

Young People and Self Harm

Procedures and pathway for schools and colleges

Updated 2023/24

The Stockport Self-Harm Policy: Procedures to Follow

For a summary of the procedures, which can be printed and laminated for ease of use in school/college, see the pathway following these procedures. For further help and support use the supporting guidance document which is referenced throughout this pathway.

All staff in school/college should receive training on safeguarding and— where appropriate— have access to the free, online training on self-harm offered by the Department of Health funded MindEd website: www.minded.org.uk, which includes specific training on self-harm for schools:

www.minded.org.uk/Catalogue/Index?HierarchyId=0_42929_42930&programmId=42929

All schools/colleges should have at least one member of staff who has been trained on dealing with self-harm.

All staff should know who their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is. In these procedures where we refer to DSL, this may also be a different member of staff with a designated responsibility for responding to self-harm.

The presumption should always be that parents / carers will be contacted, unless there are child protection reasons for not doing so, and kept updated throughout.

Any member of staff who:

- a) witnesses a self-harm incident,
 - b) hears about a self-harm incident,
 - c) or is approached by a young person who is reporting a self-harm incident (their own or someone else)
- should follow the Stockport Self-Harm pathway.

1. Following any of the situations above, the staff member should establish, first, whether the young person requires immediate first aid or other treatment.

An appointed first aider should be consulted, where physical wounds are present or in cases of suspected substance ingestion - they will determine the need for an ambulance.

If first aid treatment is required:

2. If the young person does need first aid treatment, he or she should be seen by the school/college first aider to receive appropriate care. Alongside this, the staff member should speak to the DSL who can then follow the relevant steps in this pathway.
3. Make a referral to CAMHS via the MASSH.

If hospital treatment is required:

4. Treatment in a hospital Emergency Department (ED) is required for:
 - cuts that are deep and/or bleed profusely
 - burns that are blistering or red
 - a young person who has lost consciousness
 - recent overdosed or ingestion of harmful liquids (see point 6)

Then the staff member should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who can contact the young person's parents, arrange for the young person to attend ED and subsequently follow the relevant steps in the Stockport pathway.

5. Where a young person has taken in excess of the prescribed amount of medication or swallowed something harmful, they need to attend emergency department. If parents / carers cannot be contacted or refuse to consent to this then schools/colleges need to follow their first aid & safeguarding procedures.

If the incident occurred some time ago, the designated officer should consult a medical practitioner, the duty officer at CAMHS or the school nurse to discuss what treatment may be needed. Make an urgent referral to CAMHS.

First aid / medical treatment is not required:

6. The staff member should reassure the young person and explain to them that this is something that would need further advice from the DSL.
7. The DSL will:
 - a) If it is the view of the DSL that the situation cannot be managed by school/college, contact the duty officer at CAMHS or the school nurse for advice;
 - b) complete the appropriate records following an incident or allegation of self-harm: by completing the Note of Concern form (see appendix);
 - c) in consultation with parents / carers, the young person and relevant agencies, establish what support will be provided to the young person, and arrange a referral to the service as appropriate;
 - d) record what follow-up will be undertaken with the young person and set clear timescales for this. (see also below – point 13)
8. Where incidents occur during normal school/college hours, schools/colleges should be able to receive same-day telephone support, where required, from the duty officer at CAMHS by phoning 0161 716 5868. They can also contact the Pennine Care Helpline (24 / 7) on 0800 014 9995. Make a referral to CAMHS via the MASSH.

Significant concerns or suicidal thoughts:

9. Where a young person is expressing suicidal thoughts, the DSL should contact CAMHS immediately via duty number or 24/7 number. CAMHS will provide immediate advice on the next steps, including whether an ED visit or CAMHS referral is required. (When CAMHS receive the referral, they will contact the family to offer a consultation.)
10. Where schools/colleges have significant concerns about a young person's safety and have been unable to receive advice from CAMHS or their GP, then a decision whether to take to ED should not be delayed. Consider further contact via 111 or ED to access the Rapid Response team.
11. In most circumstances the advice will be for the parents / carers to take the child home. Staff are often understandably concerned about the possible consequences of letting a distressed young person leave the premises. However, where CAMHS have been consulted, the service is accountable for the advice they give, based on the information provided by the school/college. Therefore, there is a shared responsibility between the school/college and CAMHS around the decisions made.

If unable to get hold of CAMHS for advice then make an urgent referral to CAMHS. Where the DSL informs parents/carers of the conversations had and the

recommendations given, the parents are then responsible for carrying out these recommendations such as safe storage of medication and sharp objects. The DSL is required to follow the steps set out in the pathway but is not responsible for ensuring the young person's on-going safety.

A young person should only be sent home if there is a responsible adult who will agree to collect and care for them, otherwise they should remain in school/college, and if relevant, consider a MASSH referral. If the young person cannot be discharged into the care of a responsible adult the school/college should make a decision based on a thorough risk assessment of the needs of the child and document this, this should clearly detail their rationale, and who else they have consulted as part of their decision making including other emergency contacts they may have tried, and also discussions with social workers or MASSH colleagues as appropriate

Following an incident of self-harm:

12. Checking in with young person, is any further support needed in school/college.

CAMHS will copy school/college into safety plan letters.

We encourage young people to be back in school/college as soon as if possible and safe as this encourages structure and routine all of which help with overcoming a crisis

Consider signposting or referral to:

- School nurse drop-in,
- Team Around School (TAS) process (this will decide whether Early Help is needed)
- SHINE – early intervention service (<https://beacon-counselling.org.uk/counselling-and-wellbeing/children-and-young-people/shine/>)

13. DSLs can use the resources provided in this document to support young people and their family or friends, where appropriate. This includes providing details of the support services available in Stockport, national helplines and websites and using the self-help materials which can help young people understand why they self-harm and find alternatives to self-harming behaviour.

Following a repeated incident of self-harm:

If a young person is regularly self-harming the likelihood is that CAMHS may be involved. If this is causing problems at school, CAMHS should be invited to attend TAS / TAC meetings to ensure plans are shared.

If the designated officer, or the member of staff who first witnessed / heard about a young person's self-harm feels in need of support following an incident, the section of this document 'what support is there for me?' may be useful

The Stockport Self-Harm Pathway for Education Settings

A young person has self-harmed or expressed an intention to self-harm

Is treatment required for a physical injury? Seek help from a first aider if necessary.

*Young people should not be sent to a hospital Emergency Department unless there is a physical need**

Yes

Always contact parent / carer unless there are child protection reasons not to do

If a young person is contemplating suicide, contact the CAMHS duty officer immediately on 0161 716 5868

No

- Administer First Aid
- Consider whether injuries require ED attendance*:
 - Deep cuts
 - Blistered burns
 - Any overdose / ingestion of harmful liquids
 - Loss of consciousness

- Do not leave an acutely distressed young person alone. Offer reassurance.
- Check if the young person has a safety plan and refer to it. If not, the most appropriate person should make a safety plan with them – see section 7 for a template
- Consult DSL who will contact the CAMHS duty worker for advice on treatment / next steps etc.
- Make a referral to CAMHS via MASSH
- **All calls to (and response from CAMHS / school nurse) should be logged on the Note of Concern form.**
- Establish what support is required – see section 7 of supporting guidance for resources for coping strategies
- Make plan for follow-up

Decide if the young person needs to be taken home:

- Ensure CAMHS have been consulted via duty number or 24/7 number
- If CAMHS cannot be consulted make an urgent referral
- Discuss recommendations with parents for keeping young person safe at home
- If a responsible adult is unavailable, young person should stay in school and follow safeguarding procedures

Follow-up

- Ensure that all school safeguarding procedures have been followed.
- Consider if there has been 'significant harm' and therefore an Early Help Assessment / safeguarding referral form need to be completed.
- Clarify which member of staff is best placed to speak to the young person.
- Indicate a willingness to talk to the young person about self-harm
- Be non-judgmental and validate the young person's feelings
- Ensure a note of concern has been completed and skin map where appropriate (Children should not be asked to remove any layers of clothing against their wish and photographs should not be taken)
- Where appropriate, use the resources in the Stockport Self-Harm policy to support the young person (and to support parents, carers and friends where needed)
- Keep a record of all relevant contact and conversations with CAMHS / School Nurse / MASSH etc.
- Ensure you have your own support system in place to help you deal with the incident.

