple suspected suicides may not be connected, but their occurrence can nonetheless have consequences. For example, in some vulnerable individuals it may contribute to thoughts of suicide as a way of dealing with problems.

Where concerns arise regarding a possible suicide cluster we will immediately communicate with the LCC Public Health Suicide Prevention Lead. Preventing suicidal thoughts is a multi-faceted activity which includes building resilience and ensuring early intervention and support for pupils experiencing poor mental health.

However, not everyone who has thoughts of suicide has a diagnosable mental health problem, and not everyone with a mental health diagnosis feels suicidal.

Developing St. Christopher’s attitudes towards suicide

It is important that the entire school community nurtures an attitude around the subject of suicide which helps shatter the stigma around it. A consistent and persistent programme of raising awareness is an important aspect of this.

Maintaining awareness around the risks of suffering alone with mental health issues can be hard. It helps to use a variety of tools and techniques including physical and digital campaigns. These can be shared through all the usual means including the PSHE curriculum, well-being assemblies, Synergy broadcasts, parent newsletters, website well-being information links, information displays, School Nurse Drop-in, etc.

Free downloadable and adaptable resources can be found on the POPYRUS website here:

<https://papyrus-uk.org/help-advice-resources/>

Papyrus resources have been instrumental in developing this policy and our school response to suicide safety.

Unhelpful Language when talking about suicide

- Commit suicide - Suicide has not been a crime since 1961. Using the word ‘commit’ suggests that it is still a crime (we ‘commit’ crimes), which perpetuates stigma or the sense that it is a ‘sin’. Stigma shuts people up – pupils will be less likely to talk about their thoughts of suicide if they feel judged.
- Successful suicide - Talking about suicide in terms of success is not helpful. If a pupil dies by suicide it cannot ever be a success. We don’t talk about any other death in terms of success: we would never talk about a ‘successful heart attack’.

Helpful language when talking about Suicide

POPYRUS encourages the use of helpful language such as:

- Ended their life
- Killed themselves
- Took their own life
- Died by suicide
- Suicided

Unhelpful language when talking about attempted suicide

- Unsuccessful or failed suicide - Young people who have attempted suicide often tell us, “I couldn’t even do that right.” Any attempt at suicide is serious. Young people should not feel further burdened by whether their attempt was a ‘failure’, as this may reinforce feelings of failure in other areas of their life.

- It's not that serious - All suicide attempts must be taken seriously as there is a serious risk to life. An attempt tells us that they are in so much pain they no longer want to live.
- Attention seeking - This phrase assumes that a pupil's behaviour is not serious, and that they are being dramatic to gain attention from others. However, suicidal thoughts are serious. Young people who attempt suicide need attention, support, understanding and help.
- It was just a cry for help - This dismissive phrase belittles someone's need for help. They do indeed need you to help: they are in pain and their life is in danger. They may feel they are not being taken seriously, which can be dangerous.

Helpful language when talking about attempted suicide

We could say:

- Attempted suicide
- Attempted to take their life
- Engaged in suicide behaviours
- Acted on thoughts of suicide

Ongoing support and development of our policy and practice

St. Christopher's Senior Leadership Team will ensure that ongoing reviews take place, that processes are updated in line with best practice and that on-going training is undertaken when necessary.

Where possible we will include or consult with members of our school and wider community who have personal experience of suicidal ideation, either their own or as a concerned other, in the design, development and continuous refinement of this policy.

We will refresh and update information regarding support links on a regular basis and we will share it across our community as part of our regular suicide awareness raising campaigns.

Register of specific staff training

DSL training :

L. Williamson, S. Parkinson, R. O’Doherty, B. Mulhall, S. Holmes, H. Davies, Heads of Year.

School Mental Health Lead training:

B. Mulhall

Youth Mental Health First Aid:

S. Holmes, B. Mulhall, S. Parkinson, L. Williamson

Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Children and Young peoples’ Mental Health:

L. Stott, J. Gerrard, K. Leck, M. Lane, C Blackburn.

Counselling qualifications:

- C. Blackburn (Level 3 Basic Counselling)
- R. Costigan (Level 5 diploma in Transactional Analysis psychotherapy BACP)
- E. McGuigan (BA Hons in Counselling and psychotherapy)

Links to other policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- SEND Policies

Reference made to the following documents

DfE Mental health and behaviour in schools 2018, NICE guidance, Children and Young People’s Mental Health Coalition, Public Health England, CYP harm-ed training pack, MHFA England manual.



**That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither-
whatever they do prospers.**

Psalm 1:3



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