



Dear Parents/Carers,

As we move towards the summer break I would like to share some advice and support from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LCSB) which highlight some of the current concerns both locally and nationally about the issues affecting young people today. I realise that these are sensitive issues and hope that the information provided will help increase understanding and perhaps support those who may be affected.

#### *Safety Information for Parents/Carers*

You may have heard recently in the media about tragic deaths of children who have taken their own lives. You may also be aware that reports both locally and nationally are concerned about the increase in young people who self-harm. Self-harm is often a way of coping and obtaining relief from a difficult and otherwise overwhelming situation or emotional state. It can take many forms but the most well known of these are young people cutting themselves or overdosing on medication. Self-harm is a major risk factor for subsequently committing suicide.

Another worrying issue is websites which promote self-harm and eventually encourage children to take their own lives.

Whilst there are no simple solutions to this problem some of the factors that are usually involved in incidents of self-harm are:

- Young people sharing information with their peers about their intent to self-harm, but not reporting this to any adult or organisation
- Social media being used for both peer to peer discussion and to also access what could be termed "promotional material" regarding self-harm
- The speed with which it seems that young people move from apparently feeling "low" to serious acts of self-harm
- The possibility that assessments and formal examinations trigger spikes in incidents

I am sure that parents/carers are aware of the options to help identify problems and that many of you will have had a conversation with your child about these concerns already. However, I have been asked to highlight the following suggestions:

- You should regularly monitor the social media your child is accessing
- Talk to your child about websites and social media
- Ask your child how they are feeling and if they state they are feeling anxious or stressed, discuss with them whether they feel able to cope.

If you have concerns or questions during term time please talk to your daughter's Tutor, Year Leader or a Pastoral Support Officer.

You can also get support and advice from:

- Your GP who can get specialist advice from Child and Adolescence Mental Health Services (CAMHS)



- Social Services: 020 8770 5000
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – 020 8770 6001
- Single point of access (SPA) to CAMHS – 0203 513 8000

There are also local resources that may be of use and can be found on the Sutton LCSB website: [www.suttonlscb.org](http://www.suttonlscb.org)

The Sutton LCSB has met recently and put into place extra support for young people especially over the summer break:

#### *Counselling support*

Skycasts:- these are free online group workshops. They offer practical tips and info about issues young people might be struggling with as well as the opportunity to meet other young people and share ideas in a safe, secure and confidential chat room. Past Skycasts are available online for young people to access.

Skyline:- is a free and friendly online counselling service for young people in Croydon, Sutton or Merton.

Skyline provides a safe online space to help young people talk about difficult things they might be facing. An allocated trained counsellor will listen and support the young person.

The above services are commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), more information can be found at the following links:

<https://www.skylinesupport.org/>

<https://www.talkofftherecord.org/>

#### Summer drop in sessions

The school nurses will run three drop in sessions over the holiday period each week beginning 24<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and ending 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017. The following telephone number can be used for young people to phone for support before deciding to drop in: 07500 783 914

Tuesdays: Nonsuch High School – 10am – 3pm

Wednesdays: Thomas Wall Children's Centre - 1 pm – 4pm

Thursdays: Europa Gallery Civic Centre – 10 am – 4pm

A leaflet about where to get help and support will be given to students before the end of term. I will also be putting safety advice into the school newsletter.

I realise that these are sensitive issues with no straightforward solutions but we wish to work closely with you to support the young people in our care.

I hope you all have a safe and relaxing summer break.

Yours faithfully,



Anne Holland  
Assistant Headteacher – Designated Safeguarding Lead

