

Suicide Safety Amongst Students Policy			
Current Status	Operational	Last Review:	February 2024
Responsibility for Review:	Group Head of Welfare and Safeguarding	Next Review:	July 2027
Roles Responsible for Review:		Originated:	Sept 2022
Approved by:	SET Curriculum	Committee:	Educational Excellence Committee
Type of Policy:	Staff / Students	Quality Assured by:	Policy Team

1. Introduction

COLLEGE AIM, MISSION AND VALUES

Putting students and their success at the heart of everything we do.

Our mission is to provide outstanding education for students throughout our community in order for them to become both fulfilled and play their part in being drivers of our region's economy.

Our vision is to be the centre of a hub of outstanding education and training in East Anglia by working in a wide collaborative network, creating coherent provision across the region.

Three pillars support our ideas: we aim to enable all students to gain not just the right qualifications and the best grades, but also the connections with business and character strengths they need to succeed.

2. Policy for suicide safety amongst students

2.1. This college community is aware that:-

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

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

2.3. This college acknowledges that:

- We acknowledge that thoughts of suicide are common among young people.
- 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.

- We recognise that the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness can be both a barrier to help seeking and a barrier to offering help. This college 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.

2.4. As a college community, we recognise that students may seek out someone whom they trust with their concerns and worries. We want to play our part in supporting any student who may have thoughts of suicide.

- We know that students who are having thoughts of suicide may or may not also be behaving in a way that puts their life in danger (suicide behaviours). Students 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. This College wants to work with our students who may be thinking about suicide or acting on their thoughts of suicide. We want to support them, sometimes working in partnership with family, care givers and other professionals where this may enhance suicide safety.
- We know that a 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 student may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. These adults will be trained to keep our young people suicide-safe.
- We will provide our students 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 every person, and those who support them at this college, 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 student seeking the help they need when they are struggling with thoughts of suicide.
- Our governors and 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.

- 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). We have a Welfare Team and Personal Progress Tutor team who are trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- 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.

3. Ongoing Support and Development of our Policy and Practices

- 3.1. Our Governors and Leadership Team will keep our practice up to date by maintaining contact with best practice and on-going training.

4. Our Colleges Response to a Suicide Attempt.

- 4.1. A suicide attempt is an act carried out by a person with the intention of ending their own life. A suicide attempt by a student can have a significant impact on a college community, causing distress and anxiety for fellow students, College staff and parents.
- 4.2. We believe there are 10 steps that should guide our college response to a suicide on site.
- 1) Remain calm, non-judgemental and caring.
 - 2) Always communicate with the parents/carers of the student and any professionals involved in the care of the student.
 - 3) The safety of the student and others is of vital concern should a suicide attempt occur in College. Keep the student safe and supported, and take them to a safe, private place if they can be moved.
 - 4) Call an ambulance if a student: – has taken a drug or medicine overdose or consumed poison – is seriously injured – is unconscious, confused, or disoriented – has bleeding that is rapid or pulsing.
 - 5) Call the Police if a student is disclosing intent to harm self or threatening to harm others, or is so distressed that they are unmanageable in the College environment.
 - 6) Respect the confidentiality of the student and consider the wishes of the student and their family when communicating about any suicide attempt.
 - 7) Consider the impact of the event on others. Ask student wellbeing or College leadership to check safety and wellbeing of other students,

classmates, bystanders and witnesses who may be impacted. Contact parents and carers of other students impacted and at risk, and advocate for support and suicide risk assessment being provided for these students.

- 8) Refer students appropriately based on assessment of support needs. Become familiar with the range of mental health and youth support agencies, programmes and professions accessible by our college.
- 9) Inform and liaise with relevant authorities and agencies. Follow Emergency Management critical incident reporting protocols for our college. Have student wellbeing or leadership follow up and liaise with hospital or mental health services, or any support service or programme, about support planning, communications and information sharing.
- 10) Consider the impact of social media on other students. Determine whether information about the attempt is on social media and if this is impacting on other students.

5. How we support a student with their return to College following a suicide attempt?

5.1. Before the Student who attempted to take their own life returns to College we will:

- 1) Talk with the student and parent / guardian and ask that they attend a meeting in college before their return. Time away from college should be a minimum of 2 full days.
- 2) Arrange a meeting time and date to everyone's convenience.
- 3) At the meeting we will explore what support is in place externally, and also what further support the College can provide e.g. ask the Student what they need.
- 4) The Student who attempted to take their life may not currently be suicidal, however suicide may still be an option for them, or become an option again in the future which is why a safety plan is needed. It is important that the Student has a Suicide Safety Plan: a plan that they have created with support that details how they want to stay safe from suicide. It is essential that the plan is created together with the student – with them at its centre. Creating a plan with them, not for them.

5.2. The plan must be something that they feel they are able to agree to. A good Suicide-Safety Plan always includes the following:

- a) Helpline numbers that are available and appropriate - including 24-hour helplines.
- b) Safety Contacts: people and organisations that the student can contact when they feel they can't keep themselves safe, including a safety contact for when they are at College.

- c) Arrange for regular 'check-ins' with a welfare officer once they have returned to College to see how they are doing and to check the plan is ok for them.
- d) Be prepared to amend the Suicide-Safety Plan based on their needs. It is a live document and may change over time.
- e) The Suicide-Safety Plan might also include professional support from a counsellor or therapist during college time and you should accommodate this within their timetable.

Revision History – Policy name

Revision date	Reason for revision	Section number	Changes made
Enter date	Enter reason	Section number	Enter details
February 2023	Amalgamation		Policy updated to new EEG version
March 2024	Review		Updated to 3 year review cycle

Safety Plan for Students

Name:
Mobile Number:
Date:

Getting through day and the next week	
How can you make your situation safer?	
What things lift or calm your mood?	
What things to distract you?	
Who are the people to support you?	
List who you can talk to if you are distressed or thinking about self-harm or suicide.	
Emergency professional support contact numbers	

Safety plan resource from Grassroots / Papyrus