

ALP Sittingbourne

Suicide Prevention Policy

April 2025



SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

April 2026



Empowering
Success through
Holistic and
Individualised
Learning

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| This statement was approved: | Executive Board |
| This statement will be reviewed: | September 2026 |



1. Introduction

At ALP Sittingbourne, we are committed to safeguarding the mental health, wellbeing, and safety of all pupils. We recognise that some pupils may experience thoughts of self-harm or suicide, particularly those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

This policy outlines how the school will prevent, identify, and respond to concerns relating to suicide and self-harm in a safe, supportive, and professional manner.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002 (duty to safeguard and promote welfare)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE guidance)
- SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years)
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Care Act 2022

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Relationship and Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

3. Aims

- To promote early identification and intervention
- To ensure a clear and consistent response to risk
- To support pupils in a safe and non-judgemental environment
- To protect pupils from harm
- To support staff in managing sensitive situations appropriately

4. Definition

Suicidal ideation refers to thoughts about ending one's life, which may vary from fleeting thoughts to detailed planning.

Self-harm refers to behaviours where an individual deliberately harms themselves as a way of coping with emotional distress.

5. Risk Factors

Staff should be aware that pupils may be at increased risk if they experience:

- SEMH needs or mental health difficulties
- Previous self-harm or suicidal thoughts
- Trauma, bereavement, or adverse childhood experiences
- Bullying or social isolation
- Family difficulties or instability
- Substance misuse
- Sudden changes in behaviour or mood

6. Protective Factors

Protective factors include:

- Positive relationships with staff and peers
- Strong pastoral support
- Engagement in school
- Supportive home environment
- Access to external support services

7. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Be alert to warning signs
- Take all concerns seriously
- Listen calmly and without judgement
- Report concerns immediately to the **DSL**

Senior Management Team (SMT)

- Oversee implementation of this policy

- Ensure appropriate response and support
- Liaise with external agencies where required
- Provide ongoing support
- Monitor wellbeing
- Liaise with families and professionals

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Lead response to concerns
- Conduct risk assessments
- Make referrals to external services
- Maintain accurate safeguarding records

8. Warning Signs

Staff should be alert to:

- Talking about wanting to die or harm themselves
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Withdrawal from others
- Changes in behaviour, mood, or attendance
- Giving away possessions
- Increased risk-taking behaviour

9. Responding to Concerns

If a pupil expresses suicidal thoughts or intent:

Immediate Actions

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Take the pupil seriously
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Reassure the pupil that help is available
- Inform the DSL immediately

Next Steps (Led by DSL/SMT)

- Assess level of risk
- Ensure the pupil is not left alone if risk is high

- Contact parents/carers (unless this increases risk)
- Consider referral to CAMHS/CYPMHS or emergency services
- Implement a safety/support plan

10. In an Emergency

If a pupil is at immediate risk:

- Call 999
- Stay with the pupil
- Ensure they are in a safe environment
- Inform DSL and SMT immediately

11. Supporting Pupils

Support may include:

- Regular pastoral check-ins
- Safe spaces for emotional regulation
- Individual support plans
- Adjustments to timetable or environment
- Referral to external services

Support will be ongoing and reviewed regularly.

12. Working with Parents and Carers

- Parents/carers will be informed as soon as appropriate
- The school will work collaboratively to support the pupil
- Guidance and signposting to external services may be provided

13. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Information will be handled sensitively
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where there is risk of harm
- Information will be shared in line with safeguarding guidance

14. Staff Support

Supporting pupils with mental health needs can be challenging.

The school will:

- Provide guidance and supervision
- Offer support to staff following incidents
- Ensure staff are not managing concerns alone

15. Prevention

The school promotes prevention through:

- A strong pastoral system
- Positive relationships
- Mental health education
- Student voice and safe communication
- Early identification of need

16. Post-Incident Support

Following a serious incident:

- Support will be provided to pupils and staff
- Communication will be managed sensitively
- External support may be accessed
- A review of procedures will take place

17. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any serious incident.

18. Conclusion

ALP Sittingbourne is committed to creating a safe, supportive environment where all pupils feel valued, understood, and supported. Suicide prevention is a shared responsibility, and early intervention is key to keeping pupils safe.