

## Counselling: A Guide for Students

### **What is counselling about?**

At times we all have problems that worry us. Think of a confusing jigsaw when the pieces are difficult to fit together. Talking about a problem in counselling is like sorting out the pieces so we can build a picture that makes sense to us.

Sometimes it's difficult to talk to parents, carers, friends or teachers about things that are making us anxious. A counsellor is someone you can talk to in a different way, someone who will listen to you very carefully, who will not judge you or tell you what to do.

Counselling is about helping you to work things out for yourself, to look at things differently so that you can make your own decisions and choices. It also can help you to feel differently about yourself.

### **What do people talk about in counselling?**

Whatever matters to them. Whatever is worrying them. It could be lots of different things. Here are some examples of problems and some thoughts, questions and feelings that young people have had in the past:

**Parents separating.** Is it my fault? Their breaking up is breaking me up too.

**Chaos at home.** I want to go out with my mates and make my own decisions. I'm arguing with my parents all of the time. They never listen to me, why should I listen to them???

**Making friends/keeping friends.** Everyone else seems to have loads of friends. I haven't, what's wrong with me?

**I'm feeling angry but I don't know why.** I'm worried because I keep feeling that I want to lash out at people. I can't control myself. I'm always in trouble at home or in school because of it.

**Bullies.** I don't want to come to school. Bullies bug me every day and it's getting worse.

**A tough time in school.** The work is piling up. I'm getting more and more behind. I can't seem to get on with it.

**Death of someone special.** I miss this person so much. I'll never get through this. It'll be like this forever. Nobody understands how bad I'm feeling.

## **Feelings about myself .**

Sometimes I don't understand how I feel or why I feel like I do.

### **How will I know if counselling is right for me?**

You can meet the counsellor for one or more sessions to find out for yourself, you can ask questions and see how you feel.

The counsellor will talk about where to come and how often you will meet.

Counselling is voluntary. You have the choice to come or not. Whatever you decide will be ok.

### **My problems and worries are private. Will other people know what I have talked about?**

**No.** What you talk about is confidential. This means that what you talk about is between you and the counsellor. It's your time and space to be with someone who is there for you and nobody else. If *you* want to talk to anyone else about what you have discussed in the counselling session that is up to you.

The counsellor will not pass on anything you have told them unless you or someone else is at risk of harm. The counsellor will then need to talk to someone else to help keep you safe, but will always try and talk about it with you first.

### **Will anything be written about me?**

Keeping information about people safe and confidential is very important to the counsellor. The counsellor will make some notes about what has been talked about in the session. These are kept safely in a locked filing cabinet. All information kept is private and confidential unless there is a agreed and overriding need to share this information in your best interests. You may see this if you want to.

A counsellor presents their work to a counselling supervisor regularly. This person checks the counsellor is working well with you. Only your first name is used.

### **How do I get to see the counsellor?**

Someone may have suggested it to you, or you can begin by talking to a member of staff whom you trust. This may be your House Tutor or your Raising Standards Leader (RSL).

A request for counselling form will be completed and given to your counsellor, who will see you when they have a space and discuss your wishes with you.

You can come to counselling without your parents being informed. Though, if you agree, a letter may be sent home to inform your parents/carers that you are seeing a counsellor.

After you have finished counselling you may be given an evaluation form to complete. This form is anonymous, unless you choose to put your name on it. The feedback you give will let

the counsellor know how well they are helping the students.

If you have any concerns or complaints you are welcome to speak to your counsellor or to contact your RSL.

Here are some comments made by students who have been to counselling...

*“Having counselling has helped me a lot. I have been able to discuss my problems instead of locking them away, which is what I used to do. It has been a very big help to me.”*

*“It helped me understand my problems and to overcome them.”*

*“It really helped me to talk more to my family and people around me that I could talk to.”*

*“The counselling has helped me to feel confident in myself.”*

*“I don’t feel ashamed to admit that I need help because now I know that I am not the only one that needs help.”*

**Academy Counsellor: Sara Firth**

All students are welcome to come along and have a chat with me, I am available on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings in W2.17.

I can be contacted by email on [sara.firth@langleyacademy.org](mailto:sara.firth@langleyacademy.org)