



Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



Suicide Prevention and Response

Policy and Procedure

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Suicide Prevention & Response Policy & Procedure

**PLEASE SEE SECTION 5 OF THIS POLICY FOR
THE SUICIDE RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

Document Control & Version History

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	and Significant Incident Management Policy; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
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Relevant Guidance

Relevant guidance that it is beneficial to be aware of (and that can inform internal staff training), can be found below:

- **Papyrus: Suicide-Safer Universities** <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/suicide-safer-universities/>
- **UUK Guidance on Suicide-safer universities:** <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/what-we-do/policy-and-research/publications/features/suicide-safer-universities>
- **UK Government DfE National review of higher education student suicide deaths:** https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68304edcbaff3dab9977529f/National_review_of_HE_student_suicide_deaths.pdf
- **Responses to National Review of higher education student suicides:**
 - <https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/national-review-of-higher-education-student-suicides-resources-for-institutions/>
 - <https://www.amosshe.org.uk/resource/our-response-to-the-national-review-of-student-suicide-deaths.html>

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Suicide Prevention and Response Policy

1. Policy Statement and Principles

- Oakwood College is committed to fostering a suicide-safer environment where wellbeing, mental health, and access to help are priorities for all members of its close-knit community. Preventing suicide is seen as a shared responsibility embracing professional, peer, and community support, tailored to the scale and culture of Oakwood College.
- This policy applies to all members of the Oakwood College community, including staff, students, contractors, visitors, and third-party partners, ensuring a consistent approach to suicide prevention and response.
- This Policy aligns with Universities UK/PAPYRUS Suicide-Safer Universities guidance, the latest UK statutory recommendations, along with our institutional duty of care.

The following principles underpin this Policy and our institutional approach:

- Fostering a close institutional community across staff and students;
- Clear communication, including an open dialogue about suicide and mental health difficulties;
- Responding quickly with clear protocols in the event of any concerns or reported incidents;
- Direct, targeted internal and external support, with a joined-up multi-agency approach to manage risk and support ongoing recovery.

2. Scope and Aims of the Policy

- This Policy applies to all students enrolled at Oakwood College across all levels of study (UG, PG, and all modes) and staff.
- Supports prevention, early identification, and compassionate response, considering the distinct nature of a small institution, with direct communication lines and agile processes.
- Emphasises proactive, open dialogue about mental health and risk.

Allied institutional policies and procedures, and relevant external information

This Policy should be read alongside the following Oakwood College policies and procedures:

- Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Support Through Studies

External contacts:

External support contacts include:

- [PAPYRUS HOPELINE UK](#): 0800 068 4141
- [Samaritans](#): 116 123
- NHS 111 (Option 2 for mental health crisis)
- [Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust Crisis Line](#): 0800 915 9292
- [Shout \(text-based crisis support\)](#): Text SHOUT to 85258

3. Prevention Strategy

- a) Embed suicide prevention and mental health promotion throughout institution life and curriculum, co-designed with students and staff.
- b) Regular suicide awareness training is provided to all staff and student representatives, with annual refreshers and quick access to updated guidance.
- c) Key protocols and checklists for all staff and students included as handbook appendices and featured in induction materials.
- d) Named suicide prevention leads are accessible by all students and staff, with information disseminated through induction, handbooks, and digital channels. Students and staff can access prevention leads anonymously if preferred.
- e) Foster an inclusive, non-stigmatising culture that encourages students and staff to share concerns and seek support early.
- f) Monitor student wellbeing proactively: Termly in a small specialist setting, staff are attentive to changes in behaviour, absence, or academic difficulties and respond directly, with open escalation routes.

4. Identification and Early Intervention

- All community members are empowered and given clear avenues (online and in-person) to raise “cause for concern” alerts if worried about themselves or others.
- Staff are expected to act immediately on disclosures: listening without judgement, avoiding promises of secrecy, and escalating to specialist Student Wellbeing/Mental Health leads as per robust protocols.

- Collaboration with NHS and external agencies is automatic for urgent cases, but the first response is always personal, swift, and supportive due to Oakswood College's small size and familiarity.
- Where risk is immediate or high, emergency contacts ("trusted contacts") will be reached in accordance with best practice and sector recommendations, balancing confidentiality with duty of care.

Suicide Response Procedure

5. Response to a Suspected or Attempted Suicide

- a) Convene an Incident Response Team (including safeguarding/mental health, academic, accommodation, and senior leadership). Check Business Continuity Plan (including Critical Incident Management Plan) to ensure alignment if/where necessary.
- b) Coordinate internal and external communication, prioritising sensitivity and confidentiality, minimising speculation, and supporting those affected. Communication with families and staff support after the incident.
- c) Immediate and ongoing support offered to peers, staff, and the wider community, including facilitated access to external bereavement and crisis resources (e.g., Samaritans, PAPYRUS).
- d) Proactive Review: Engage in statutory reporting, sector review processes, and multi-agency response, sharing anonymised learning to prevent future tragedies.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Incident coordinators:** Use clear checklists for on-site or off-site incidents, reflecting both sector guidance and local context.
- **Wellbeing/Mental Health leads:** Direct the prevention, response, and support process, and liaise with external professionals.
- **Senior leaders:** Ensure policy oversight, an agile response, and a non-blaming campus environment.
- **All staff and student reps:** Attend training, be vigilant, raise concerns, support peers.

7. Community and Continuous Improvement

- Regular review of policy at senior governance level, including analysis of effectiveness, staff/student feedback, and engagement in national learning.

- Annual awareness campaigns and regular consultation with students to adapt prevention work for the needs of the particular student body.
- Leverage close staff-student relationships and direct feedback channels to continually update procedures.