

## Advice and guidance for parents

If you are worried that your son/daughter is self harming, please contact the school and speak to one of the Pastoral Team. This could be your child's Head of Year, the Deputy Headteacher: Pastoral (Mr Eccles) or another member of the Pastoral Team.

They will be able to support you in addressing your concerns.

The National Self Harm Network ([www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)) offers useful advice and suggests that distractions can help reduce incidents of self harm.

### These may include:

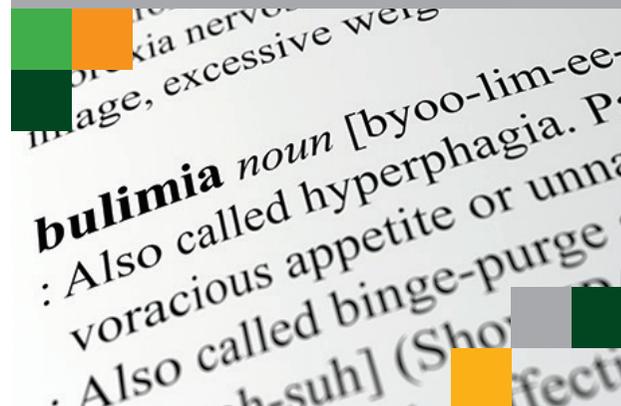
- Physical activity
- Creative activities
- Comforting activities
- Constructive activities
- Having fun
- Being with others
- Getting inspired

You can support your child in developing these strategies.

## Dealing with incidents

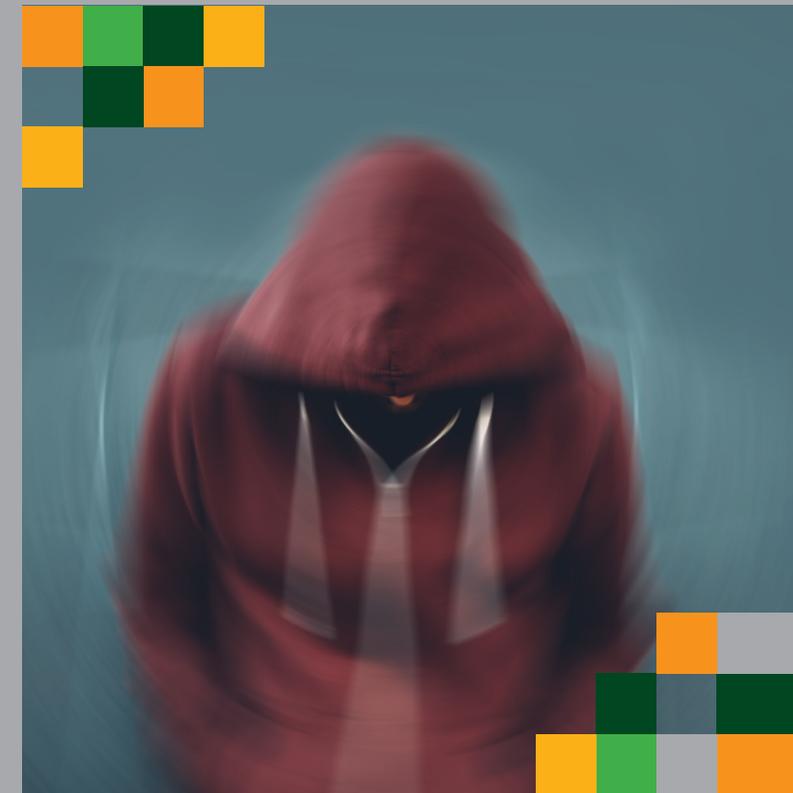
If we are aware that a student has self-harmed we will:

- Listen calmly
- Seek first aid treatment if necessary
- Contact parents/carers as soon as possible
- Contact other professionals for advice. This may be the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or Children's Social Care
- Work with students and their families to ensure appropriate support is in place to address both the self harming and the underlying issues
- Monitor the situation and communicate regularly with parents/carers
- Support other students who may be affected



# Self-Harm

## Information for parents, carers and students



T: 020 8239 2383

E: [office@overtongrange.sutton.sch.uk](mailto:office@overtongrange.sutton.sch.uk)

[www.overtongrange.sutton.sch.uk](http://www.overtongrange.sutton.sch.uk)

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## What is self-harm?

Self harm can take many different forms and as an individual act is hard to define. However, in general, self harm (also known as self injury or self mutilation) is the act of deliberately causing harm to oneself either by causing a physical injury (including ingestion of substances), by putting oneself in dangerous situations and/or self neglect.

### Physical harm can take many forms.

#### It could include:

- Cutting, burning, biting
- Substance abuse
- Head banging and hitting
- Taking personal risks
- Picking and scratching
- Neglecting oneself
- Pulling out hair
- Eating disorders
- Over dosing and self-poisoning

#### Suicide:

Self-harm is often thought to be linked to suicide. This is not the case. People suffering emotional distress may feel suicidal but self-harm is a coping mechanism and is not necessarily a suicide attempt.

However, some individuals who self-harm may go on to complete a suicide attempt. It is important not to dismiss incidents of self-harm as attention seeking behaviour.

## Why do people self-harm

Self harming is NOT attention seeking behaviour, it is attention needing behaviour.

Self harm is a way of coping with difficult or overwhelming situations or emotional states.

#### Situations which can trigger self harm:

- Relationship problems
- Pressures - e.g. school work, exams, sporting performance, family issues
- Bullying
- Trying to fit in
- Low self esteem
- Feeling depressed

#### Young people may be more likely to self harm if they feel:

- That people don't listen to them
- Hopeless or worthless
- Isolated, alone
- Out of control
- Powerless - that there is nothing that they can do to change anything
- Unable to experience emotional pain, even for a short period of time

## Worried about self-harm?

If you are worried about yourself or someone else then talk to a member of staff in school that you can trust.

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## Advice and guidance for students



The National Self Harm Network ([www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)) offers useful advice and suggests that distractions can help reduce incidents of self harm.

#### These may include:

- Physical activity - e.g. going to the gym, popping balloons
- Creative activities - e.g. singing, drawing or painting, making a play list
- Comforting activities - cuddling a pillow, taking a bath, playing with a pet
- Constructive activities - e.g. doing schoolwork, writing a to do list, organising your room
- Having fun - watching TV, going to see a film
- Being with others - e.g. Phoning a friend, talking to someone
- Getting inspired - e.g. looking at the clouds, looking at works of art, yoga

## Further information

#### National Self Harm Network

[www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

Download the **Calm Harm** app

#### Samaritans

116 123

#### School Nurse

0208 770 5409

[kooth.com](http://kooth.com)

