



Counselling Policy

To create a school that unlocks the
potential of every child

إنشاء مدرسة قادرة على إطلاق العنان
إمكانات كل طفل

Approved/reviewed by	
Assistant Head of Pastoral	
Date of review	August 2023
Date of next review	August 2024

This procedure is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulation

COUNSELLING: DEFINITION

Counselling is the process of building awareness and learning coping strategies to build efficiency in maintaining social and emotional wellbeing. This can be offered in a one-to-one or group format. The process involves reflective discussions and activities targeted at goal specific targets identified for the betterment of the unique individual.

The goals are determined based on concerns as identified by the student themselves, teachers or parents.

How is counselling beneficial:

- Improved communication and interpersonal skills.
- Greater self-acceptance and self-esteem.
- Ability to change self-defeating behaviors/habits.
- Better expression and management of emotions
- Efficient management of life stressors

ROLE OF THE COUNSELLOR:

- Offer tailored support strategies to students in individual or group set up.
- Create assemblies that build skills and support the development of healthy strategies of coping with stress, emotional regulation and strong sense of self.
- Collaborate with the school community to create support structures for maximised experience of student not only in class but in school in general.
- Offer parental guidance and support to help cope with specific challenges.
- General Parental information session with topics that offer insight into child development and maintaining healthy communication styles.
- Teacher professional development to build awareness on mindful classroom practices that are cohesive and inclusive for all students in the class.
- Working with Peer mentors to offer support to larger school community through monitored engagements, wellbeing initiatives and

IDENTIFYING VULNERABLE STUDENTS:

Vulnerable students are usually identified through parental concerns, reports or teacher observation.

- Additional educational needs (SEN students)
- Gifted and talented (G and T)
- Neurodiverse (Autism /ADHD)
- Students who have challenging home environments
- Students whose families are struggling with high stress or severe crisis
- Students observed to have significant changes in regular emotional and behavioural patterns

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF DIAGNOSIS:

All students have varied levels of learning and emotional capacity. Similarly, the level of challenges the students face differs. Some students struggle with elements of behaviour and learning and benefit from additional skills and support. Others have challenges that lie outside the range of typicality which require altered and varied interventions to match their strengths. The second pool of students often fall under a specific neurological or mental health diagnosis.

It is important to note that a diagnosis does not imply the inability of a student. It mainly offers targeted challenge areas that allow for strength-based interventions to be tailored to build efficiency in learning and behaviour practices.

A formal diagnosis also allows for eligibility of additional support strategies that include:

- Extra time in assessments
- Language exemption
- Scribe or Reader
- Separate room

REFERRAL PROCESS:

Students:

Students can reach out to the counsellor independently with their struggles and challenges. Based on the severity of the issue, the counsellor will reach out to parents and/or relevant teachers.

Parents:

If parents have observed any cause for concern, they are welcome to reach out to the counsellor and or form tutor. Following this, the counsellor will check in with the student and give feedback as needed.

Teachers:

If teachers have observed a significant shift in student behaviour and level of class engagement, they will let the counsellor know who will follow up with a check in with a student.

Some students drop in on a need basis where they seek out support during times that they need it.

Other students are offered fixed time slots for weekly sessions (6 to 10 weeks). These slots are often non-curricular periods; however, they can be during curriculum hours based on level of urgency and need for support. A discussion is facilitated at the end of the block of session to reflect on goals, progress and plan.

COUNSELLING PROCESS:

The student and counsellor discuss specific goals/ targets to be addressed during their time together.

The discussion is often a balance between reflection on the individual's emotional experience and identifying comprehensive strategies to support shift to effective coping and management of self.

These strategies are drawn from behaviour therapy and psychotherapeutic interventions based on what is most relevant to the individual.

The individual is often given reflective homework and invited to try the strategies and share feedback on how it worked for them. Based on this feedback these strategies are either reinforced or altered.

CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

The Counsellor has a clear discussion with the students stating the boundaries of confidentiality. The counsellor is entitled to share information with parent/ senior leadership in case of:

- Disclosure of self-harm
- Disclosure of harm to other
- Sharing safeguarding concerns from home or school environment
- Information that may cause detrimental effect to child's development and experience of a healthy life

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The school counsellor keeps up to date with emerging trends of vulnerabilities and challenges with the relevant populations. There is a consistent scope of professional upskilling through workshops, seminars and courses.

The teachers are equipped with relevant language and strategies to support emotionally vulnerable children in the classroom environment. They are constant conversation and reflection of variations and amendments to incorporate needs of children within reason when they may be going through highly stressful complications in their life.

Parents are encouraged to explore the strategies shared with children through regular workshops in order to offer consistent reinforcement of the same to students. These workshops include in-house presentations by the school counsellor and presentations by external professionals.