St Andrew's CE VC Primary School

'Roots to grow, Wings to fly'
They will soar on wings like Eagles.
Isaiah 40:31

Pupil Self-harm Policy

Signed (Chair)	Name Anthony Parker	Date: September 2026
Signed (Head)	Name Graham Pike	Date: September 2026
Ratified by Governing Body on:		Next Review: September 2027

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This policy has been assessed with regard to its impact on equalities issues. The equality impact assessment has been conducted by the relevant Governors' sub-committee and focused on race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and religion/belief. Community Cohesion has also formed part of the impact assessment work in order to ensure respect for diversity, alongside a commitment to common and shared bonds.

EqIA outcomes

X	*The assessment found no areas of potential negative impact and actions resulting in positive impact are in place.*

Pupil Self-harm Policy

1. Safeguarding Context:

At St Andrew's CE Primary School, we recognise that self-harm and suicidal ideation are serious indicators of emotional distress and may be associated with safeguarding concerns including abuse, neglect, exploitation, trauma, bullying, domestic abuse or unmet additional needs.

In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE), all concerns regarding self-harm or suicidal ideation will be treated as safeguarding concerns and responded to through the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff should be aware that mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Whilst school staff are not mental health clinicians and are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions, they are well placed to identify changes in behaviour, recognise signs that children may need help and refer concerns appropriately.

The welfare of the child is paramount and all actions taken under this policy will be child-centred and undertaken in the best interests of the child

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Safeguard pupils who may be at risk of self-harm.
- Provide staff with clear guidance on responding to concerns.
- Ensure early identification and intervention.
- Promote emotional wellbeing.
- Establish effective communication with parents, carers and external agencies.
- Ensure all self-harm concerns are managed consistently and appropriately.

3. Definition:

Self-harm refers to any behaviour where a person deliberately causes harm to themselves as a way of coping with emotional distress.

Examples may include:

- Cutting or scratching
- Hitting themselves
- Pulling out hair
- Deliberately causing injury
- Interfering with wound healing
- Expressing a desire to hurt themselves

Suicidal ideation refers to thoughts, plans or expressions about wanting to die or end one's life.

Whilst uncommon in primary-aged pupils, all disclosures, comments or indicators must be taken seriously.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff must:
- Understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Be alert to indicators of emotional distress, self-harm and suicidal ideation.
- Report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Record factual information promptly and accurately.
- Work within the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Understand that concerns about mental health may also be safeguarding concerns.
- Never promise confidentiality to a pupil.

Governing Board: The Governing Board will:
- Monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place.
- Support the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Headteacher: The Headteacher will:
- Promote a culture of safeguarding.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training.
- Support implementation of this policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will:
- Lead responses to all concerns regarding self-harm or suicidal ideation.
- Undertake risk assessments.
- Liaise with parents, carers and external agencies.
- Maintain confidential safeguarding records.
- Coordinate support for pupils.
- Make referrals where necessary.

All Staff: All staff have a responsibility to:
- Remain vigilant to signs of distress.
- Listen carefully if a pupil discloses concerns.
- Report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Follow safeguarding procedures at all times.

5. Identifying Concerns:
Indicators may include:
- Unexplained injuries
- Repeated reports of accidents
- Withdrawal from peers
- Increased anxiety or distress
- Significant mood changes
- Persistent sadness

- Expressions of hopelessness
- Changes in attendance or engagement
- Talking about hurting themselves

These signs may indicate emotional distress and should always be reported to the DSL.

6. Responding to a Disclosure:
If a pupil discloses self-harm or thoughts of suicide, staff should:

Do:
- Stay calm.
- Listen without judgement.
- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by speaking out.
- Take the disclosure seriously.
- Explain that information must be shared with adults who can help keep them safe.
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL.

Do Not:
- Promise confidentiality.
- Express shock or disbelief.
- Dismiss the concern.
- Conduct an investigation yourself.
- Leave the child unsupported.

7. Immediate Actions:
Where a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk:
- The pupil must remain supervised.
- The DSL or Deputy DSL must be informed immediately.
- Parents/carers will be contacted unless doing so would place the pupil at further risk.
- Emergency medical assistance will be sought where required.
- Children's Social Care or emergency services will be contacted if necessary.

8. Risk Assessment:
The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether the self-harm concern may indicate that the pupil is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect, exploitation or significant emotional harm. The DSL will determine whether Early Help, Children's Social Care, health services or other external agencies should be involved and will ensure all decisions are recorded appropriately.

The DSL will consider:
- Nature of the concern.
- Any evidence of self-harm.
- Whether suicidal thoughts or plans are present.
- Previous concerns.
- Family circumstances.
- Protective factors.
- Additional safeguarding concerns.

Following assessment, an appropriate support plan will be implemented.

9. Working with Parents and Carers: St Andrew's CE Primary School values positive partnerships with parents and carers.
In most cases:

- Parents/carers will be informed promptly.
- Concerns will be discussed sensitively.
- Support strategies will be agreed collaboratively.

Where informing parents may increase risk to the child, safeguarding procedures will take precedence.

10. Early Help and External Support: The school may seek support from:

- GP services
- School Nursing Service
- Mental Health Support Teams
- CAMHS
- Educational Psychology Services
- Early Help Services
- Children's Social Care

Referrals will be managed by the DSL.

11. Support in School:
Support arrangements may include:

- A named trusted adult.
- Regular wellbeing check-ins.
- Emotional literacy support.
- Pastoral interventions.
- Reasonable classroom adjustments.
- Attendance support where required.

The school will work to maintain the child's dignity, wellbeing and educational progress.

12. Recording and Information Sharing:
All self-harm concerns must be recorded on the school's safeguarding recording system. Records should be factual, accurate, dated and signed.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Data Protection legislation and statutory safeguarding guidance.

The school recognises that effective information sharing is essential for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Decisions will always be made in the best interests of the child.

13. Staff Training: All staff will receive:

- Regular safeguarding training.
- Updates on mental health and wellbeing.
- Guidance on recognising and responding to self-harm concerns.

The DSL will ensure staff remain informed of local safeguarding procedures and emerging risks.

14. Monitoring and Review:

The Governing Board will receive any anonymised safeguarding information as appropriate to enable effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements. The Governing Board will ensure that this policy remains compliant with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, DSL and Governing Board or sooner in response to legislative changes or local safeguarding partnership updates.