

ITALIA CONTI CHISLEHURST

SELF-INJURY & HARMING POLICY

Italia Conti Chislehurst is committed to its core mission and duty of care for the continued dedication to the health, safety and happiness of its pupils. The self-injury policy is to understand, support and help any sufferer known to the academy and by recognising the warnings signs it will offer practical support to assist in the building of confidence, self-esteem and emotional well being of the individual.

Self-injury affects people from all walks of life, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or personal strength. Self-injury is not particularly related to music, emo or gothic cultures, or such stereotypes.

Self-injury is any deliberate, non-suicidal behaviour that inflicts physical injury to a person's own body. Self-injury is essentially a coping mechanism that enables a person to deal with intense emotional distress, creating a calming sensation. It may also be used to 'awaken' a person who is feeling numb or dissociated.

The most common forms of self-injury are scratching, cutting, burning and non-suicidal overdosing (chronic self-medication).

RISK FACTORS

Self-injury is very often a secretive behaviour and there may be no warning signs, but some of the following may indicate that a pupil is suffering internally which may lead to self-injury.

- negativity and lack of self-esteem;
- appearing unhappy or depressed
- out of character behaviour;
- a history of bullying or problems at home;
- a sudden change in friends or withdrawal from a group

Italia Conti Chislehurst will adopt the following protocols for dealing with the syndrome of self-injury and will implement a training and education programme for staff which will include:

Recognising the warning signs that a pupil may be self-injuring;

- Obvious cuts, scratches or burns that do not appear of an accidental nature;
- Frequent 'accidents' that cause physical injury;
- Regularly bandaged arms and/or wrists;
- Reluctance to take part in a class or other activity that requires a change of clothes or more revealing clothing. Wearing long sleeves and trousers in very hot weather

EATING DISORDERS - ANOREXIA NERVOSA – BULIMIA NERVOSA

Eating disorders involve a disturbance of eating habits or weight control behaviour which results in impairment to physical health or which affects the person's psychological and social functioning. Both anorexia nervosa & bulimia pose serious health risks for young people. For some young people, the disorder is only brief, but in others it becomes a long-term problem and there is a risk of death. People with eating disorders have an increased risk of suicide and self harm. Early intervention is needed.

Italia Conti Chislehurst is experienced in identifying warning signs which may include the following;

- Weight loss without any other illness that would account for it
- Changes in character
- Obsessive concern about body weight, shape and dieting
- Extreme fear of gaining weight or of eating
- Unrealistic belief about being fat
- Marked distress around meal times. Avoiding mealtimes with others
- Evidence of depression, anxiety and thoughts of self-harm
- Lying or evading questions about types and amounts of food consumed.
- Lack of stamina and obvious denial about weight loss
- Poor progress in class

Italia Conti Chislehurst believes that better prognosis is associated with earlier detection and treatment. Therefore the following **protocols and procedure** will be applied should a pupil or student be suspected of having an eating disorder problem.

Procedures and Priorities

1. The Principal will meet with the pupil or student to discuss their cause for concern. Should it be deemed necessary they will explain that they may have an illness which can be helped with the appropriate treatment and support.
2. Responsible Family members or guardians will be contacted in order that the young person or student is referred to their General Practitioner who can check and monitor their weight and body mass index (BMI) and refer them to other appropriate professionals which may include; Psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, counsellors, dieticians and nutritionists,
3. Attendance may be, or in extreme cases will be suspended until allied health professionals and their GP state that they are fit to resume classes.

ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Identifying immediate substance-related risks of an individual is vital to ensure other young people's well being and safety. Italia Conti Chislehurst will attempt to enable the young person to get appropriate professional help before they continue with their schooling.

Roles & Responsibility:

As a weekend school Italia Conti Chislehurst is not well placed provide the kind of on going support and assistance required. However, it is hoped that parents will liaise with the school so that the individual concerned can be supported.

Italia Conti Chislehurst will exclude any pupil who encourages or pressurises others to self-harm in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and Anti-bullying Policy.

The Academy will inform parents if appropriate and liaise with them as to how best to manage the situation.

Pupils and parents will be made aware that it is not always possible to retain confidentiality if the circumstances or reason for self-injury, eating disorder or drug abuse is in conflict with the academy's safeguarding or anti-bullying policy. It may be deemed necessary for other professional bodies to be informed such as social services, educational psychologists or law enforcement officers.

The policy will be reviewed:
SEPTEMBER 2022