

PARKVIEW ACADEMY

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

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1. Policy Purpose and Scope

Parkview Academy recognises its responsibility to help prevent suicide among children and young people. Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people in the UK, and many of these deaths are preventable with appropriate support, awareness and early intervention. This policy outlines our whole-school approach to suicide prevention, aligning with DfE expectations, statutory safeguarding duties and current best practice guidance. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

This policy applies to all staff, visitors, volunteers, governors and members of the school community. It should be read alongside:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)** (statutory safeguarding guidance) ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))
- **RSHE statutory guidance** and forthcoming updates from September 2026 (referencing careful, age-appropriate discussion of self-harm and suicide in context) ([pshe-association.org.uk](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk))
- **School Safeguarding Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **SEMH policy**
- **Counselling & Wellbeing policy**

2. Our Commitment

Parkview Academy aims to be a **suicide-safer school** where:

- All learners feel connected, supported and safe;
- Staff are aware of suicide risk and equipped with the knowledge and skills to act;
- The environment minimises access to means of harm;
- The whole school community understands how to talk about suicide in a safe, non-stigmatizing way;
- We work in partnership with families, professionals and external agencies when risks are identified;

This commitment is informed by guidance such as the PYPYRUS *Building Suicide-Safer Schools & Colleges* toolkit and Samaritans' *Step by Step* resources. ([Papyrus UK | Suicide Prevention Charity](https://www.papyrus-uk.org/))

3. Core Principles

3.1 Suicide Is Multifaceted and Preventable

We recognise that:

- Thoughts of suicide are not unusual among young people;

- Suicide risk arises from complex personal, social and mental health factors;
- Early identification and supportive response can reduce risk.

3.2 Reducing Stigma Saves Lives

We commit to fostering an environment where:

- Language avoids stigma and myths (e.g., not describing suicide as “selfish” or “selfish act”);
- Conversations about emotional distress are safe, empathetic and professional;
- Learners feel they can seek help without judgement.

3.3 Talking About Suicide Responsibly

Direct discussion of suicide methods or explicit details is *not safe* in class settings. If pupils raise concerns, staff will respond in a supportive, safeguarding-led manner and refer to appropriate professionals for follow-up. ([pshe-association.org.uk](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk))

3.4 Connectedness Reduces Risk

We will strengthen relationships and trust so that pupils feel able to seek help. This includes:

- Training staff in suicide risk recognition and response;
- Providing safe spaces and trusted adults for disclosure;
- Strengthening peer support and connectedness;
- Ensuring visibility of wellbeing support pathways.

3.5 Reducing Access to Means

The physical and pastoral environment will be regularly audited to identify and reduce any opportunities for self-harm or suicide attempts, following best practices for environmental safety.

4. Leadership, Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Leadership Commitment

The **Executive Board** and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Providing strategic oversight of suicide prevention practice;
- Ensuring staff training is prioritised;
- Maintaining up-to-date policy and procedures;
- Ensuring appropriate response plans are in place should a suicide occur.

4.2 Suicide Response Team

Designated staff will form the Suicide Response Team with defined responsibilities:

- **Headteacher** – Strategic oversight and family liaison
- **Assistant Head(s)** – Operational coordination and staff support
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – Safeguarding risk assessment and response
- **Class/Key Worker** – Ongoing pastoral support for the pupil
- **Suicide-trained staff member** (e.g., ASIST-trained; Suicide First Aid) – Specialist guidance

All team members will have clear roles in preparedness, prevention, intervention, and postvention.

5. Identification, Support and Reporting

5.1 Early Identification

Staff will complete regular training on:

- Recognising signs of emotional distress and suicide risk;
- Supporting pupils in distress;
- Knowing how to refer to DSL or appropriate external support.

Training refreshers will be provided at least every two years.

5.2 Safe Plans

Where a learner is identified as being at elevated risk, a **suicide safety plan** will be developed in partnership with:

- The pupil;
- Parents/carers;
- DSL and wellbeing leads;
- Relevant external professionals (where appropriate).

The safety plan will outline risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, agreed actions and responsibilities, and contact arrangements for crisis support.

5.3 Confidentiality and Disclosure

Sensitive disclosures about suicide risk will be handled under the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff must report concerns immediately to the DSL, who will determine appropriate information sharing with parents and professionals based on best practice and legal safeguarding duties. ([GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))

6. Curriculum, Education and Awareness

Parkview supports pupil wellbeing education that:

- Builds emotional literacy, resilience, and help-seeking behaviour;
- Ensures age-appropriate discussion of mental health and suicide within RSHE and wellbeing programmes;
- Avoids explicit details or harmful content;
- Involves consultation with mental health professionals where possible. ([pshe-association.org.uk](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk))

7. Working with External Support

Parkview Academy will collaborate with:

- NHS and NHS mental health support teams
- Local authority mental health services
- Charities such as *PAPYRUS* and *Samaritans*
- Specialist clinicians when higher-level risk is identified

We will signpost pupils, families and staff to crisis support, including:

Samaritans – 116 123 (free UK helpline)

PAPYRUS HOPELineUK – 0800 068 4141 / text 07786 209697

8. Postvention: Responding to a Suicide in the School Community

If a suspected or confirmed suicide occurs:

- The Suicide Response Team will enact the **Postvention Plan**;
- Immediate communication with families will be handled sensitively;
- Support will be made available to students and staff;
- Samaritans' "Step by Step" support may be accessed to assist with the immediate and ongoing response. ([Samaritans](#))

Postvention actions will focus on reducing contagion risk, supporting grieving individuals, and returning the school community to routine in a supportive manner.

9. Policy Review and Improvement

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory guidance and best practice. Implementation will be monitored through:

- Training records;
- Case reviews;
- Feedback from stakeholders;
- External inspection requirements.

Related Documents

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- RSHE Policy
- SEMH policy
- Counselling & Wellbeing policy

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