



Self-harm and Suicide Risk Response Protocol

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Self-harm and Suicide Risk Response Protocol

This protocol supports teachers at Pinewood, to intervene effectively when students exhibit suicidal or self-harming behaviour. It clarifies which steps can be taken in response to a risk of suicidal or self-harming behaviour. The term suicidal behaviour in this document includes the following: a student expresses, directly or indirectly, that (s)he has suicidal thoughts OR a student displays self-harming behaviour OR talks about the desire to self-harm.

Stage 1: When a student confides in Faculty and Staff:

- Any concern related to student safety should be treated seriously, even when uncertainty exists.
- Be respectful and honor their courage in sharing these thoughts or experiences any thoughts about, or behaviours of, self-harm. Students who disclose these thoughts or behaviors, feel comfortable with you to do so, and are often seeking support, safety, or connection.

In conversation with the student:

- Do not promise confidentiality or secrecy: The student's safety is your utmost concern. You can only tell the student that what they tell you is confidential, when there is no concern for their safety, or someone else's. Share that if you need to inform or include the parents or others, you will always do this in consultation with the student (when age 12 and up).
- Listen. Ask open ended questions and reflect back the student's feelings and problems in your own words.
- Try to avoid giving advice or your own opinion.
- Be direct. It is recommended to use words such as suicide, killing yourself, ending your life, etc. Open and direct conversations about suicide do not increase risk and may help students feel supported and understood.
- Remain calm and supportive. Avoid reacting with shock or anxiety.
- Be clear about the steps that you are undertaking to ensure the student's safety (e.g. including the School Psychologist, calling parents, informing administration, etc.)



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- Student Voice: Provide them with the option to inform the school psychologist either individually or together with a trusted adult, depending on their comfort level and needs.

Stage 2: Risk assessment - including professionals and management

- Take immediate action to ensure the student's safety.
- Don't leave the student unattended, before he/ she sees the School Psychologist. Consider bringing the student along, ask another staff member to stay with the student, or send someone for help.
- Always include the School Psychologist and/ or any school leader to determine next steps. You can bring the student along, or to another **supervised** quiet spot.
- The School Psychologist will conduct an initial school-based risk assessment and determine whether immediate external mental health or medical intervention is required.
- Document all actions taken, as soon as possible.

Stage 3: Actions to be taken after the risk assessment

- The School Psychologist/ Administration and/ or the student should inform parents.

Always inform parents when a student has expressed suicidal ideation or if there is a general risk of self-harm. Notify parents of the situation and about the actions taken so far. Advise parents on next steps. If the student is a **medium or high risk**, parents will be invited to pick up their child. Next steps may include ensuring there are no lethal means in the home and will include a support plan to help the student get the appropriate mental health care.

- If the student is considered at imminent risk, emergency medical or psychiatric services should be contacted immediately.
- The most active Greek organization, based in Athens and specialized in Self-Harming and Suicide Intervention is called Klimaka. The contact details are:

Number: 1018 or 210-3417162-3

Email: help@suicide-help.gr



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Stage 4: Documentation and monitoring

- Regardless of level of risk, the School Psychologist will complete an incident report. An incident report includes:
 - ☐ Student's name
 - ☐ Who was involved?
 - ☐ What happened?
 - ☐ The risk assessment done by the School Psychologist
 - ☐ What actions were taken?
 - ☐ What agreements were put in place?
 - ☐ Who will take what responsibility?
- Set up a safety plan in school to monitor the student's suicidal and self-harming behavior.
- If needed and upon discussion, the Principal or the School Psychologist may inform Relevant staff members on a need-to-know basis in order to support student safety and wellbeing. The members of the staff and the Student Services team will evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and the implementation of the protocol after every incident.

Stage 5: Return-to-School Support

Following a mental health crisis, hospitalization, chronic absenteeism, or significant self-harm/suicide-related concern, a structured and supportive return-to-school plan may be developed in collaboration with the student, parents/guardians, School Psychologist, administration, and relevant staff members.

The purpose of the return-to-school process is to support the student's emotional safety, wellbeing, and gradual reintegration into school life while reducing overwhelm and promoting stability.

Supportive measures may include:

- gradual reintegration into the school routine when appropriate



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- temporary academic accommodations or workload adjustments
- flexibility with assignments, deadlines, or assessments
- access to a trusted adult or designated safe space within the school
- scheduled emotional check-ins with the School Psychologist or designated staff member
- collaboration with external mental health professionals when appropriate and with parent/guardian consent

The level and duration of support will depend on the individual needs of the student and may be adjusted over time based on the student's wellbeing, functioning, and progress.

Relevant staff members may be informed on a need-to-know basis in order to ensure appropriate support, consistency, and student safety while respecting the student's privacy and dignity.