

Counselling policy

The Role of the College Counsellor

The College Counsellor is employed to help the College address the emotional needs that young people can have in response to a wide range of experiences such as family breakdown, bereavement, loss, family and peer relationship difficulties, anxiety, bullying and loss or lack of self-esteem.

Counselling at The Ladies' College is part of the Pastoral Care within the school, and is an onsite response for those students needing the additional expertise that counselling brings to the overall pastoral support system.

For a pupil from Melrose/Melrose Pre-School to be eligible to receive counselling, signed permission will be required from their parent/guardian. This will be arranged by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

Students in the Senior School and Sixth Form are deemed Gillick competent and may give consent without parent/guardian involvement initially.

The Counsellor will provide up to 4 counselling sessions per student (1 x 30 mins (initial session) and 3 x 40 mins sessions). If required, further sessions may be available at an additional charge and the Counsellor will have a discussion with the student and request permission for contact to be made with their parent/guardian as further sessions will be chargeable.

Other Professionals

In order to reduce any potential conflicts of therapeutic effort, the College Counsellor will not provide counselling to students who are currently in receipt of therapeutic support from another agency, e.g. CAMHS or private counselling.

Private Work

Where there is a need or wish on the student's part to move on to private counselling, The Ladies' College expects the Counsellor to provide signposting to other services in order to facilitate this. No individual Counsellor will be recommended.

The College Counsellor will not see College students in a private capacity.

Statement of Good Practice and Confidentiality

The Counsellor must be a member of a professional body and be familiar with and work to the guidelines of their Code of Ethics. Any breaches will be dealt with through the complaints procedures of the member's professional body. The Counsellor must notify The Ladies' College if they are the subject of a complaint to her professional body and the College will follow its own Complaints Policy internally.

The young person's consent is the ethically preferred way of resolving any dilemmas over confidentiality, but exceptional circumstances may prevent the Counsellor from seeking the young person's consent to a breach of confidence, due to the urgency and seriousness of the situation, for example, preventing the young person from causing serious harm to self or others. In such circumstances the Counsellor has an ethical responsibility to act in ways which balance the young person's right to confidentiality against the need to communicate with others and to follow the College's safeguarding policy.

The Parent/Guardian of pupils from Melrose/Melrose Pre-School will be advised of this during the consent procedure and the pupil will be advised when they meet with the Counsellor.

Students from the Senior School and the Sixth Form will have this confidentiality clause outlined in the initial consent form at the outset.

Record Keeping

Appointments, cancellations, contracting arrangements and all relevant paperwork will be responsibly held by the College Counsellor at all times in accordance with the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law 2017.

The school adopts a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law 2017, and this is updated as necessary to reflect best practice in data management. Each young person's counselling records are kept under an anonymous ID number and stored securely. Statistical data will be collated on an annual basis and no student will be identified within the data collected.

Regarding 'Access to Records' the Counselling Service will adhere to the GDPR policy as set out by The Ladies' College under the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) 2017 Law.

Counselling records, including process notes, may be requested by the courts during hearings about the welfare of children. If the College Counsellor is given a Court Order to appear in court or produce their process notes, they may obtain legal advice so that they can make representations to the Court in the appropriate manner, to limit disclosure of non-relevant sensitive client information.

Referral

1) Melrose/Melrose Pre-School referrals will be by email from the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher direct to the Counsellor (after discussion and signed permission from a parent/guardian).

2) All Senior School and Sixth Form referrals can be made by any member of school staff. A student may talk directly to any member of school staff, or the Counsellor to self-refer.