



**KING EDWARD VI
FOUNDATION
BIRMINGHAM**

Educational excellence for our City



**KING EDWARD VI
ACADEMY TRUST
BIRMINGHAM**

Suicide Safer Schools Policy

Responsible Board/Committee	Academy Trust and Foundation Board
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Version	2

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework outlining the King Edward VI Foundation and Academy Trust's approach to safeguarding and child protection in relation to suicide safety.

Definitions

The King Edward VI Foundation (the 'Foundation Charity') (registration no. 529051) charity, comprises two Independent Schools and the Foundation Office. The King Edward VI Academy Trust Birmingham (the 'Academy Trust') (registration no. 10654935) incorporates the Academies. (The Foundation Charity and the Academy Trust are collectively known as the 'Foundation'.)

See Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy for context of King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls.

Commitment

The Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. We believe that:

- All young people have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- All young people have the right to experience their optimum mental and physical health.
- That every young person has the right to be safe and to feel safe in school.
- Young people need support that matches their individual needs.
- All young people should respect and support each other.
- By having clear systems and processes in place, identification of needs will be identified early.
- All staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding young people and protecting them from abuse, harm and exploitation.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes ensuring that young people are safe whilst in school and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls will follow Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 in reference to:

- Safeguarding information for all staff.
- What school staff should know and do.

- A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding.

This policy cannot be separated from our general ethos and safeguarding culture within school which ensures that students:

- are treated with respect and dignity.
- are taught to treat each other with respect.
- feel safe.
- have a voice and are listened to, ensuring that our approach to safeguarding is child-centred, always considering the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who encounters young people, and their families has a role to play to fulfil this responsibility effectively, including identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Diversity and Equality Mission Statement – include this if this is part of your school practice ie to include this statement in every policy

We believe that all members of our community are entitled to be treated fairly and equally regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sex, sexuality or disability. Our purpose is to challenge discrimination in all its forms so that our students can achieve educational excellence.

AIMS AND VALUES

King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls will endeavour to provide an environment where every student can feel safe, happy, healthy and able to achieve.

This policy will contribute to the protection and safeguarding of our pupils and promote their welfare by:

- Adopting a whole school approach to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that safeguarding and child protection underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development in school.
- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and pupils.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust ethos in the school, built on mutual respect and shared values.
- Introducing age-appropriate work within the curriculum on suicide safety. Encouraging pupils and parents to engage with school and external services to respond to and support behaviours of concern.
- Alerting staff to the signs and indicators that all may not be well.
- Developing staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities pupils face; and
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage.

This means in King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls we will contribute to supporting our pupils by:

- Identifying and protecting all pupils, especially those identified as vulnerable.
- Identifying individual needs as early as possible; gaining the voice of pupils and designing plans to address those needs; and
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents/guardians/carers, and other agencies.

OUR VISION FOR WELLBEING

As a school, in order to prioritise and be committed to the wellbeing of all members of our school community, staff and students are committed to the development of resilience through connectedness, kindness and compassion.

Through the values, ethos and culture we advocate every day in line with our school vision, we aim to develop and nurture students and colleagues with sensitivity and mutual respect.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls is aware that suicide is the leading cause of death in young people and that we play a vital role in helping to prevent young suicide. We want to make sure that students at our school are as suicide-safe as possible and that our governors, parents and carers, teaching staff, support staff, students and other key stakeholders are aware of our commitment to be a Suicide-safer school.

School will therefore:

- Have conversations and listen to children and their families as early as possible.
- Understand the child's lived experience.
- Work collaboratively to improve children's life experience.
- Be open, honest and transparent with families in our approach.
- Empower families by working with them.
- Work in a way that builds on the families' strengths.

If school feels a multi-disciplinary approach is required, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Deputy, with parent/carer consent, must consider liaising with other agencies and complete an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. If required to, all staff will support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Suicidal ideations (SI), often called suicidal thoughts or ideas, is a broad term used to describe a range of contemplations, wishes, and preoccupations with death and suicide. **Suicidal ideation** should not be taken lightly. It's impossible to predict who's likely to act on these thoughts. That's why anyone who expresses suicidal ideation should be considered at risk for suicide.

While someone might admit to wishing to die, they may deny making plans to do so. Warning signs that suicidal ideation has become more than **suicide ideation** include giving away possessions, getting affairs in order, and saying goodbye to loved ones.

Risk factors, whilst not exhaustive, may include:

- Offline and online bullying;
- Over emphasis on academic success (and fear of failure);
- Lack of access to professional mental health care;
- Addiction;
- Depression or other mood disorder;
- A history of suicide in the family;
- A history of trauma or abuse;
- People who are marginalised/discriminated against;
- Lack of support network;
- A chronic illness and/or chronic pain;
- Previous suicide attempt.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Our Senior Leadership Team will lead procedures as outlined in the staff section of this policy, in the event of a suicide, with support from members of the School Governing Body or Foundation where appropriate.
- The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Senior Leader responsible for Staff CPD should be aware of who has received general suicide awareness education and those who have received Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). Safeguarding, Pastoral and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Teams will work together where students have thoughts of suicide or suicidal behaviours and will communicate the information with parents in order for them to keep their child safe.

SUICIDE AND CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

Emergency CAMHS referrals have increased by 53% in three years ([The Royal College of Psychiatrists](#)). The increase means more than 600 children with a mental illness a week are deteriorating to such a state that they have reached crisis point. We're seeing the highest suicide rate in 30 years for school aged children.

King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls acknowledges that:

- **Suicidal thoughts are common**
- **Suicide is complex** - There are several contributory factors surrounding suicidal ideation and suicide and the reasons are often complex and individual to that person. We believe that there are lessons that may be learned from each case.
- **Stigma inhibits identification, support and swift intervention.** We recognise that the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness can be a barrier to open and transparent conversations that lead to help being put in place. King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls is dedicated to tackling suicide stigma through pupil understanding of mental health issues and how and where to seek help. Strong relationships between staff and students are key. In our language and in our working relationships, we will promote open, sensitive talk that does not stigmatise and perpetuate taboos.
- **Suicide is everyone's business** - As a school, we recognise that students may seek out someone who they trust with their concerns and worries. We want to facilitate the reporting of any risks or concerns.
- **Safety is important** - We want to support our students, sometimes working in partnership with family, caregivers, external agencies and other professionals where this may enhance suicide-safety.
- **Suicide is a difficult thing to talk about.** We know that a student who is suicidal may find it very difficult to make their feelings known and speak openly about suicide. We have key adults in school who are specifically and regularly suicide-safety trained and who can identify when a pupil may be struggling with thoughts of suicide.
- **Talking sensitively and safely about suicide will not encourage someone to take their own life. (NHS)** Talking openly about suicide reduces stigma and gives the person an opportunity to seek help. It also shows them you're someone they can approach in future if they're struggling. We therefore provide our students with opportunities to speak openly about their worries with people who are ready, willing and able to support them.

PAPYRUS' TEN MYTHS AND FACTS SURROUNDING SUICIDE- further information about the stigma related to suicide and the most prevalent myths surrounding it can be found on the papyrus website. [Mythbusting | Papyrus](#)

SUICIDE PREVENTION

We will endeavour to ensure all students are aware of mental health issues, including suicide, through PSHE lessons and other areas of the curriculum as appropriate and where they arise. These opportunities should equip our students to know how to spot signs, what to do and how to escalate any concerns to staff. We want to create a community where talking about mental health and suicide is not taboo and young people feel safe and able to tell someone if they feel suicidal and ask for help.

King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls will support any Foundation reviews of Mental Health and Wellbeing, which may include Suicide-Safety. This will ensure our suicide prevention work is integral to that of our wider community. It can also help identify and address possible patterns of suicidal behaviours across the Foundation. We will however take into consideration advice from Papyrus which states that we should be aware that statistical anomalies may occur from one year to the next, especially when comparing different communities or geographic areas. We will look at timeframes of three or more years to identify significant patterns.

When we identify a student at risk of suicide, we will notify parents and request they take their child to A&E immediately. Students may be signposted to appropriate support, see details at the end of this document.

Staff who have been trained will create a safety plan with students who have been identified as being at risk of suicide. We will endeavour to ensure that all staff are suicide aware through staff training so that they know how to spot signs, what to do and how to escalate any concerns to the DSL/Deputy DSLs.

Suicide Postvention Team

In the event of a suicide, King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls Leadership and Safeguarding teams will take responsibility to liaison with external agencies, provide appropriate support for students and liaise with the impacted family.

We will also

- Provide information about services/sources of bereavement support after a suicide. Links can be found at the end of this document.
- Assess the impact of any relevant intervention provided to staff or students.
- Review lessons learned.

STAFF

All staff will do their best to support students whilst recognising that we are not experts. Our aim as a school is to keep students “safe for now” while that young person, their parents/carers and school work to secure specialist help for them. Staff will endeavour to help a young person move unbearable feelings into thinkable thoughts.

Staff will follow the Schools’ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which includes what to do if they have concerns about a student, in school, or whilst on a school trip.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF ON WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS IMMINENT RISK OF DEATH OR HARM

If you determine that a young person has acted in a way that puts their life in danger, act quickly to keep them safe and ensure that there is no imminent risk.

Staff can find information about mental health and wellbeing through resources provided by [Now and Beyond](#) and [NHS/Kooth resource hub for teachers and education staff](#)

APPENDIX FOR STAFF

Staff will be supported in the [event of the death of a student by suicide](#) or following a disclosure/intervention. Staff should contact Papyrus [debrief service](#) for immediate support but also speak to their line manager/senior leader if further support is needed. Support may also be provided by the Samaritans organisation. We know that this experience can be very challenging and want to support in any way we can. Staff can also access external agencies including Employee Assistance and [Education Support Helpline](#) in confidence on 08000 562 561.

If a student is bereaved by suicide, we will endeavour to support them in school and use external agencies. See Cruse [how adults can support young people bereaved by suicide](#) for details.

Staff can also access information on [suicide, suicidal feelings and working in schools](#) from Education Support. This guide aims to support school staff discuss suicide safely, as well as to support staff who are affected by suicide and suicidal feelings. This resource does not offer guidance on supporting children and young people.

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

It can be difficult to find out that someone you care about has thoughts/intentions of suicide. As a parent/carer you may feel angry, shocked, guilty and upset. These reactions are normal, but what the person you care about really needs is support from you. They need you to stay calm and to listen to them.

If a parent is concerned about their child, please let school know immediately: email details for form tutors and Pastoral Leaders can be found on our school website

Try to:

- Keep an open mind;
- Make the time to listen;
- Help them find different ways of coping;
- Go with them to get the right kind of help as quickly as possible.

Some people you can contact for help, advice and support are:

- Your family doctor;
- [Local/national services](#);
- [NHS supporting someone with suicidal thoughts](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

There are lots of people you can talk to about what you are going through. It is important to tell someone you trust and feel comfortable with, as they will be able to help and support you. You could talk to:

- friends;
- family;
- someone at school, such as your Form Tutor or a member of the Pastoral Team;
- your GP or healthcare professionals such as a counsellor or nurse;
- kooth is a free, safe and easy to access mental health service for young people. They're commissioned primarily by the NHS and are the only digital mental health service to be accredited by the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy);
- Further support is available from some of the organisations listed at the end of this document.

There are no rules about how you should tell someone. The most important thing is that you feel comfortable and trust the person you decide to tell. Set time aside to talk to them. Remember you can set the pace and it is up to you how much you want to tell them.

If you find speaking about it too difficult, you can tell someone in writing or in an email. You can even ask a friend to speak to a trusted adult on your behalf. Let them know you need help with how you are feeling.

If you're worried that when you tell someone they won't understand, or if you have experienced this, suggest they talk to an expert in the field to try to understand more about suicide ideation. Don't let the fear of a bad reaction put you off seeking the help you need and deserve. As hard as it is to tell someone, sharing will take the pressure off you and help you get the right support and help available.

If you have concerns about another student, please prioritise their wellbeing and safety over your friendship, hard as that may be. They may be angry for a while, but getting help and support for them is much more important and friendships can be rebuilt. You can seek support from Papyrus if you have been affected by someone you know's [suicide attempt](#) or ring  0800 068 4141.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Foundation Leader in Education – Safeguarding and Wellbeing will ensure this policy is reviewed annually, the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and that processes are updated in line with best practice and that on-going training is undertaken when necessary.

Resources

- nowandbeyond.org.uk – resources for parents and carers of 16-18 year olds. Student Roost works preventatively to remove the stigma associated with the mental health of young people, Student Roost and Beyond have created a hub of information to equip parents and carers with information to enable them to support their children through the higher education journey, whatever their path looks like.
- nowandbeyond.org.uk Support for you or someone you know who needs help right now. If talking to an adult is not possible, follow the link to find out information about organisations who can help.
- Youth 4 Youth is a charitable organisation that provides services to young people aged 10-25 across the UK. Their primary service involves putting young people in contact with peers to provide peer-to-peer mentoring. The organisation is led with a youth focus which enables them to stay in touch with what young people need.
- Papyrus are a national UK charity hosting HOPELINEUK - a confidential support and advice service for children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide, or anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide. **By phone:** 0800 068 4141. **By text:** 07860 039 967 **By email:** pat@papyrus-uk.org
- Grassroots Suicide Prevention The Stay Alive app is a groundbreaking tool in suicide prevention. Years of research and development, supported by clinical expertise from Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, resulted in a unique digital resource catering to individuals at risk.
- Samaritans provide confidential emotional support 24 hours a day, all year round, for people feeling in distress or needing to talk with someone. You can contact **Samaritans: By phone:** 116 123 (free) – but please be aware that there is no texting service to Samaritans
- Breathing Space is a free and confidential phone service for anyone who is experiencing low mood, anxiety, depression, is unusually worried or who is needing someone to talk to. **By phone:** 0800 83 85 87
- CALM are aware that anyone can hit crisis point. They run a free and confidential helpline and webchat – 7 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone who needs to talk about life's problems. They also support those bereaved by suicide, through the Support After Suicide Partnership (SASP) which can be accessed via the CALM website. **By phone:** 0800 58 58 58 **By webchat:** 5pm till midnight, every day. See the CALM website
- Youngminds exist to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health, and all young people get the mental health support they need, when they need it, no matter what.
- If you are a parent or carer worried about your child then speak to one of the **Youngminds** experts at the Parents Helpline: **By phone:** 0808 802 5544 (9:30am - 4pm, Mon - Fri). **By email:** use the Parents Helpline contact form available on the website. **By live webchat:** via the website 9:30am - 4pm, Mon - Fri
- **NSPCC Adult Helpline** is a resource to support anyone concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including being concerned that a child's mental health or that they may be experiencing suicidal ideation or be actively suicidal. In the former case the adult will be able to discuss their concern with trained counsellors, be supported and signposted to the most relevant support services. In the latter case the adult will be advised to call 999 immediately and be supported. By phone (free) Monday – Friday 08.00-22.00 and Weekends 09.00-18.00: 0800 800 5000 By email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- Childline is a free 24-hour helpline. Children and young people can talk with a counsellor about any problem at all, including coping with death and bereavement. By phone: 0800 1111. You can also email securely and chat on-line via the Childline website: