



**St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School  
Egerton Road,  
Bishopston  
Bristol, BS7 8HP**

**Self-harm Policy 2020**

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Headteacher
<b>Governing Body Committee</b>	FPP
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This policy is available at  
<http://www.st-bonaventures.bristol.sch.uk/>

### Version History

Version	Date	Page	Description of Change	Origin of Change
1	08.07.15		New policy	
2	16/09/20		Updated to reflect the full reopening of St Bons following the COVID pandemic.	



## **Introduction**

At St Bonaventure's we believe that each of us is made in God's image. We therefore seek to support each pupil's development in ways which will foster a positive self-image, confidence and a sense of worth. Our pupil's welfare is of paramount importance and all staff have a responsibility to be mindful of issues relating to pupils' wellbeing, and a duty to report any concerns.

This policy sets out clear guidelines on the school's procedures for dealing with those who self-harm and is consistent with the school's overall values and aims.

## **Definition of Self-harm**

Self-harm is a term used when someone injures or harms himself or herself on purpose (also called self-injury or deliberate self-harm) rather than by accident. Common examples include deliberate hair removal, pinching cutting, hitting, scratching or burning. Attempted suicide is the most serious form of self-harm.

## **Warning signs**

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing difficulties that might lead to them self-harming. These warning signs should always be taken seriously.

Warning signs could include:

- Changes in sleeping or eating habits- pupil may present as tired in school
- Increased isolation from friends
- Changes in mood
- Lowering of academic ability- disengagement with school work
- Expressing feelings of failure
- Talking or joking about self-harm

## **How the school will help support pupils with self-harm**

The school will support pupils who self-harm by developing a common understanding through making time to listen to the pupil; identification of staff training, listening concerns from friends; parents and members of staff. There will be long-term strategies to enhance self-esteem and develop emotional literacy which include the identification of a trusted adult and a safe place within school. Where appropriate pupils will be made aware of the policy and who the named staff members are if they wish to report a concern.



### School procedures

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil might be self-harming must report this to the head teacher.

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff that they have been self-harming the member of staff must report this to the head teacher.

The member of staff who has alerted the head teacher must record all incidents on CPOMS and discuss with the pupil the chain of command.

A similar route will be taken if a friend discloses that a pupil is self-harming.

There will be a time scale for the designated staff member to take the various steps below:

#### **The recommended Chain of Action is as follows:**

- **pupil** is spoken to about the initial concerns (by designated teacher).
- **parents/carers** are informed.
- **parents/carers** are invited to school for a meeting with the class teacher and head teacher.
- **parents/carers** are recommended to seek consultation with family GP and to inform the school of the outcome within a nominated period of time.
- **school** is given permission by parents to have feedback from the GP.
- **if no follow up occurs** with the GP and the school remains concerned, the school may arrange an appointment with the school doctor/other specialists that may be associated with the school. In situations of extreme concern the school is also able to refer directly to CAMHS.
- **follow up** meetings are arranged between the parents/carers, class teacher and head teacher so that progress can be assessed and any targets reviewed.
- **nominated staff member** will act as a support link for the pupil.
- **timetable changes**, such as suspension from lessons that require extent of self-harm to be revealed to the others (for example PE) are likely to occur.
- **any pupil who self-harms at school and is a risk to themselves or others** may be suspended until they receive the support they need to be able to contain this behaviour at school.
- **disciplinary steps** will be taken by school if a pupil is found with implements that are used to cause self-harm (razors, knives, blades, etc) at school which may include suspension.
- **based on medical feedback**, the suitability of the pupil continuing attendance at school will be assessed.
- **contagion will be managed** by staff keeping an eye on the peer group and other potentially vulnerable young people in the year, by continued education on the fact that self-harm is an expression of distress rather than a risk behaviour that should be 'tried out'.
- **steps may be taken** to ensure that parents of the year group are informed (without naming) so that they monitor their children.



### **School policy on confidentiality**

We will inform parents/carers if we feel a pupil is at risk to themselves or to others.

The head teacher may also need to pass on information to other members of school staff who have regular contact with the pupil- on a need to know basis. The pupil and their parents/carers will be informed and the reasons why such staff need to know.

If concerns about a pupil have been raised by a friend/s, it should be decided with the pupil what feedback is given to the friends about the action the school will be taking on their behalf. In the case of friends presenting with concerns their parents will need informing and again the need to know policy in terms of confidentiality will be used.

### **Further considerations**

The head teacher will consider managing the return of a pupil to school after a period of specialist treatment or period of time off school in a way that is as supportive to the individual pupil but also supportive of the rest of the pupils in the class.

In the event of a pod or school closure due to the COVID pandemic, if a pupil known to the school to be self-harming has to return to home learning then the class teacher would provide weekly phone calls with the child. The head teacher would make weekly contact with the parents to ensure they are accessing appropriate support.

### **Documentation**

A record will be made of all incidents, discussion points and dates and the decided course of action. These will be recorded on CPOMS.

### **Staff support**

The designated staff member will have a duty to keep up to date with information regarding self-harm and forms of support available.

Staff who have been involved with a pupil who self-harms may need support and will be offered this opportunity through a number agreed ways with the school. These may include discussion with another experienced staff member or counselling.

### **Implementing and reviewing the policy**

Parents, pupils and staff should all be aware there is a policy and of its content. Parents and carers should work in partnership with school to support pupils who self-harm. Pupils need to be aware that they can be confident any disclosure of sensitive information will be supported and dealt with efficiently and sensitively.



The policy should be reviewed and with reference to other policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Medical