

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Status: | Regulatory |
| Applies to: | Senior School |
| SLT Reviewer (initials): | HN |
| Committee Monitor: | Education |



STOVER SCHOOL

Counselling Policies and Procedures 2016 - 2017

Independent Day and Boarding School for Girls and Boys ages 3 – 18 Years

Stover School

September 2010
Next review date August 2016

Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Counsellor Roles and Responsibilities | 4 |
| About Counselling | 6 |
| Referral Process | 8 |
| The First Steps | 9 |
| Confidentiality | 10 |
| Data Protection | 13 |
| Lone Working Policy | 15 |
| Boundaries | 17 |
| Fitness to Practice | 19 |
| Ethics | 20 |
| Insurance and Supervision | 22 |
| Complaints Procedure | 23 |
| References | 24 |

Introduction

This document has been made available to you because it is important that everyone involved with pupils at Stover School feels confident about how to support a pupil to access the counselling service.

These policies are in place to protect both staff and pupils and to ensure that the service is run professionally, ethically and effectively at all times.

The aim of this document is to:

1. Provide all staff, pupils and parents/carers/guardians with a comprehensive guide to the counselling service.
2. Help people to understand how counselling works and what the benefits are.
3. Support people through the referral process.
4. Support people to understand the confidentiality policy and why it exists.
5. Ensure that all pupils receive the same equal opportunity to access counselling at Stover.
6. Support staff to understand what their responsibilities are when a pupil wants to attend or may benefit from counselling.

This is a living document and it is the responsibility of the school counsellor, in conjunction with the school, to ensure that this document is kept up-to-date and reflects changes in policy, guidance and legislation.

This document is to be used in conjunction with professional guidelines and protocols set out by regulatory bodies.

Counsellor Roles and Responsibilities

Reporting to: Head of Pastoral Care.

1. To provide professional counselling sessions to pupils at Stover School.
2. To provide any additional sessions which may be required and to be at a mutually convenient time for the client, counsellor and school.
3. Additional sessions are to be carried out following the consultation of the counsellor and the Head of Pastoral Care.
4. To be accountable for any time it may take, within reason, to complete duties outside of counselling sessions. These may include: meetings, administrative tasks, training, supervision and other tasks which help with the efficiency and quality of the counselling service.

Main Areas of Responsibility

1. To be an integral part of the school team, and to link with other members, offering support as necessary and appropriate, to facilitate an efficient and professional service.
2. Maintain effective and professional relationships with all persons associated with the school.
3. To be responsible for the information available to pupils, parents, carers, guardians and teachers/staff in relation to the counselling service. Information should be relevant, up-to-date, informative and easy to access.
4. To attend meetings and discussions held within the school which may be beneficial to the running of the service, e.g. pastoral meetings and 1-1 meetings with staff.
5. To be responsible for all administrative tasks related to the role, e.g. the production of information leaflets & notices, messages to pupils, parents, carers, guardians and staff, and the use of educational and informative literature for the benefit of all.
6. To liaise with other professionals in the best interest of pupils, the school and the counselling service.
7. To abide by the terms and conditions of the Counselling Agreement/Contract.

8. To attend and participate in regular supervision in accordance with professional guidelines, Codes of Ethics and professional codes and standards of practice.
9. To continue personal and professional training relevant to the needs of the pupils/school and in accordance with professional codes.
10. To properly maintain individual client records in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (see page 13).
11. To maintain own wellbeing, assess and monitor own fitness to practice, and undertake professional counselling relating to own issues as and when appropriate.
12. To respect client confidentiality, particularly if discussing issues relating to current case load within ongoing training or outside supervision.
13. To consult with Head of Pastoral Care at the earliest opportunity if she/he feels there is a need to consult with others including but not exclusive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
14. To consult with Head of Pastoral Care at the earliest opportunity if she/he feels there is a need to consult with other agencies in relation to the contracted Confidentiality Policy relating to Child Protection Safeguarding issues.
15. To remain as independent and impartial as possible, always maintaining that the counsellor's role is primarily to be working in the best interest of Stover's pupils.
16. To adhere to the guidance set out in this policy.

The roles and responsibilities are intended to give a general indication of the standard required by all counsellors, relating to their role within the school. Any changes will be carried out in consultation with the counsellor and the Head of Pastoral Care.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| The school counsellor is | |
| Qualifications and Training | |
| Professional Membership | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

About Counselling

Professional counselling should only ever be provided by someone who:

1. Holds a recognised counselling qualification at Diploma Level or above.
2. Is insured.
3. Is in receipt of regular professional supervision.
4. Is a member of a governing body such as the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Unless someone meets these criteria they are not in a position to provide appropriate, professional counselling. It is important that people are trained and regulated because counselling is a therapeutic approach which supports people with their well-being and mental health. Counsellors are trained to identify the needs of people and decide if a referral to a service other than counselling is appropriate. Counsellors will never work with a person if their skills are not adequate to meet the needs of the client and another service such as mental health is required for example.

Counsellors should have sound knowledge of their methods of practice and they should be used with the best interest of the pupil in mind.

Why Counselling is Important:

Counselling is a therapeutic approach which can provide people with the opportunity to be listened to and supported as they work through difficulties in their lives. These difficulties may already be known or they may be disclosed for the first time during the counselling process. Working with a qualified, professional counsellor means that a person can be supported through what may be some very painful or difficult situations.

Therapy offers you a safe, confidential place to talk about your life and anything that may be confusing, painful or uncomfortable. It allows you to talk with someone who is trained to listen attentively and to help you improve things (BACP, 2010). Counselling can help to give you the tools to move forward in your life by being listened to and supported as you try and make sense of your situation.

Counselling is also supportive of the key outcomes from Every Child Matters (Department of Education, 2003).

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- economic well-being

Some of the issues people may bring to counselling:

- Relationship difficulties
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Poor self-image
- Behavioral difficulties
- Divorce
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Bullying
- Self-injury/harm
- Eating disorders
- and many other issues which may be affecting you

A counsellor will not judge you. They will offer a safe, confidential place where you can talk about things in your life which may be painful, difficult and causing you to feel unhappy or low.

Your counsellor will work with you to help you make positive changes that you would like to see in your life. It is about learning and developing with the support of a counsellor, not being judged or told what to do.

Counselling can help to give you the tools needed to move forward. The counsellor will work with you to help you make the positive changes you would like to see in your life.

Counselling is not a quick fix; it is a professional therapeutic approach which can only be provided by someone who is qualified and experienced. All sessions are voluntary and it has to be the person's choice if they want to attend. You will never be made to attend if you do not want to.

Everyone is different and no two people will have the same experience. Some people attend for a matter of weeks, some for months or years.

Referral Process

For a child or young person to receive counselling the following must first apply:

1. They must agree to attend. No person will be seen if they do not want to attend.
2. The sessions must be deemed by the counsellor to be in **the best interest of the child or young person.**

A child or young person will never be forced to attend counselling.

How to make a referral:

If you think a pupil at Stover would benefit from counselling then it can be helpful to discuss it with them first to see what they think. However, if you want to chat to the counsellor first to talk the situation over you are always welcome to do so.

Pupils are welcome to make contact with the counsellor themselves. Parents, carers and guardians can also contact the counsellor directly.

The next step is to either contact the counsellor yourself or support the young person to get in touch with the counsellor themselves (usually suitable for senior pupils). This can be done by email, phone or text.

The pupil will be invited to an initial 30 minute session where they can find out more about the therapeutic process and the counsellor can decide if counselling is the best option for the pupil. The pupil can also decide if counselling is something they would like to continue with.

Head of Pastoral Care will be regularly informed of the referrals that are made and of the names of the pupils who are seen. This is to safeguard pupils and ensure they are being supported effectively. No more information, other than a pupil's name will be passed on by the counsellor unless there is a safeguarding or welfare issue.

Making a referral to the counsellor does not mean that a pupil's welfare is no longer your responsibility. If you are concerned about a pupil you must follow the school safeguarding guidelines and inform an appropriate member of staff, however serious you consider your concern to be.

The First Steps

1. Once it is decided that a senior pupil will see the counsellor an arrangement is made with their tutor or directly with the pupil inviting them to attend a 30 minute session. This initial session gives both parties the chance to meet and for the counsellor to explain how counselling works.
2. For pupils in the prep school, the counsellor usually liaises with the child's parents/ carers/ guardians and teacher to support the pupil to identify a suitable session time.
3. If the pupil is happy to continue long term they are invited back, usually the next week. The recommended initial number of sessions is 6 (1 a week). After this there is a review and sessions either end or continue for another contracted amount of time.
4. Sessions last for up to an hour and are arranged between the pupil and counsellor.
5. The confidentiality policy is always explained in full.
6. The boundaries and 'contract' are put in to place. For senior pupils it is explained that it is preferable for the pupil to contact the counsellor directly.

In the prep school all parents, carers or guardians are usually consulted before their children are seen. Counselling is usually requested by a parent, carer or guardian or on recommendation from a teacher or Principal. Parents, carers or guardians are sent information about counselling, including the confidentiality policy, and they either speak to the counsellor over the phone or in person. They are asked to sign and return a consent form to the counsellor.

Confidentiality

All children and young people have the right to confidentiality. Gillick competent under 16s and young people aged 16 or 17 are entitled to make decisions about the use and disclosure of information they provided in confidence in the same way as adults, e.g. They may be receiving treatment or counselling about which they do not want their parents to know.

(DoH, 2007)

One of the key factors that help to make counselling so successful is its confidentiality policy. With the exception of child protection issues or cases where there is a risk of harm to self or others, all sessions are confidential. However, the emphasis has always got to be on safeguarding children and young people. Sometimes confidentiality has to be broken to protect them and this is always the priority.

What confidentiality means:

Anything that is discussed during a counselling session remains between the pupil and the counsellor.

Unless the counsellor has the pupil's permission or it is in their best interest to do so the counsellor will not discuss the content of sessions with anyone, including parents, carers or guardians.

Teachers and other staff, including the Principal, do not automatically have the right to know if a pupil has counselling.

Conversations between parents, carers or guardians and the counsellor will remain private though the counsellor will always inform pupils that they have spoken to them because transparency is very important.

Not all young people want their parents, carers, guardians, members of their family or others to know they have counselling. For some people this can be difficult to accept. However, the young people have to be the priority and the decision has to be their choice.

This level of confidentiality helps to develop trust between the pupil and counsellor and is essential for the process to be successful. This does not apply to children under 12 or older pupils who the counsellor does not deem to be competent in line with the Fraser guidelines (NSPCC, 2011).

In every case the counsellor will work with the pupil to identify other support available to them. This may include their parents, family, friends, teachers, Learning Support, the school Chaplain, school Nurses etc. It is rare that pupils do not inform their parents but the counsellor will always support them if they choose not to. Some young people may feel that they are being disloyal if they want to discuss their parents or others during the sessions and this is one of the reasons why they choose not

to tell them. For others the reasons may be more serious and counselling may be the only form of support a young person has. The counsellor will assess the needs of the young person and ensure that their safety and well-being is the priority. They will always act in line with the Child Protection policies of the school and legislative guidance such as Working Together 2013.

Confidentiality is always explained in full during the first initial meeting. Anyone is welcome to contact the counsellor at any time to find out more.

Fraser Guidelines / Gillick Competence:

Following the case of Gillick v West Norfolk & Wisbech Area Health Authority in 1985 (Bailii, no date) Lord Fraser ruled that young people (under 16) have the right to access advice and services relating to contraception without their parents knowledge, providing they are deemed as being what has come to be known as Gillick Competent (NSPCC, 2011).

This approach is used by professionals working with young people to help support them to access services or make decisions that are in their best interest (NSPCC, 2011). This is to prevent parents, carers, guardians or other adults from denying young people the right to access support that could be helpful to them. Confidentiality keeps people safe.

What this means to Counselling:

Young people over the age of 12 have the right to access counselling without their parents/ carers knowledge providing they are considered to be able to make an informed decision (Gillick Competent). This can only be assessed by a qualified person, and at Stover it is the counsellor who will ultimately decide if a young person is able to make this decision. The counsellor will seek professional advice if they are unsure about any aspect of assessing competency or have any concerns relating to a specific pupil. Counsellors are not qualified or in a position to assess Mental Capacity and this is a matter for an appropriately qualified professional.

The counsellor will aim to identify with the young person all of the support they have available to them, including parents, carers, guardians, family, friends, school for example. However, there are some circumstances where it is not beneficial to the young person for their parents, carers or guardians to know and this must be respected at all times by all staff.

Following the death of Peter Connolly in 2007, Professor Eileen Munro was commissioned to review child protection in 2010 and her final report, The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report, A child-centred system (Department for Education (DoE), 2011), was published in 2011. The report highlights the importance of working professionally with children and their families. This report succeeded Lord Laming's report in to the death of Victoria Climbié (House of Commons, 2003). One of the key findings of Lord Laming's Report was the failure of professionals, including Doctors and Social Workers, to communicate effectively. It cannot be emphasised enough that although

counselling is a confidential service; the welfare of children and young people is paramount. Therefore, if confidentiality needs to be broken to safeguard a child or young person, it will be.

If Confidentiality needs to be broken:

1. The child or young person will be informed. In an age and needs appropriate manner, they will be told why, who will be informed and what will be passed on. They are to be involved and not excluded from the process where appropriate to their needs and well-being.
2. A relevant member of staff will be informed straight away by phone or face to face. This will be a Child Protection Officer. It will be their duty to take appropriate action. This may include contacting the Local Authority Safeguarding Team.

Child Protection Officers are:

Mrs. K. Veal

Mrs. C. Coyle

If they are not available then another suitable senior member of staff is to be contacted.

3. The child or young person will be supported through the next stages, whatever they may be unless instructed to do otherwise by the Local Authority or the Courts.

Mrs. Veal will be regularly informed of the referrals that are made and of the names of the pupils who are seen. This is to safeguard pupils and ensure they are being supported effectively. No more information, other than a pupil's name will be passed on by the counsellor unless there is a safeguarding issue.

Data Protection

Records and communications produced in relation to counselling at Stover School are subject to The Data Protection Act 1998.

The Eight Principals of the Data Protection Act 1998

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless—
 - (a) at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met, and.
 - (b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is also met.
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

(HMSO, 1998)

What this means to counselling at Stover School:

1. Records about people that are seen by the school counsellor have to be kept to maintain good, professional practice. Records help to support clients so that an honest, realistic and professional account of their time with a counsellor can be kept. This may be particularly relevant in cases involving safeguarding and/ or mental health.
2. Records have to have meaning and purpose, are not to be excessive and are to be written in adherence with Ethical Codes and guidance set out by professional bodies.
3. Records are strictly confidential and are only to be shared with the counsellor (author) and the person whom they are written about. Records may also be required for legal cases when requested by a court of law or the police.
4. Records are not to be kept for any longer than necessary and must be kept securely.
5. People have the right to access their records. This must be applied for in written form.
6. The school counsellor discourages the use of names of identifying information in written correspondence – digital or otherwise and includes text messages, emails, written notes.

For further information please refer to the BACP guidance on record keeping.

Lone Working Policy

Sessions are almost always 1:1 therefore the counsellor will be working alone with a child or young person.

Usual school rules regarding lone working do not apply to counselling as sessions are confidential therefore windows or doors may be closed or covered in order to respect a child or young person's privacy. It is not acceptable for the counsellor to hold sessions where others may view the child or young person during their session.

The counsellor will always take steps to ensure that the safety of the child or young person is considered, as well as their own. If it is felt that the child or young person poses any risk in terms of safety or allegation then a risk assessment will be conducted and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the child or young person received the support they require whilst ensuring they or the counsellor are not put at any risk. It is recommended that pupils sit in the chair closest to the door so that they are not easily seen if the door is accidentally opened, so that they can leave easily as and when they wish and to support the counsellor in relation to minimizing allegations.

If an allegation is made by the child or young person relating to the counsellor then sessions will cease with immediate effect. The complaints procedure is to be followed as well as any investigation deemed appropriate by the school and/or any other relevant agencies.

Prep School Pupils

Where these pupils are seen by the counsellor, their parents/ carers/ guardians will be aware of the time and day they are seen. Their class teacher will also know. This ensures that they are not at risk of absconding or becoming unaccounted for at any time. Sessions are held in a room which is familiar to the pupils, is easy to access and is in a central location. Pupils are always free to leave the room if they wish to and the counsellor will inform Mrs. Martin if they return to class at a time different to the expected one.

Senior School Pupils

These pupils usually make their own arrangement for session times directly with the counsellor. Their parents/ carers/ guardians may not be aware they attend sessions so are less likely to be aware of the session time or day. Mrs. Veal is made aware of who attends for purposes of supporting well-being though may not be aware of the session day or time. One of the school secretaries will be notified of the pupil's name and session time at the beginning of each day the counsellor is in school and due to be seeing someone. This may be done verbally or in writing in which case the note will be destroyed at the end of use by the secretary. If a pupil does not attend their session the same secretary will be informed to ensure the whereabouts of the pupil is known and to protect pupil safety and to prevent any absence or absconding. This also means that if a teacher questions the absence of a pupil they can be told by the secretary they are accounted for but do not have to know why.

Sessions are held in a room which is familiar to the pupils, is easy to access and is in a central location. Pupils are free to leave the room at any time they wish and the counsellor will inform the same school secretary if they return to class at a time different to the expected one.

It is the responsibility of the counsellor to ensure they have a room ready and available for their sessions.

Any changes in availability must be communicated to the counsellor by the school and an alternative must be found.

Boundaries

Boundaries are an implicit aspect of the counselling role and it is important that they are maintained at all times. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the counsellor to maintain boundaries within the therapeutic process and counselling relationship.

Where boundaries start to become blurred, reassessment and appropriate action must be taken.

Ways to support boundaries in the school counselling role – some guidance to the counsellor:

1. Establish a clear contract with the school.
2. Establish a clear contract with pupils in the first session.
3. Be clear about expectations and confidentiality when liaising with adults in the pupil's life such as parents.
4. Be transparent in relation to conflicts of interest and manage them appropriately and ethically.
5. Maintain routine in working patterns, the room(s) to be used and time of sessions.
6. Unless necessary or in the best interest of a pupil, restrict links to a few chosen and appropriate key staff members within the school.
7. Implement a referral process.
8. Do not enter classrooms unless giving a specific talk or training.
9. Ask pupils how they want to be acknowledged, if at all, if you see them outside of sessions.
10. Limit access to the staff room for beverages or to use the computers or other equipment such as photocopiers appropriate to tasks associated with your role and refrain from participating in staff room conversation. If staff talk about a pupil it is the counsellor's responsibility to maintain confidentiality and end the conversation as appropriate and ask the staff member to contact them at a more appropriate time or follow the referral procedures.
11. Bring your own lunch or have lunch at a time when the lunch hall is quiet and take your meal to a private area to eat.

- 12.** Be open and honest with pupils if you have to speak with others in relation to their well-being. Adhere to Ethical frameworks.
- 13.** If you are running groups you need to manage dual roles in a professional manner.
- 14.** If you are running groups in the boarding house ensure there is another member of staff present either in the room with you or very nearby. Stay in communal areas only and facilitate groups in the common rooms only.
- 15.** The counsellor is to manage their own caseload and implement a waiting list if necessary. The counsellor needs to be honest and open about their availability and not take on cases unnecessarily.
- 16.** If a waiting list is utilised, the counsellor will need to consider how the pupils can be supported or 'held' (if appropriate) until sessions are available to them and may need to consider other professionals or agencies.

This is guidance and not an extensive list. It is the counsellor's responsibility to consider and implement appropriate boundaries.

Fitness to Practice

It is the school counsellor's responsibility to maintain their own well-being and fitness to practice.

“Generally speaking, you must make your own decision about your fitness to practice whether it be about your emotional or medical condition. Best practice is to ensure that this decision is made in consultation with supervisors and managers wherever possible”.

(Dale, 2010)

The counsellor must consider caseloads when considering their fitness to practice and need to adjust their caseload accordingly. The counsellor is responsible for their own caseload and must work safely and effectively within the hours available to them. For example, if the counsellor is supporting a client(s) who present with stressful or complex needs then the remaining caseload may need to be reduced until the therapeutic relationship comes to an end. The caseload is to be managed on a case by case basis and the counsellor needs to consider their fitness to practice when considering taking on cases.

It is important that the counsellor regularly assesses their own fitness to practice and at times when they may feel less able, and not in a position to carry out their regular duties, they must liaise with senior staff at the school to come to an appropriate arrangement until they either feel able to return to normal duties or alternative arrangements have to be made.

Periods of ill-health, bereavement, a relationship breakdown, a traumatic event or stresses caused by the nature of the work itself are all examples of difficulties which can contribute to a counsellor's level of fitness to practice. Taking time to regain 'fitness' is a professional approach to take and it is the responsibility of the counsellor to seek the appropriate support.

The needs and well-being of clients must be a significant factor in any decision making around fitness to practice and appropriate steps must be taken if sessions are to be impacted upon because of the absence of the counsellor.

The counsellor must consider Ethical frameworks, guidance and professional codes when considering their 'fitness to practice'.

Ethics

Counsellors are required to be a member of a professional regulatory body and must adhere to their Ethical frameworks. As a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy the counsellor will adhere to their Ethical Framework for Good Practice (BACP, 2010). The counsellor will always work in the best interest of the person they are working with.

The principals of the BACP Ethical Framework are:

Fidelity: honoring the trust placed in the practitioner

Being trustworthy is regarded as fundamental to understanding and resolving ethical issues.

Practitioners who adopt this principle: act in accordance with the trust placed in them; regard confidentiality as an obligation arising from the client's trust; restrict any disclosure of confidential information about clients to furthering the purposes for which it was originally disclosed.

Autonomy: respect for the client's right to be self-governing

This principle emphasizes the importance of the client's commitment to participating in counselling or psychotherapy, usually on a voluntary basis. Practitioners who respect their clients' autonomy: ensure accuracy in any advertising or information given in advance of services offered; seek freely given and adequately informed consent; engage in explicit contracting in advance of any commitment by the client; protect privacy; protect confidentiality; normally make any disclosures of confidential information conditional on the consent of the person concerned; and inform the client in advance of foreseeable conflicts of interest or as soon as possible after such conflicts become apparent. The principle of autonomy opposes the manipulation of clients against their will, even for beneficial social ends.

Beneficence: a commitment to promoting the client's well-being

The principle of beneficence means acting in the best interests of the client based on professional assessment. It directs attention to working strictly within one's limits of competence and providing services on the basis of adequate training or experience. Ensuring that the client's best interests are achieved requires systematic monitoring of practice and outcomes by the best available means. It is considered important that research and systematic reflection inform practice. There is an obligation

to use regular and on-going supervision to enhance the quality of the services provided and to commit to updating practice by continuing professional development. An obligation to act in the best interests of a client may become paramount when working with clients whose capacity for autonomy is diminished because of immaturity, lack of understanding, extreme distress, serious disturbance or other significant personal constraints.

Non-maleficence: a commitment to avoiding harm to the client

Non-maleficence involves: avoiding sexual, financial, emotional or any other form of client exploitation; avoiding incompetence or malpractice; not providing services when unfit to do so due to illness, personal circumstances or intoxication. The practitioner has an ethical responsibility to strive to mitigate any harm caused to a client even when the harm is unavoidable or unintended. Holding appropriate insurance may assist in restitution. Practitioners have a personal responsibility to challenge, where appropriate, the incompetence or malpractice of others; and to contribute to any investigation and/or adjudication concerning professional practice which falls below that of a reasonably competent practitioner and/or risks bringing discredit upon the profession.

Justice: the fair and impartial treatment of all clients and the provision of adequate services

The principle of justice requires being just and fair to all clients and respecting their human rights and dignity. It directs attention to considering conscientiously any legal requirements and obligations, and remaining alert to potential conflicts between legal and ethical obligations. Justice in the distribution of services requires the ability to determine impartially the provision of services for clients and the allocation of services between clients. A commitment to fairness requires the ability to appreciate differences between people and to be committed to equality of opportunity, and avoiding discrimination against people or groups contrary to their legitimate personal or social characteristics. Practitioners have a duty to strive to ensure a fair provision of counselling and psychotherapy services, accessible and appropriate to the needs of potential clients.

Self-respect: fostering the practitioner's self-knowledge and care for self

The principle of self-respect means that the practitioner appropriately applies all the above principles as entitlements for self. This includes seeking counselling or therapy and other opportunities for personal development as required. There is an ethical responsibility to use supervision for appropriate personal and professional support and development, and to seek training and other opportunities for continuing professional development. Guarding against financial liabilities arising from work undertaken usually requires obtaining appropriate insurance. The principle of self-respect encourages active engagement in life-enhancing activities and relationships that are independent of relationships in counselling or psychotherapy.

Insurance and Supervision

The school counsellor is required to hold professional insurance with an appropriate regulatory body.

To help maintain and professional and safe practice it is important that counsellors receive regular supervision. Supervisors need to hold a recognised qualification, be insured and be a member of a governing body.

Supervision exists for two reasons:

1. To protect clients, and
2. To improve the ability of counsellors to provide value to their clients.

Supervision protects clients by involving an impartial third party in the work of a counsellor and client, helping to reduce the risk of serious oversight and helping the counsellor concerned to reflect on their own feelings, thoughts, behavior and general approach with the client (Counselling Resource, 2012).

Complaints Procedure

If you or a pupil is not happy with the counsellor's conduct or practice or has any other complaint they are encouraged to discuss this with the counsellor direct. The counsellor will aim to do what is best to rectify the situation.

If it is felt the complaint has not been addressed in a satisfactory manner or it is not felt that approaching the counsellor is possible or appropriate, you can talk to Mrs. Veal or Mrs. Coyle or another member of senior staff. Pupils may want to discuss their complaint with their parents or a family member instead.

If the situation is still not rectified the counsellor's professional body, such as the BACP, can be contacted.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Name of professional body | |
| Address | |
| Telephone | |
| Email | |

This same process applies to anyone who is not happy with the counsellor's conduct or practice or has any other complaint.

In all cases the counsellor will do their best to provide suitable information regarding the complaints procedure and will help to resolve any outstanding issues of complaint.

The school Safeguarding Policies apply to the complaints procedure.

References

BACP (2010). *BACP: Ethical Framework*. Available at: http://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework/ (Accessed 12 September 2014).

BACP (2010). *Key Facts*. Available at: http://www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/assets/docs/Key-fact-sheet-1-What-do-counsellors-and-psychotherapists-do_1276789241.pdf (Accessed 12 September 2014).

Bailii (no date). *Gillick v West Norfolk & Wisbech Area Health Authority 1985*. Available at: <http://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKHL/1985/7.html> (Accessed 12 September 2014).

Counselling Resouce (2012). *Counselling and Therapy Supervision*. Available at: <http://counsellingresource.com/lib/therapy/aboutcouns/supervision/> (Accessed 12 September 2014).

Dale, H. (2010) *Am I fit to practise as a counsellor?* BACP Information Sheet P9. Lutterworth: BACP.

Department for Education (2003). *Every Child Matters*. Available at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/EveryChildMatters.pdf> (Accessed 11 September 2014).

Department of Health (2007) *Mental Health Act 1983 Draft revised Code of Practice*. London: DH, paragraph 39.55.

HMSO. 1998. *Data Protection Act 1998*. London: HMSO.

House of Commons (2003). *Inquiry in to the Death of Victoria Climbié*. Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmhealth/570/570.pdf> (Accessed 11 September 2014).

NSPCC (2011). *Gillick competency and Fraser Guidelines*. Available at: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/research/questions/gillick_wda61289.html#How_is_Gillick_competency_assessed? (Accessed 11 September 2014).