



WINDERMERE
SCHOOL

SUICIDE STATEMENT AND POLICY

This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy has been written following the guidance from Papyrus - <https://papyrus-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/toolkitfinal.pdf>

This policy is available to all parents on our school website www.windermerschool.co.uk or as a hard copy from the school offices.

SUICIDE: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

PAPYRUS recommends that schools and colleges have a policy statement which is known by the whole community and which enshrines a strong commitment to suicide prevention.

At Windermere School, we are aware that:

- i) suicide is the leading cause of death in young people;*
- ii) we play a vital role in helping to prevent young suicide.*

We want to make sure that children and young people at Windermere School are as suicide safe as possible and that our governors, parents and carers, teaching staff, support staff, pupils themselves and other key stakeholders are aware of our commitment to be a suicide-safer school.

Windermere School believes that suicide prevention is everybody's business and that all can play a role in preventing young suicide. When a life is in danger, the priority is to save that life.

At Windermere School this includes but is not an exhaustive list:

- Governors
- Senior Leadership Team
- DSLs
- All Teaching staff
- Boarding staff
- Pastoral and Wellbeing staff
- Support staff
- Administration staff
- Grounds and Maintenance staff
- Catering staff

- Young people as peer supporters/mentors
- Parents and Guardians
- Counsellors and other supporting outside agencies
- General Practitioner

Each of these groups can make a unique contribution to suicide prevention.

Our Beliefs about Suicide and its Antecedents

Windermere School acknowledges that:

- **Suicidal thoughts are common**
 - We acknowledge that thoughts of suicide are common among young people.
- **Suicide is complex**
 - We believe that every suicide is a tragedy. There are a number of contributory factors surrounding a suicide and the reasons are often complex and individual to that person. However, we believe that there are lessons that may be learned from each death that may help prevent future deaths.
- **Stigma inhibits learning – stigma can kill**
 - We recognise that the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness can be both a barrier to seeking help and a barrier to offering help. Windermere School is committed to tackling suicide stigma. In our language and in our working relationships, we will promote open, sensitive talk that does not stigmatise and perpetuate taboos. This will include avoiding the use of language which perpetuates unhelpful notions that suicide is criminal, sinful or selfish. We know that unhelpful myths and misconceptions surrounding suicide can inhibit young people in seeking and finding appropriate help when it is most needed.
- **Suicide is our business, too**
 - As a school, we recognise that pupils may seek out someone whom they trust with their concerns and worries. We want to play our part in supporting any pupil who may have thoughts of suicide or those affected by suicide.

- **Safety is very important**

- We know that pupils who are having thoughts of suicide may or may not also be behaving in a way that puts their life in danger (suicide behaviours). Pupils experiencing suicidal thoughts are potentially at risk of acting on these thoughts. Those who are already engaging in suicide behaviours are also clearly at risk of death or harm. Windermere School wants to work with our pupils who may be thinking about suicide, or acting on their thoughts of suicide. We want to support them, sometimes working in partnership with family, caregivers and other professionals where this may enhance suicide safety.

- **Suicide is a difficult thing to talk about**

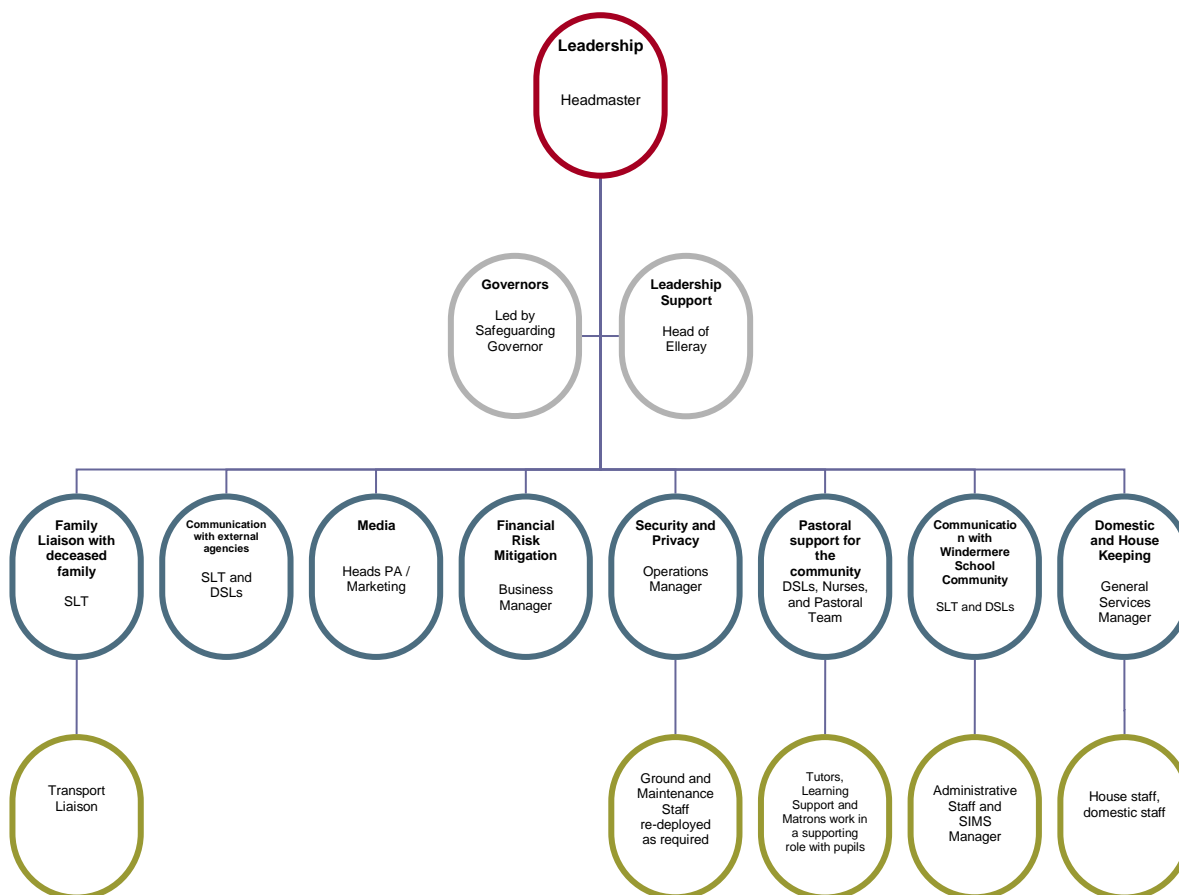
- We know that a child or young person who is suicidal may find it very difficult to make their feelings known and speak openly about suicide. We will equip adults with the skills to identify when a pupil may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. These adults will be trained to keep our young people suicide-safe.

- **Talking about suicide does not create or worsen risk**

- We will provide our pupils with opportunities to speak openly about their worries with people who are ready, willing and able to support them. We want to make it possible for pupils, and those who support them at Windermere School, to do so safely. This will be in a way that leads to support and help where this is needed. We will do all we can to refrain from acting in a way that stops a pupil seeking the help they need when they are struggling with thoughts of suicide.

Our Team and its Responsibilities

- A. Our Governors and Senior Leadership Team will be clear about how we will respond in the event of a suicide. Each member of our named response team will have a defined responsibility within our plan including leadership, family liaison and any communications with external agencies, including the media.



- B. We will have a clear picture of who has received general suicide awareness education and commit to this being refreshed periodically (at least every three years).

Training to date:

- Mental Health Champions Training – DSLs attended 26.11. 2019
- Papyrus Training – All Staff 06.01.2020
- Suicide Prevention Awareness (eLearning Cumbria CSCP) tbc
- Samaritans – Schools support materials

- C. We will identify a team of people who are trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). This team will be drawn from across the whole school community, not just from one department.
- ASIST – DSLs awaiting training. (Delays due to COVID-19.) This will then be made available to staff from other departments. All staff and Governors will receive a level of cascaded training from the DSLs.
- D. We will have a clear policy about how staff should work together where thoughts of suicide or suicide behaviours are known among our young people. We will manage the sharing of information in a way that enhances safety.

To be achieved through:

- Pastoral Meetings
- Staff Meetings
- INSET Days
- Departmental Meetings
- Briefings
- Regular updates from the DSLs of pertinent and up-to-date information

There will be open communication with the aim that all members of staff working directly with pupils, will be equipped with the skills to offer support to the pupils or will know how to signpost to the relevant support.

Ongoing Support and Development of our Policy and Practice

- Our Governors, Senior Leadership Team and DSLs will keep our practice up to date by maintaining contact with best practice and on-going training. Our aim is for everybody working within the Windermere School community will feel empowered to identify and support those in need.

Appendix

Guidance

- **Suicide prevention: developing a local action plan**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/suicide-prevention/developing-a-local-action-plan> 25 October 2016 Guidance
- **Preventing suicide: lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-suicide/lesbian-gay-and-bisexual-young-people> 13 March 2015 Guidance
- **Suicide prevention: identifying and responding to suicide clusters**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/suicide-prevention/identifying-and-responding-to-suicide-clusters> 10 September 2015 Guidance
- **Suicide prevention: suicides in public places**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/suicide-prevention/suicides-in-public-places> 1 December 2015 Guidance
- **Support after a suicide: a guide to providing local services**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-after-a-suicide-a-guide-to-providing-local-services> 9 January 2017 Guidance

Policy

- **Suicide prevention strategy for England**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/suicide-prevention/strategy-for-england> 10 September 2012 Policy paper
- **Suicide prevention: third annual report**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/suicide-prevention/third-annual-report> 9 January 2017 Policy paper

	Name	Date	Version
Compiled – Start Date	Jenny Davies (DSL)	June 2020	1.0
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Approved			