

Sent via IRIS 06.09.22
MF/:P/MKB/SchCounselling
6 September 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: School Counselling Service

The school provides an on-site counselling service for all our students and this will recommence week beginning 19 September 2022.

Young people have a range of issues to deal with on a daily basis and they may need help with their problems and worries. Sometimes, no matter how well they get on with their parents / carers or teachers, they may find it difficult to talk to them and need to access help and support by talking to someone else they trust. We therefore believe that this "on site" type of support will be useful to our students who may benefit from talking to an adult other than a family member or member of staff at school. This is particularly relevant in the current climate we are all operating in.

The counselling service here in school will provide our students with the opportunity of working with a trained counsellor in a confidential environment where they will be encouraged to develop their personal resources to cope with life's challenges.

Suzette Breeden leads our school counselling team and although the team is independent from the school staff, they know and understand the school and will liaise with teachers and other staff to help our students, while at the same time maintaining confidentiality.

The service will be available on a confidential basis and students can either be referred by their Head of Year; or can self-refer. The referrals are managed / processed by Miss Pepperrell (Director of Faculty - Inclusion and Student Support / SENDCo) and she liaises with Suzette as required.

Should you wish to know more about the service or if you do not want your child to access this service please contact:

Miss Pepperrell pepperrell@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Ms Francis francis@shirley.croydon.sch.uk

by Friday 16 September 2022. If nothing is received by that date, it will be assumed that your child can access counselling should either they self-refer or we refer them.

Yours sincerely

Ms M Francis
Deputy Principal

School Counselling

Information for young people

Sometimes life can be tough, and people growing up can be under pressure. Having someone you can really talk to may be a help - perhaps a friend, a teacher, your parents/carers, or someone in the family. At times, everyone feels worried or has problems that may be hard to talk about with the people close to you. You may worry about whether they will understand, whether you can trust them, whether they will blame you, or ignore your feelings. That is when you may think about talking to the school counsellor.

How is a counsellor different?

- they don't blame or judge you
- they don't tell you what to do
- they are there for you - whatever the problem
- they are good at listening carefully
- they can see you in school time
- they help you sort things out in a way which suits you
- they understand how your school works and can get you more help and information if you need it
- they can give you the time and space you need
- they have had plenty of training and practice to help them do their job well.

Will the counsellor tell anyone about what I say?

A counsellor would not ordinarily tell other people about you or your situation without your permission. However, if they think that you or someone else may be at risk or in danger, they may need to get help from others to keep you safe. They will talk with you about this and work with you to try to find the best thing to do for you.

What kind of things can I tell the counsellor about?

Whatever is on your mind, problems, decisions, worries, and changes. It could be lots of different things - making friends and relationships, parents separating, losing your temper and getting into trouble at home and at school, teasing and bullying, losing someone special, mixed-up feelings, health worries, exams and coursework. All these things can affect how you feel and how you behave. Talking with you about your worries and problems is the start of helping you sort them out.

How does it work?

Seeing a counsellor might be your idea, or your parents/carers or a teacher might suggest it. You don't have to decide straight away. You can meet the counsellor first, to ask questions and find out more. Counselling is voluntary - it's your choice, and whatever you decide is OK. You are likely to be offered appointments for regular sessions for several weeks in a room in school where you won't be disturbed. The school would like to contact your parents/carers to let them know you are seeing a counsellor but it may still be possible to come to counselling without your parents/carers being told, and you can discuss this with the counsellor.