



Newpark Comprehensive School

Scoil Chuimsitheach Na Páirce Nua

SELF HARM POLICY

1. Policy

- 1.1. In Newpark we understand self harm to mean harming oneself without suicidal intent. Self harm includes, amongst others, self-injury, anorexia, and bulimia. Self-injury includes cutting oneself, for instance on arms or legs, striking oneself, or banging one's head repeatedly.
- 1.2. Although neither 'Children First' nor the 'Child Protection guidelines for post-primary schools' refer to self harm, the spirit of these documents inform our policy. It is our policy to inform parents/guardians of an incidence of self harm if it comes to our attention. If there is extreme concern about the welfare of the child the designated liaison person (DLP) will be informed and he will seek advice from the Duty Social Worker or the Child Manager.
- 1.3. In Newpark we endeavour to respond to students who self harm in a compassionate and non-judgemental manner. Through the pastoral care team we also endeavour to help the student make the choice not to self harm.

2. Procedure

- 2.1. If a student discloses self harm to a member of staff, or a member of staff sees evidence of self harm, the staff member should refer the student to a member of the Pastoral Care team (Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor or Nurse). The staff member should inform the PC team member the student nominates and let the student know that this is necessary for the student's own protection.
- 2.2. If a student reports to the member of staff that another student may be self harming the staff member should instruct the reporting student to inform a member of the Pastoral Care team. The staff member should also inform the nominated PC team member.
- 2.3. Subsequent to meeting with the student concerned, the PC team member will decide, in the best interests of the student, the manner in which parents/guardians and possible other persons will be informed. The criterion for informing possible other persons will follow 'best practice' norms outlined in section 1.2.1 of the 'Child Protection guidelines for post-primary schools'. The PC team member may in turn refer the student to an outside agency.
- 2.4. If the student is deemed to require medical attention, the Chaplain or Guidance Counsellor will refer the student to the school Nurse.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management at its meeting of October 7th 2009. Date of review of Self harm policy: October 2011.

Signed: Micheal Johnston: Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Derek Lowry Secretary, Board of Management

Policy updated by Pastoral Care team, Sep 2009

