Chetwynd Junior School Policy and Procedure on Self Harming

Approved by:	**Headteacher**	
	Chair of Governors	
Adopted by Governors	**July 2025**	
Last reviewed on:	**May 2025**	
Next review due by:	**July 2026**	

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 keep our pupils safe and to train our staff to recognise, respond and act swiftly and appropriately to all cases of pupil self-harm. Pupils' safety and wellbeing is paramount

Objectives

• To recognise any form of self-harm or suicidal ideology and act appropriately.

How to manage students who self-harm in a non judgemental, supportive way.

To help pupils improve their emotional literacy and build their self-esteem.

Education about self-harm for pupils and staff

• 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 working closely with the pupil , parents and mental health services, if needed.

• To be alert to the possibility that self-harm may arise at any age and understand how best to support.

What is Self-Harm?

Self-harm is any deliberate behaviour that inflicts physical harm on someone's own body and is aimed at relieving emotional distress.

Self-harm can include:

• cutting themselves;

• scratching themselves;

• burning or scalding their body;

• banging and bruising themselves;

• scrubbing or scouring their body;

• deliberate bone-breaking;

• punching themselves;

• sticking things into their body;

• swallowing inappropriate objects or liquids;

• taking too many tablets (overdose);

• biting themselves

Warning Signs

Self-harm may present as visible or invisible signs. The latter can include ingested materials or cuts / bruises under the clothing.

Staff, parents and pupils may become aware of warning signs that might indicate that a pupil is experiencing difficulties that my lead to self-harm or suicide. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and anyone observing any of these should seek further advice from one of the school DSL's.

Warning Signs may Include:

• visible signs of injury (e.g. scarring)

• a change in dress habit that may be intended to disguise injuries

• changes in eating or sleeping habits

• increased isolation from friends or family; becoming socially withdrawn

• changes in activity or mood

• lowering of academic achievement

• talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope

Common Problems leading to Self-Harm

Those who self-harm are usually suffering emotional or psychological distress. It is vital that all such distress is taken seriously to assist in alleviating that distress or to minimise any risk.

Any young person who suggests 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 unattended.

Emotional/Psychological Risk Factors Associated with Self-Harm can be:

• recent trauma e.g. death of a friend or relative, parental divorce

• negative thought patterns and low self-esteem

• school problems / bullying

• abuse – sexual, physical, emotional or through neglect

• sudden changes in behaviour and/or academic performance

• relationship difficulties (with family or friends)

• learning difficulties

• pressure to achieve

• a history of abuse of self-harming in the family

- parental separation
- domestic abuse in the home

Miss Ballard, Wellbeing Mentor , Parent Support Advisor and Mental Health First Aider is in school everyday. Her role is to help pupils and their families manage the emotions and signpost to more specialised support if required.

Chetwynd Junior School have 4 trained Designated Safeguard Leads

Anybody concerned about a student must liaise with either of these members of staff, who will follow up with sensitivity, discretion and in line with the Safeguarding Policy. See procedure below.

Prevention

An estimated 1 in 12 children self-harm at some point and it is far better to prevent self-harm before it happens. The risk of self-harm can be significantly reduced by the creation of a supportive environment in which individual's self-esteem is raised and healthy peer relationships are fostered.

This can be achieved through development of good relationships by all members of the school community and in particular through the PHSE programme in which peer reporting is included. Staff awareness of issues leading to self-harm is increased through training and the production of comprehensive policies on Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-bullying, appropriate medical polices and a full and informative policy on self-harming. This policy is posted on the School's website to achieve the widest circulation, including parents.

The pupils are provided with a wide range of internal and outside sources of help and these are widely publicised. As well as the Designated School Leaders and a robust pastoral system within the school, the pupils are able to speak to a member of staff they feel safe talking to. The school staff are strongly supported by the senior leadership team in all matters concerned with Child Protection. Staff are prepared to deal with self-harming behaviour within the school. Senior staff have access to external agencies who can offer advice and/or assist with issues including students who self-harm.

School Procedures for Dealing with Self-Harm

If there is concern that a pupil may be self-harming or is thinking of self-harming, this should be reported to a DSL. If physical harm has occurred, parents need to be contacted and the pupil taken to A&E for medical assessment and care. (In an emergency an ambulance must be called).

Any open wounds or injuries, must be dressed appropriately. The mental health first aider will monitor and support the pupil and their family by making contact with appropriate support organisations. In some cases self-harm may raise safeguarding issues in which case the procedures in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed.

In the case of severe self-harm requiring medical intervention, parents will be informed immediately.

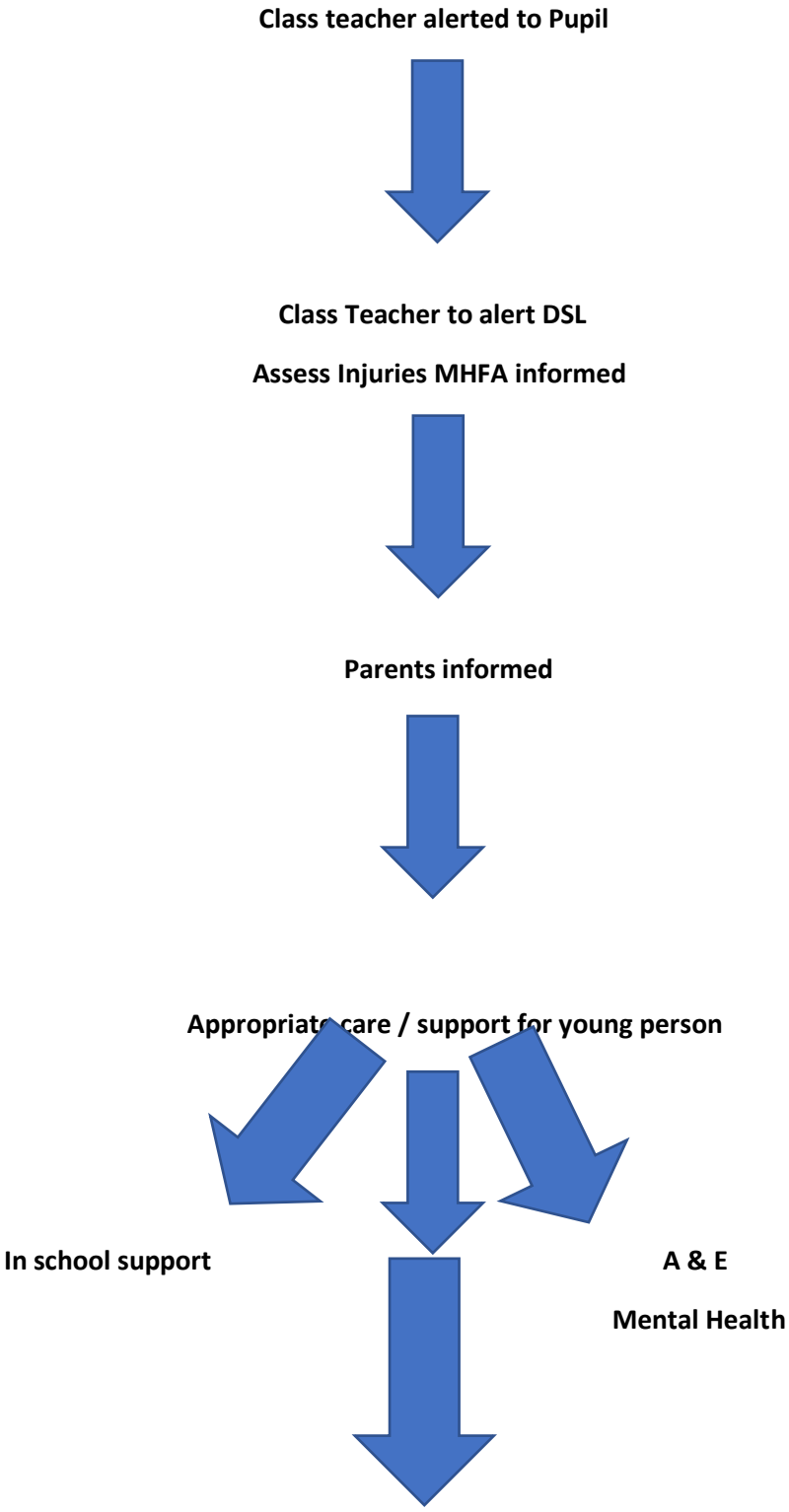
In a situation in which it is disclosed that self-harm is symptomatic of abuse in the home, the DSL may take the decision to make a referral directly to the appropriate authority without informing the parents. Where parents are informed, they will be encouraged to work in partnership with the school in supporting the pupil through this difficult time.

As stated in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff must not promise confidentiality, but reassure the child that only those people who need to know will be informed for their safety.

Staff may report incidents of self-harm concerns on CPOMS after informing a DSL.

Risk assessments carried out to reduce possibility of further incidents.

Flow Chart


Class teacher alerted to Pupil
Class Teacher to alert DSL
Assess Injuries MHFA informed
Parents informed
Appropriate care / support for young person
In school support
A & E
Mental Health
Risk assessment completed
Regular communication with parents.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually (or earlier if necessary) by the Designated School Leader or Deputy Designated School Leader.

Linked Policies

The following are linked to this policy and should be noted when dealing with cases or suspected cases of self-harm:

- Safeguarding Policy

  Wellbeing Policy

- Medical Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Sexual Education Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy

Useful Resources and Helplines

Childline – provides a free national helpline for young people , free confidential advice 24 helpline for children and young people 0800 1111

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.**uk**

111 Crisis mental health

LifeSIGNS (Self Injury Guidance and Network Support) – An online, user lead voluntary organisation to raise awareness about self harm and provide information and support to people affected by self harm directly or in a care role.

Shout 85258 free text support

Samaritans 116123

Mind 0300 1233393

Family Support Helpline 01926 412412

Family Information Service 01926 742274

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk

Harmless info@harmless.org.uk

Papyrus UK www.papyrus-uk.org

Date of Issue	Completed by	Date of Review
May 2025	Dawn Ballard	May 2026