West Kirby Grammar School

School Counselling Service Policy and Procedures

Administration Use:	
Statutory/Non-Statutory:	Non
Website:	Yes
Date reviewed:	Spring 2026
Next Review Date:	Spring 2027

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KEY CONTACTS

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At West Kirby Grammar School (WKGS) we recognise that emotional wellbeing is fundamental to learning, personal development and success.

Our counselling service forms part of our wider pastoral and wellbeing provision, working alongside Thrive, pastoral staff, safeguarding and external agencies to ensure students receive the right support at the right time.

1	FORWARD
	Young people, much like adults, can be adversely affected by difficult and stressful situations in different ways and can find it difficult to cope at times. It is important that young people can access support services in the place where they spend so much of their day. Counselling is a way of helping our young people through a process of talking listening and empowerment. The young person is provided with a safe place to express their feelings and thoughts about what they perceive to be an issue in their life. Counselling can help a young person to understand themselves and their situation better. It can give them new ways of coping with issues that cause them upset therefore increasing their capacity for learning. It aims to build on existing pastoral support by contributing to the best possible start in life for students, reducing stress levels and promoting emotional health and well-being. "The task of counselling is to give the client an opportunity to explore, discover and clarify ways of living more resourcefully and towards greater well-being." (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy - current BACP Ethical Framework). The counselling support provided in the school conforms to the current best practice and professional standards for school-based counselling, specifically in respect of counsellor qualifications, continuous professional development, supervision policy and safe working practices. Two important characteristics of our school-based counselling service are the emphasis on preventative/early intervention work and the strong belief that the service needs to be accessible to all students. Counselling in West Kirby Grammar School is part of the pastoral care system and the service is seen as a supportive part of the school community. Successful counselling is based on trust, self-motivation and commitment. It must be a voluntary activity and is therefore not part of the behaviour management policy of the school. While the counsellor is accountable to the school the welfare of the child is always paramount and the school Child Protection Policy is adhered to. Evidence shows that a counselling service which provides support within an overall school strategy can be

	highly effective in promoting young people's welfare, supporting their learning and achievement as well as alleviating and preventing the escalation of mental health problems. School-based Counselling can help students to develop skills which make personal transitions more manageable. A counsellor who is part of a whole school approach to emotional health and well-being is in a unique position to recognise early on children who are at risk, in need, vulnerable or for whom there are potential serious mental health risks at an early age. The school has a responsibility to inform the school counsellor of any significant events (in school or in the community) which may impact on students (as individuals or as groups). It is the school's responsibility to work with the Counsellor to raise awareness of the counselling service with students, staff, parents/carers and governors.

2	ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR COUNSELLORS
	The following principles are adopted by the school counsellor when making ethical decisions. These are a simplified version of the 'ethical principles ' held within the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy's Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

2.1	TRUST - FIDELITY
	The school counsellor understands that for their work to be successful, young people will need to trust them not only as an individual, but the service that they provide. The counsellor will work in such a way that encourages and builds a trusting, confidential relationship with young people within the usual limits of necessary child protection disclosures.

2.2	RESPECTING THE WISHES OF YOUNG PEOPLE - AUTONOMY
	The counsellor will only work with young people who enter a counselling relationship voluntarily; counselling is not likely to be successful if the young person concerned is "sent" for counselling against their wishes. The school counsellor will inform the young person about the services they offer in a language that they understand and check that they fully comprehend what counselling is, and what it can and cannot offer. The counsellor will explain that confidentiality is an important part of their counselling relationship, but also will be very clear about when confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the reasons for this, and what might happen if the confidentiality agreement needs to be broken.

2.3	WORKING TO A PROFESSIONAL STANDARD FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE YOUNG PERSON - BENEFICENCE
	The school counsellor aims to work professionally and competently with young people. They will have adequate training and supervision and will continually monitor their work in order that their young clients will receive the best possible provision of counselling. The school counsellor will pay attention to providing services that are appropriate to the developmental needs of their young client group.

2.4	AVOIDING HARM TO YOUNG PEOPLE - NON-MALEFICENCE
	The school counsellor will always endeavour to work to ensure that no physical or emotional harm is caused to young people by their counselling services, either intentionally or unintentionally. This will include being sure that they are fit to practice in school, for example, in terms of their health and personal circumstances. The school counsellor has a clear understanding of the school system and the school environment and is aware of potential conflicts of interest between their clients and others (for example, school staff and parents/carers). The school counsellor is aware, and considers the consequences for the young people concerned, of their communications with others.

2.5	FAIRNESS - JUSTICE
	The school counsellor will endeavour to ensure that their work with young people (including young people who may become clients in the future) is fair and that they are treated with respect. The counsellor considers their legal responsibilities, alongside ethical considerations and contractual obligations. The school counselling service is accessible to all and attempts to cater for the diverse nature of a school's population. Requests for the counselling service, in terms of number of referrals and waiting lists, is managed in such a way that competing demands can be prioritised in a manner that is fair and just.

2.6	PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SELF RESPECT
	The school counsellor has a personal responsibility to ensure that they work ethically, and competently, and are professionally equipped for their role in the school environment. They are responsible for ensuring that their initial training, ongoing supervision, continuing professional development and self-management

	(both within and outside of school) are appropriate in order to offer the best possible services for young people.

3	THE SCHOOL COUNSELLOR
	The counsellor is employed and managed directly by the school on a full-time contract and as part of the pastoral care team. The BACP code of ethics is adhered to and the counsellor has regular supervision. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their appointments and where possible arrange these directly with the counsellor. Emails may be sent directly to the student from the Wellbeing Manager. Appointments are rotated through the appointment schedule to ensure as much as possible that the student does not miss the same class repeatedly. Referrals to the counselling service come from many people, teachers, parents/carers, outside agencies, peers and students who self-refer. Students have the right to refuse or discontinue counselling at any time and it is the counsellor's responsibility to ensure that their rights of autonomy are respected. Common reasons for referrals are anxiety, stress, family breakdown, bereavement, loss, abuse, peer relationship difficulties and bullying. The counsellor works within the limits of their own competence and is aware of local and national support agencies. An onward referral may be made where appropriate. Criteria for this may be: 1. A lack of response to the present help being offered. 2. The need for more appropriate help. 3. Help needed beyond the expertise of the helper. 4. The clients own request for referral.

4	THE ROLE OF THE COUNSELLOR
	The counsellor can offer a young person a safe and supportive environment to talk over difficult issues in confidence and will listen to a young person's views, experiences and feelings without judgement in an atmosphere of respect and empathy based on a secure and trusting working relationship. The role of the counsellor is to: • Provide a counselling service to young people who are registered with the school as current students. • Organise and administer the counselling service in conjunction with schools' staff. • Communicate and liaise with school staff, in the best interest of the young person, whilst within the limits of client confidentiality. • Encourage the engagement of the young person's family when appropriate and beneficial. • Liaise with staff in taking and making referrals to and from other agencies.

	• Act as a resource to schools' staff by offering an insight into counselling and promoting the service where possible. • Maintain accurate counselling session records and to write reports as and when required. • Maintain and develop professional practice through regular and ongoing management and clinical supervision and training and through involvement in service evaluation and auditing. • Practice counselling in accordance with the Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy published by BACP.

5	WHAT HAPPENS IN COUNSELLING
	Counselling helps the student to focus on and understand more clearly the issues that concern them. By respecting their own values, choices and lifestyle, the counsellor can work together with them towards making choices or changes that are right for them. Counselling will take place on a weekly basis, each session lasts between 30 – 50 minutes depending on the case. A contract will be made to work with them for up to 6 sessions and then evaluate if further counselling is required. The first meeting will consist of a detailed assessment and evaluation of the situation presented by the student. The counsellor will also explain the nature of the work and what the student might expect. Goals and objectives of counselling will be established at this point. Students will be seen individually, but sometimes group counselling can be organised.

6	INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS
	The school counselling service is a professional psychological service available to all students to assist them on their progress through school. The counsellor tries to address many of the emotional and behavioural difficulties that students might experience. It may help them: • Make informed choices. • Cope with crises. • Work through feelings of inner conflict. • Improve relationships with others. • Gain a better understanding of themselves. • Develop coping strategies.

7	INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS
	Parents/carers of incoming students are informed at the beginning of each school year that the service exists in the school via the school counsellor leaflet, information is also available on our school website. While it is acknowledged that working in partnership with parents/carers can benefit the counselling relationship, the counsellor also makes a commitment to protect counselling confidentiality, which sets definitive limits to parent/carer involvement, decisively underpinned by both ethical and legal factors. The young person has a right to access counselling without their parents/carers consent or against their parents/carers wishes if they are considered to be "Gillick Competent".

8	FRASER GUIDLINES
	The Fraser Guidelines set out the criteria that should be met before the counsellor can provide a service to under 16s without parental consent – the assessment of young people against these guidelines is often referred to as assessing whether the young person is Gillick competent. Young people under the age of 16 can consent to medical treatment if they have sufficient maturity and judgement to enable them to fully understand what is proposed. This was defined in England and Wales by the House of Lords in the case of Gillick vs West Norfolk and Wisbech AHA and DHSS in 1985. The judgement in the House of Lords referred specifically to doctors but may also be interpreted as covering counsellors, youth workers, health promotion workers and others. It is the counsellor's responsibility to explain to students clearly and periodically exactly what this means in practice. Young people under the age of 16 have as great a right to confidentiality as any other person. If someone under 16 is not judged mature enough to consent, the consultation itself is confidential. The counsellor welcomes parent/carer enquiries regarding school counselling, if you have any questions, concerns or objections to your child accessing the school's counselling service.

9	ACCESS TO COUNSELLING
	Anyone who wishes to make a request for counselling on behalf of a young person must, in the first instance, discuss this with the young person involved. The right for children and young people to participate is enshrined in Article 12 of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which states that: "Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the

child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child". This has been abbreviated by UNICEF to say:
"You have the right to say what you think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect you, and to have your opinions taken into account".

After talking with the young person, the adult can encourage a self-referral or, with the young person's permission, seek an appointment. This approach values the young person and respects their right to be informed and involved in decisions concerning themselves. It is important to note that counselling is not compulsory, and a young person may choose not to engage with or choose not to continue with counselling.

Requests for young people to participate in counselling could be taken from any interested parties including young people themselves, parents/carers, teachers, and others. Informal liaison and discussion should take place prior to a formal request for counselling.

The young person has a "right to access counselling without their parents' or carers' consent or against their parents'/carers' wishes if they are considered to be "Gillick Competent" (see above).
If a child/young person is requesting counselling, then the school and the Counselling Service, together, can assess if he or she is "Gillick Competent". If this is deemed to be so, then they can access counselling without their parents/carers knowledge or consent.

It is therefore necessary to make an assessment of Gillick Competency taking into account:

- The maturity of the child or young person.
- Whether the young person demonstrates sufficient intelligence and understanding to enable him or her to understand what is being proposed, i.e., counselling.
- Whether the young person demonstrates sufficient intelligence and understanding of the consequences of his or her actions.
- Whether the student understands the consequences of a possible deterioration in their mental health if they don't access counselling.

Good practice involves a partnership with parents/carers and the counsellor values the importance of exploring how the student could be supported in informing parents/carers if this is appropriate and in line with the young person's wishes. If the student is considered "Gillick Competent" it is then up to the counsellor to determine whether counselling is an appropriate provision.
For the young person to be eligible to receive counselling, she/he must understand the nature of counselling and be able to make a valid verbal counselling contract, including the ability to understand the principle of confidentiality and the need for this to be overridden where the young person is alleged to be at risk of harm from self or other.

	Routine requests will be entered into the appointment system and be seen at the earliest opportunity. Urgent cases will be seen at the next available cancellation, free appointment or, in exceptional circumstances, on the counsellor's next working day, subject to negotiation with the counsellor. It is useful if the student can indicate on the request for an appointment their perceptions of the urgency of the situation or the level of risk. It is essential that the counsellor is informed if the young person has been seen in the past or is currently working with any other agencies such as CAMHS, Children's Social Services, Behaviour Support and the current level of involvement. It is also the responsibility to inform the counsellor if the young person poses any risk. Young people who are currently receiving support from other agencies are eligible to access the Counselling Service. There should be no apparent conflict with any impending legal proceedings or overload in the support or interventions being given to the young person elsewhere. The counsellor is mindful of the fact that there may be occasions where information that is disclosed during a counselling session may later form part of legal proceedings or legal action and that they may be required to give evidence or provide reports in due course concerning their client ('Good Practice Guidance for counselling in schools' 4th edition BACP, p 27). In these situations, the counsellor may seek guidance from Social Services in individual cases before commencing counselling with a young person. There may be some instances where it may not be appropriate for a student to be offered counselling for example, they may not be ready to engage in the process. If there is any doubt concerning the appropriateness of a young person receiving counselling, then a discussion will be held to clarify the issues involved and establish the best way forward. It is important that the students see counselling as a service for them. Therefore, when evaluating the service, comments from students are included at all stages of the counselling process.

10	MAKING AN APPOINTMENT
	Students can only benefit if they want counselling. Counselling is voluntary and takes place with the agreement of the young person. This will be referenced in the contract established between the student and the counsellor. Appointments can be made by calling at the counsellor's room or if the counsellor has been given a referral about a student from a staff member, friend or parent/carer, then the student is given an initial appointment time which is placed in the register. The form tutor will give this to the student, and it will be kept confidential. Some students find this initial appointment sufficient on its own; other students will want ongoing individual counselling, or a referral to other forms of support. Every effort will be made to see the student on the day they request an appointment and if requested they will be allocated a space for ongoing sessions as soon as possible.

	If referrals are made by someone other than the student, it is useful to discuss with them about a referral and establish a willingness from them to participate in counselling. If students are unable to attend an appointment, they are asked to inform the counsellor so that the time slot can be allocated to someone else and another appointment can be given.

10.1	EMERGENCY APPOINTMENTS
	The counsellor tries to keep a daily emergency appointment space. Emergencies will be given priority and will be seen on the day.

11	CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY
	There is no such thing as absolute confidentiality when working with young people; at all times child protection concerns will take precedence over normal confidentiality codes. The contract entered into with the young student at the beginning of the counselling relationship will spell out what this means in a way that is relevant to the student's maturity and level of understanding. Good practice dictates that at the beginning of a counselling relationship the young person and the school counsellor enter into a contract. This clearly sets out what boundaries exist in the context of a school-based counselling service. The student will not be offered levels of confidentiality that cannot be honoured. Absolute confidentiality therefore cannot be guaranteed. The welfare of the young person will, at all times, take precedence over confidentiality. At the beginning of a counselling relationship, the counsellor will explain confidentiality and its limitations to the young person. If the student is under 18 there are exceptional circumstances where confidentiality cannot be maintained, and young person's decisions must be overridden: • The young person is in a life-threatening situation (including self-harm). • Inaction might place them or someone else in a life-threatening situation. • If the young person discloses past or current abuse or is threatened by an abuser (sexual activity under the age of 13). • Matters concerning the prevention and detection of terrorism. • Drug trafficking. • Issues of a court order, requiring the counsellor to appear in court. The counsellor will discuss difficult ethical and moral decisions of reporting disclosures with their clinical supervisor and line manager. The counsellor will treat with confidence all personal information about young people, whether obtained directly, indirectly or by inference. Such information includes names, addresses, biographical details and other descriptions about the young person's life and

	circumstances that might result in identification. A breach of confidentiality may be necessary in the interests of a child's safety. This would only relate to those occasions when the counsellor has strong grounds for thinking that an individual might be at risk of significant harm. (A copy of the school child protection policy can be downloaded from our school website).

12	RECORDS OF COUNSELLING
	The collection and storing of information about young people is carried out on a need to know basis. • Information is kept with the consent of the young person. • Young people are informed of who will have access to the information and what the information will be used for. • Young people have the right to access information about themselves at any time. • Parents/carers of children under 12 years may request access to their child's record. • Records are kept in a secure filling cabinet and are protected from unsupervised access. • Records are kept until the student leaves the school and are then shredded. • Any correspondence or referrals carried out which name the individual are done with the knowledge and consent of the individual, copies of letters and correspondence are kept secure. The counsellor will keep minimal notes about what has been discussed in the sessions and present their work to a counselling supervisor every month during clinical supervision. This will enable effective monitoring of the counselling provision taking place. Information which could identify the young person is not provided to the supervisor. It is a legal requirement to protect sensitive data, and Data Handling Procedures in Government sets out measures that schools should adopt to maintain data security. The UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 came into force on 1st March 2000; the purpose of the Act is to protect the individual rights and freedoms of individuals, especially their right to privacy with respect to the processing of personal data. The Act applies to personal data whether it is held on a computer system or on paper. There are particularly stringent rules surrounding "sensitive" data such as student characteristics, SEN, health, religious beliefs, ethnic background, sexuality etc. UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 determines that a school counselling record could be classified as part of an education record. The responsibility for the retention and disposal of school counselling records lies with the school counsellor.

13	REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM OTHER AGENCIES
	The counsellor may from time to time be asked to disclose information about a young person to another professional, agency or service. Such information will only be released with the consent of the young person or where it is necessary for the protection of the young person or a third party. The counsellor completes an ongoing audit of the service, taking care to keep the data anonymous. This information may be used to develop the counselling service, highlight areas of concern and assess student satisfaction with the service.

14	SUPERVISION
	The counsellor engages in regular clinical supervision to maintain and monitor standards and to comply with the BACP ethical code. The Counsellor will use time in a supervisory relationship to anonymously consider the case work to offer the highest standards of ethical practice to the clients. This will enable effective monitoring of the counselling provision taking place. Information which could identify the young person is not provided to the supervisor.

15	COMPLAINTS
	If you are not happy with the counselling service, it is your right to make a complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved by speaking with the school counsellor, then you can speak to Mrs Ravenwood, Senior Assistant Headteacher. If your complaint needs further attention, it can be referred to The British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) of which the counsellor is a member.

16	APPENDIX 1 ISSUES FOR STAFF TO BE AWARE OF WHEN CONSIDERING REFERRING A STUDENT FOR COUNSELLING
	Counselling supports the emotional health of the student that underpins academic achievement and facilitates the building and management of helpful relationships in the school environment. At the heart of the service is the one-to-one therapeutic counselling provided for students which includes liaison and consultation with staff. Please note that the young person should not be questioned about the sessions they have attended. Young people may not want their peer group to know (for many different reasons) that they see the school counsellor. Consideration needs to be given to the management of how the young person is given information, spoken to about

counselling and excused from lessons in order to attend and discreetly access counselling sessions.

Please consider the following issues when referring a student for counselling:

1. What are your reasons for the referral?
2. Is there any other information regarding family background, hospitalisation or other agencies' involvement, which may be helpful?
3. How is this student functioning in school? (Academically, socially, behaviourally)
4. How do you expect counselling to help this student?
5. Has the student been fully consulted about his/her referral and given the information about counselling?
6. Has the young person been consulted about whether or not their parents/carers will be informed about the counselling?

Some common indicators for referral to counselling can include:

- Standard of work dropping dramatically.
- Becoming subdued or over excited.
- Sudden changes, marked mood swings and/or behaviour that appears out of character and/or extreme.
- School refusal.
- Those who bully others and those who are victims of bullying behaviour.
- Those who are known or who are suspected to have been sexually, physically or emotionally abused.
- Have difficulties due to family breakdown.
- Peer group difficulties/relationships.
- Have been bereaved or suffered loss or separation.
- Low self-esteem.
- Self-harm e.g., cutting.
- Misuse of alcohol and drugs.

If a member of schools' staff is unsure whether to refer for counselling, it may be helpful to discuss concerns with the counsellor in order to clarify the most appropriate way forward.
Once a member of school staff is clear that a referral is appropriate, then they need to complete a referral form. There is a need for discretion and confidentiality to be observed as much as possible and respect for the young person's right to privacy. Discussion should only take place on a need-to-know basis.

The signposting and referral to counselling should be done sensitively with the student. This can be done, either by the member of staff or by someone else who the student knows and trusts.

It is essential that counselling sessions are seen as voluntary and confidential and it is a means of support not a disciplinary measure for a student. It should be made clear that it is an opportunity to talk about problems and worries with a view to resolving

	or managing them more easily. The first session is an opportunity for counsellor and client to decide as to whether to engage in counselling or not.

17	APPENDIX 2 COUNSELLING
	What is counselling? The opportunity to talk about things that are of concern, in confidence with a qualified counsellor. What is spoken about with depend on the individual, but common themes are stress, relationships, change, loss and distressing traumatic events. **What does a counsellor do?** Counsellors are trained to listen without judging and to help people sort out their thoughts and feelings about whatever is concerning them. **Why have a counsellor in school?** A school-based service brings counselling to young people in a place that is familiar, safe and secure. If children and young people are able to receive emotional support from a qualified professional, they will have greater opportunity to fulfil their potential. **How long will counselling last?** Counselling may be for a few sessions, or a longer term. It is reviewed regularly between the counsellor and the young person. **Where and when does it take place?** A private room is made available for the counselling to take place in. Sessions last anywhere between 20 to 60 minutes (depending on the circumstances) and appointment times are varied so that time is not lost from any one subject. **Is it confidential?** A key feature of the service is that information discussed in the counselling session is treated confidentially. Counselling is at a time when it is ok to talk about concerns without the fear of them being discussed elsewhere. This includes not discussing the work with parents/carers, unless the young person requests or gives consent for this. This can be hard for parents/carers to accept at times but ensuring the confidentiality of the work is crucial for establishing trust so that the young person feels confident to speak openly and freely about what is concerning them. However, if a young person appears to be at risk of significant harm, it may be appropriate to seek help from other agencies to keep them safe. The counsellor would aim to discuss this first with the young person concerned. The counsellor receives supervision of their work to ensure the quality of their practice, this is confidential.

18	**APPENDIX 3** **INFORMATION SHEET - STUDENTS**

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 to you about where and when 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 it's between you and the counsellor. It's your time and space to be with someone who is there for you and nobody else. Obviously 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 keep confidentiality unless you are at risk of harm. If this is the case the counsellor may need to talk to someone else to keep you safe but will always try to talk with you about this first.

Will anything be written about me?

Keeping information about people safe and confidential is very important to the counsellor. The counsellor may make some brief notes about what has been talked about in the session. These notes are kept safely locked in a filing cabinet. All information written and discussed is private and confidential unless there is an agreed or overriding need to share the information in your best interests. A counsellor presents their work to a counselling supervisor regularly. This person checks the counsellor is working well with you. Either your name or school is mentioned.

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 that you trust. This may be your form tutor or Head of Year. You can come to counselling in some cases without your parents/carers being informed. 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 also fill in a self-referral form.

After you have finished your counselling, you may be given an evaluation form that you can complete. The form is anonymous unless you choose to put your name on it. The feedback you give will let us know how well we are helping the students that we see. If you have any concerns or complaints, you are welcome to either speak with your counsellor or another member of staff.

19	APPENDIX 4 INFORMATION SHEET – PARENTS AND CARERS

What if I don't want my child to receive counselling?
If a child or young person requests counselling and is able to understand what is involved in the process, then they have the right to access counselling. We would hope that parents and carers would not deny them this right and we would prefer your support. We are always happy to talk with you about any concerns you may have about the idea of counselling.

What if my child refuses to have counselling?
The decision about whether to take up the offer of counselling is entirely voluntary for students just as it would be for an adult.

Can I support the counselling work?
Yes, and we welcome this. Our experience shows that the most helpful thing a parent/carer can do is to show an acceptance of counselling as a normal and useful activity. If your child wants to talk about it, then this is encouraged but it is important not to press them if they don't. We acknowledge that this isn't an easy task, and it is quite natural for parents/carers to feel anxious about what may be being said in the sessions. It is always our hope that talking with the counsellor will lead to greater openness with parents/carers and families, you will need to allow a little time for this to happen.

If my child wants to see a counsellor does this mean I am failing as a parent/carer?
Absolutely not! We all experience occasions when it feels hard to speak to those closest to us about things which are bothering us. Often this can happen as we don't want to worry those we love, or because we want help thinking things through with someone outside of the family. The counsellor will not be judging you or your child but looking to help them find their way through whatever is troubling them.

How are referrals made to the counselling service?
Referrals may be made through the schools' pastoral system, or your child's head of year, the request may come from you, or your child who can self-refer.

Data Protection procedures and evaluation.
All information about counselling work is kept securely by the counsellor in line with current date protection regulations. After the counselling has ended your child will be given and evaluation form that they can complete anonymously and return. This allows the counsellor to know how well we are helping the students we see.