

Student Counselling Services Policy

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff

St John's College, Cardiff

STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICES POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of the School:

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,
Infant School & Nursery.

Version: September 2024

Introduction

A confidential Counselling Service is offered to pupils by St John's College in partnership with BCS Counselling Service. The primary task is to enable individuals to become more effective in their lives within and outside of the college setting.

Whilst academic staff, support staff and others may use counselling skills, it is vital to recognise the service as a core activity, carried out by professionally trained practitioners.

This document reflects Government Guidelines for Counselling in Schools, the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (NCPS) Good Practice Guidance for counselling in schools and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). This document will be updated and reviewed in conjunction with the development of the service provision.

In line with its Safeguarding obligations, the school has undertaken the necessary checks for each individual counsellor to ensure their suitability to work with children.

These policies and procedures apply to all individuals working for BCS in partnership with St John's College.

Role of the Counselling Service

Working with students offers them personal time to explore their concerns, issues and wellbeing. The range of issues is widespread and as per Government and NCPS guidelines covers:

- **Therapeutic issues**
- **Developmental issues**
- **Educative/supportive issues**

Work with staff involves offering support and guidance to staff who are involved in supporting students. Work with other professionals either internal e.g. ALNCo, Heads of Year or external agencies e.g. CAMHS, contributes to the overall well-being of students for consultation and referral purposes.

Accountability

The Assistant Head Pastoral (Mrs. E Jones) who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has overall line management responsibility for the service (at time of writing). This is to ensure the service reflects the needs of students and contributes to the success of St John's College.

Our counselling team along with pastoral support responds to referrals for counselling support. Following an initial meeting and assessment, sessions are arranged at a time to suit the needs of the pupil with consideration for their studies. Responsibilities of the Health and Wellbeing Officer (Mrs M Holland) include, day-to-day contact with BSC Counselling Services, overall coordination of the service provision, communication strategy, development ideas, coordination of the counselling meetings, liaising with key members of staff and production of all reports and statistics.

Clinical Supervision

Our dedicated counselling team will undertake Clinical Supervision which takes place once per month for 1.5 hours at the offices of BCS, where the work discussed includes the work undertaken at St John's College. The clinical supervisor must be named and documented to the school.

Paul Phillips - paul@bcscounselling.com

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is used to maintain and develop knowledge and skills relevant to the scope of practice within the service and to adhere to HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an integral part of the Ethical Framework to which the service adheres. Maintaining confidentiality is essential to pupils and to the school who are seeking to offer a professional and effective service. However, for legal reasons it is not possible to offer absolute confidentiality and the limitations are made clear to each new pupil within the assessment:

- If anyone else under 18 years old is at serious risk
- If you are under 18 years old and your safety is at risk
- If you may harm yourself or others
- If you have serious health issues and your GP could help

N.B. Consent to disclose information will be sought wherever possible.

Practitioners working with young people under the age of 18 need to be clear about the applicable law; generally, under English/Welsh law young people aged 16-18 have the same entitlement to confidentiality as adults. A triangle of trust has been formed between the counsellors, the Health and Wellbeing Office and the DSL who are named in this document when considerations are required for a pupil's wellbeing.

Reporting abuse can never be an easy decision nor can policies be written to cover every eventuality. St John's College has a policy and procedure for dealing with disclosures of abuse by students. The person with overall responsibility for child protection issues is the Designated Safeguarding Lead along with the Safeguarding Team.

➤ **See also Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.**

Working Practices

In order to support the wellbeing of our pupils, the school will fund six 50-minute counselling sessions during their time at St John's College.

Referrals to the Counselling Service can be made via the DSL, Heads of Year, Health and Wellbeing Officer and by Parents directly via the Head of Year. A copy of the referral and consent form is in the appendix, alongside a copy of the letter sent to parents of pupils.

Mrs Meredyth Holland - Health and Wellbeing Officer, works closely with the counselling service (BCS), and manages all appointments under the guidance of the DSL, Mrs Emma Jones.

Prior to the first session, parents are required to complete a consent form. The consent form must be signed and returned to Mrs. Holland / Mrs. Jones so that the first session can be arranged.

BCS will provide pupils with a parent and carers information sheet from BCS Counselling Services. This document is designed to give guidelines on the service provision and provides an outline of the working agreement between a pupil and practitioner.

Pupils' appointment times are issued to have minimal impact on their studies and will be issued weekly. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for attending their sessions. Sixth Form students are responsible for checking their emails to confirm their appointment times. Where possible, Sixth Form students are issued an appointment during their free periods. Counselling sessions can either take place face-to-face in the **Quiet Room** on the main site, or online. Preferably, sessions will take place face-to-face.

Pupils are informed that they have six funded sessions and that they must inform Mrs. Holland if they are not able to attend a session due to illness or a planned excursion. Non-attendance without informing Mrs. Holland will be counted towards their six funded sessions.

Parents will be notified as their child nears the end of the funded sessions and in cases where further sessions are required, BCS Counselling will invoice parents directly. Bills will be charged on a session by session basis at the charge rate of £40.00 per session. The data captured in the consent form will be transferred to BCS Counselling in order for the billing arrangement to commence.

In order to ensure that appointment times have a minimal impact on studies, with the permission of the parents, Mrs. Holland will continue coordinate appointments.

Written records are kept securely by the service and retained for 7 years, at which time they will be destroyed within a secure and confidential process.

Reports and statistics are produced at the end of the academic year in the following format:

- Counselling Report - An overview of the service provision together with any new developments and future strategy.
- Statistics – Detailing student information accessing the service and attendance data.

Counselling Documents

The documents listed below have been developed as standard documentation for the counselling service. All counsellors working within the service must use these documents when working with students. The Lead Practitioner will review and update them in line with NCPS Guidelines, HCPC and St John's College policies and procedures.

- Student Details Form
- Record of Sessions Attended
- Assessment Form
- Core Score Forms
- Session Notes
- Feedback Questionnaire

St John's College is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all, as well as promoting respect, honesty, ambition, teamwork, trust and kindness amongst students and staff.

Student feedback questionnaires will be given out towards the end of counselling for ongoing evaluation purposes of the service provision.

School Counsellors

The School Counselling service is provided by



Meet our counsellors



Victoria Lock



Tahreen Arshad



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff



Confidential Referral Form - Counselling

Name:	Year Group:
Presenting Issue:	
Date of Referral:	Date of Ending Session:
Number of sessions completed:	Notes:

If the counsellor is concerned about the pupil's safety or the safety of other pupils, they will share the information with Mrs Emma Jones and Mrs Meredyth Holland and this will be seen as a triangle of trust.

- **Emma Jones** - *Assistant Head, Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*
ejones@stjohnscollegecardiff.com
- **Meredyth Holland** - *Health and Wellbeing Officer*
mholland@stjohnscollegecardiff.com



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff



Parental Consent Form

Please complete the information below:

Child's Name:	
Parent(s) / Carer(s) Name(s):	
Address:	
E-mail Address:	
Contact Telephone Number:	

Please sign and date the form to signify your understanding of the following:-

- I understand that St John's College will fund up to 6 counselling sessions for my child. I consent for my Child to attend the counselling sessions and acknowledge that any further sessions will be billed directly by BCS Counselling Services. **NB: Parental funded sessions will only be arranged following direct discussion with you.**
- In the event that additional sessions are required, I provide consent for the information collected in this form to be transferred to BCS Counselling Services: <https://www.bcsmentalhealth.com/> in order for the counselling /billing arrangement to commence. St John's College has undertaken due diligence and is satisfied that BCS Counselling Services process data in line with the EU General Data Protection Regulations 2018. A copy of BCS Data Protection Policy can be obtained directly from Mr Toby Messer - *CEO/Founder*, toby@bcscounselling.com.

Signed:	
Dated:	

Example of letter sent to parent/s / guardian/s

Dear Parents.

Further to our recent discussions, you will be aware that <CHILD'S NAME> is keen to utilise the school's counselling service, provided by BCS Counselling, for and on behalf of St John's College.

Our pupils will have difficulties and worries from time to time as part of normal life and there may occasionally be circumstances when it might be preferable to talk to someone who is independent of school and home, and who is a specialist in listening and helping find solutions. Emotional support for young people has always been important and nowadays, pupils can feel under more pressure than ever before, both socially and academically, so support from school as well as at home is vital. With this in mind, St John's College has committed to fund up to six 50-minute counselling sessions for its pupils.

BCS Counsellors have partnered with our school to provide our pupils with an invaluable resource to support their mental health and overall well-being. Accessing the school's counselling provision offers numerous benefits to our pupils, impacting their well-being and academic success in significant ways. Here are some key reasons why engaging in counselling can greatly assist our pupils.

- **Emotional Support:** Counselling provides a safe and confidential space for students to express their thoughts, feelings, and concerns. This emotional support can help them cope with stress, anxiety, depression, or any other emotional challenges they may be facing.
- **Improved Mental Health:** Access to counselling can lead to improved mental health outcomes. Students can learn coping strategies, stress management techniques, and develop better self-awareness, which can contribute to a healthier mental state.
- **Enhanced Academic Performance:** When students are emotionally and mentally well, they are better equipped to focus on their studies, leading to improved academic performance. Counselling can help them address any issues that may be affecting their ability to concentrate and learn.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Counsellors can assist students in resolving conflicts with peers, teachers, or family members. Learning effective communication and conflict resolution skills can lead to better relationships and a more positive school environment.
- **Increased Self-Esteem:** Through counselling, students can work on improving their self-esteem and self-confidence. This can have a lasting impact on their self-perception and how they interact with others.

- **Life Skills:** Counselling can teach essential life skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, and goal-setting. These skills are valuable not only in school but also in future endeavours.
- **Prevention of Escalation:** Early intervention through counselling can prevent minor issues from escalating into more significant problems. Addressing concerns promptly can reduce the risk of more severe emotional or behavioural issues later on.
- **Healthy Coping Mechanisms:** Students can learn healthier ways to cope with stress and adversity, reducing the likelihood of turning to negative behaviours or substance abuse as a means of escape.
- **Support during Transitions:** Counselling can be particularly beneficial during times of transition, such as moving to a new school, dealing with family changes, or preparing for exams. It provides a stable support system during these challenging periods.
- **Promotion of Resilience:** Counselling helps students build resilience, allowing them to bounce back from setbacks and face challenges with a more positive outlook.

In order for your child to access the funded sessions, please complete the attached consent form and return to mholland@stjohnscollegecardiff.com

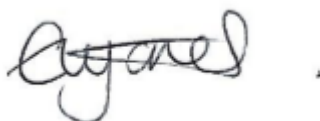
Please note, there is an opportunity to extend the counselling sessions in cases where a pupil has utilised their funded sessions. In such cases, BCS will form a separate billing arrangement with you directly. Further information can be found within the school's Student Counselling Services Policy.

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Best Wishes,



Meredyth Holland *Prof.Dip.Pys*
Health and Wellbeing Officer



Emma Jones
Assistant Head, Pastoral
& Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)