



JAGS COUNSELLING SUPPORT POLICY

Counselling aims to provide young people with an opportunity to talk through their concerns in a non-judgemental and supportive environment and to help them to find their own ways of addressing their difficulties. Counselling within schools has shown to bring about significant reductions in psychological distress in the short term, and to help young people to move towards their personal goals. It is seen as an effective way of bringing about improvements in mental health and well-being, and to helping children and young people to engage with studying and learning. Our pastoral staff are trained to be able to offer support for students with mild to moderate mental health concerns (such as anxiety, conduct disorder, substance use disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder) and have had training in trauma and mental health first aid.

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in EYFS.

In JAGS there are a large number of people for students to talk to including their Form Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Heads (7,8 & 9; 10 & 11; Sixth Form), the Senior Deputy Head, Assistant Head Pastoral, Nurses and SENDCo. In the Junior School – the Head, Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head Pastoral, Form/Class teachers, and Nurses. More specific counselling services are provided by our two fully qualified onsite counsellors who follow the BACP/HCPC ethical framework. The therapy approach is integrative and includes Art Psychotherapy and Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy.

Confidentiality

Our counselling service is tailor made to suit the needs of JAGS. The pastoral team may suggest that a short period of counselling may be appropriate. Pupils can self-refer for a counselling drop-in session; however, a referral for ongoing counselling requires parental consent. Parents can contact their daughter's Head of Section to discuss a counselling referral.

'A listening ear' is often all that is needed to support our pupils but where further interventions are needed, our counsellors will advise.

The counsellors and chaplain also run drop in wellbeing clubs during lunchtime, such as mindfulness/Do Nothing Club and groups focused on the therapeutic use of arts as well as transition workshops for key school stages.

The counselling provision is fully confidential and pupils and parents attending appointments can trust that no information will be passed on to any other parties, unless in discussion with families. However, in each session the counsellors will make it clear that if pupils divulge information that may mean that the pupil or anyone else is at risk to self or others then the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) would be informed immediately and act upon their concerns.

The Counsellors, Nurses, SENDCo and Senior Deputy Head meet regularly to discuss caseloads and the Senior Deputy Head updates the Head on a weekly basis.

Our Child Protection Online Management System is used to log sessions, giving a brief overview of topic but not details, unless relevant to safeguarding concerns. Our counsellors keep their notes securely and any details of a safeguarding nature are accessible to the safeguarding team, as appropriate.

The school offers a Health Assured Employee Assistance programme to staff should counselling support be required.

From May 2023, the EAP is provided by BHSF Rise with a 24-hour confidential Helpline: 0800 285 1538 and website www.myrisehub.co.uk

Appendix 1

JAGS Counselling Contract

Counsellor Responsibilities:

- To be available at the agreed time
- To start and end on time
- To offer a quiet, appropriate and undisturbed space
- To maintain safe, professional boundaries
- To regard all contact and information as confidential unless she has reasonable doubt concerning safety of client or others.
- To encourage client autonomy
- To work within the BACP Ethical Framework (available upon request) including regular supervision
- To review the therapeutic work and relationship regularly
- In the unlikely event of the therapist cancelling, an alternative appointment is offered ASAP

Client Responsibilities

- To attend punctually
- To be respectful to the counsellor and property in her room
- To agree to give permission to inform nominated safeguarding staff if the counsellor has serious concerns about risk to self (client) or others.

Remote access

Additional information to be agreed by client and parents

The appointment will be arranged via email and followed up by the counsellor by phone.

All other conditions remain as above and all safeguarding principles and protocols will be followed, including contacting the DSL/DDSL in the event of a safeguarding concern.

Signed Client: _____

Date: _____

Signed Parent: _____

Date: _____

Signed Counsellor _____

Date _____

JAGS Counselling referral form

This referral form should be uploaded to CPOMS and RMR flagged to approve this referral.

Date of Referral *

Do the parents/carers understand why this referral is being made and has parental consent been obtained? If not, why? *

Yes / No

Does the student agree to the referral being made? *

Yes / No

Details of Child/Young Person being Referred

Name	*	Date of Birth	
Known as	*	Form	
		Year group	

Does the child/young person referred have Special Educational Needs / Disability / Learning Disability?

Professional Network

Are adult mental health services involved with the family already? Yes / No/unknown

Referrer's Details *

Name

Job Title

Email

Reason for Referral *please attach additional sheets if you need more space*

What is the problem you are seeking help with? (include any risk factors, e.g. self-harm, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, etc.)

How long has it been causing difficulties? Are the difficulties at school and home?

.....
Have there been any recent changes in the child / young person's or family's life?

.....
What has already been tried?

.....
What do you think would help support the student?

.....
What are the parent/carers' and child/young person's attitudes to counselling?

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Are there any known risk factors:

a) To self:

b) To others:

c) To professionals:

Is there a history of any developmental delay for this child? E.g. speech and language	Yes / No
Have there been any concerns that this child/young person is displaying symptoms of ADHD?	Yes / No
In case of a suspected SEND, has the SENCO team been involved?	Yes / No

Appendix 3

Counselling Risk assessment Online Learning

For online counselling during school holidays where continuous care is deemed beneficial. Pupils may be provided with online Teams counselling with their parents' knowledge.

Risk	Control Measure	Outcome	Remarks
Parents are unaware of sessions taking place	Parents and pupils to be provided with an updated contract outlining the move back to in school counselling	Pupil, parent and counsellor to sign an updated contract	Some pupils and parents may prefer online counselling and this is permissible, dependent upon the sessions taking place during the counsellor's usual working hours. Only sessions agreed in advance, and logged on CPOMS can take place in this way.
Pupil may contact counsellor out of hours and at inappropriate times	The counsellor should be contacted by the pupil by Teams and only use Teams for video meetings	Boundaries must be made clear to pupil and parents Counsellor should be clear about working hours	Counsellor should use an out of office signposting message when not working
To what extent does the child have the capacity to manage the safety of their environment without adult support or intervention?	Age of the child must be taken into account	Conversation with parents and staff	
To what extent does the child have exclusive control over the equipment (telephone, computer, tablet, etc.) and what is the risk to confidentiality?	Discussion with child about privacy. Quiet space to be found in which to have conversations Therapist to prepare a safety and boundary management checklist to go through at the start of each session (for example, where in the house are you, who else is in the room, where are any animals, what will be do if we are interrupted, etc.)	Parents to agree to child's privacy during appointment	

Safeguarding concerns	<p>Schedule sessions during 'working hours' (to ensure the availability of support services)</p> <p>Identify key members of staff to whom to refer</p> <p>Use emergency contacts in event of DSL being unavailable or the situation requiring immediate intervention by the police</p>	Therapist to have list of school contacts and outside agencies to whom to refer	Counsellor is working to BACP ethical guidelines
Appointment allocations	Consider whether it is possible to keep timing as regular and consistent with 'normal' therapy sessions. When working with child clients alone (rather than child and parent), agree to a shorter period of contact as relevant to the content and purpose of the session.	Reduced appointment time to be taken into account given the intensity of telephone conversations	
Changes to where data is stored	Consider security of data	Written notes to be under lock and key and 'overview' notes to be held on CPOMS	More detailed notes need to be kept on CPOMS to ensure that the pastoral team is kept abreast of any changes to the child's circumstances or ability to engage online.
<p>Clinical risks</p> <p>Does the child have current or pre-existing risk? Or is the risk external in origin, (e.g. originating in the environment) and could on-going contact with the therapist exacerbate this? Or is the risk internal (i.e. risk of harm to self and is a safety contract in place?</p>	Review risk assessment for individual cases	Any additional measures put in place	
Will social distancing or self-isolation increase or decrease the risk?	Review risk assessment for individual cases	Any additional measures put in place	As pupils move back to in school counselling, they may present with anxiety issues

Does the therapist have the means to contact the parent if they need to intervene within the room for the safety of the child (for example, the parent's mobile number)?	Contract should include emergency contact details for parents	Emergency contact details obtained	Important that counsellor can contact parents in event of safeguarding emergency
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'Drop in' counselling sessions

Some pupils may only require a 'drop in' session to discuss a concern.

Risk	Control Measure	Outcome	Remarks
A 'one off' session becomes an unofficial referral	Clear boundaries given	Pupil should be discussed with Assistant Head	Actions recorded on CPOMS
Parents are unaware of the sessions, placing counsellor and child in a vulnerable position	After two 'drop in' sessions, pupil should be told that to continue with sessions, they will be required to have a full referral	If pupil does not want a full referral, they should be sign-posted to Childline, YoungMinds, KOOTH etc.	To ensure transparency of service and to protect the counsellor, clear expectations of 'drop in' sessions must be made