



**Te Kauwhata Primary School**  
*'Successful Learners in an engaging and inclusive environment'*  
*'Learning Together' – 'Kia Ngatahi te Ako'*

## **Self Harm Policy and Guidelines**

NAG 5: Health and Safety

### Self-harm

Self harm is when someone deliberately causes physical harm or injury to themselves, usually without suicidal intent. Examples include cutting, burning, punching, scratching, or overdose without wanting to die. Students may self-harm for a number of different reasons and the practice is often considered a coping strategy to decrease distress. As self-harm can cause mental and physical health issues and is a risk factor for suicide, it should always be taken seriously.

Self-harming behaviour has become more common among young New Zealanders, and it is important for staff to be aware of the practice and how to respond

### Acting on Concerns:

Staff may notice evidencing of self-harming (such as cuts and bruises) or students may disclose that they are self-harming to a staff member or a friend, who may let a teacher know. If this happens, staff:

- listen calmly to the student without judgement
- explain the limits of confidentiality and that senior staff must be informed, to establish support for the student
- seek support from other school staff and inform the principal
- if suicide ideation is evident or there appears to be any risk of suicide, follow the [MOE Guidelines for Suicide Prevention](#).

We will work with the students, parents, and support services as appropriate, to set up and maintain support at school and outside of school. A support plan may be developed and staff monitor the student's continuing behaviour and wellbeing.

### Responding to self-harm incident that takes place at school

If a student self-harms in front of others at school, this may cause considerable distress to other students and staff. If this happens, staff:

- takes the student to the sick bay for first aid and call for medical services, if required
- keep an item that can be used by the students for self-harm out of reach
- follow the guidelines in our health and safety guidelines to manage the injury as required
- Check for suicide risk and arrange for the students to be assessed by an appropriate health professional
- if appropriate, depending on the nature of the event, contact the Behaviour Crisis Response Service and / or Traumatic Incident team
- follow our reporting of accident and incident guidelines

- work with the students and parents to ensure supports are in place

We will consult with family and support services and ensure that supports are in place before the student returns to school. After the student's return to school, staff continue to work collaboratively with the student, whānau, and support services to monitor the student's ongoing wellbeing.

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**Legislation:**

Health and Safety at Work Act

Children's Act 2014

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**Resources**

Ministry of Education: [Behaviour Support, Behaviour Crisis Response Service](#) and [Traumatic Incident](#) (contacts and resources)

Mental Health Foundation: [Self Harm](#) (Information and resources)

Resources for student and parents: [Youthline](#) and [Kidshealth](#) (information and resources)

Approved by Board Chairperson – signed for Board of Trustees      Date -

Revised:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson – signed for Board of Trustees

Date - 21/9/22

