

CWS - Student / Parent Information on the Folio school counselling Service Year 7& 8

There are times in our lives when we all need someone to talk to and growing up, Learning how to deal with situations that we have never experienced before can be tough. Moving from primary school to secondary school is scary, but knowing that you have someone to talk to where you will not be judged, and speak to in a private space can be a great help especially if you find it hard to speak to your parents and maybe even your friends. Maybe you feel vulnerable or think no one wants to listen, the school counsellor is here to listen and help you find solutions and a pathway to help you through your problems.

How is speaking to the school counsellor different from speaking to your family, friends or teachers?

- The counsellor is fully qualified, with years of experience working with young people in schools.
- Speaking with friends and family can be difficult sometimes as friends and family already know you and may hold ideas as to why you feel the way you feel which may not be true for you, but working with a fully qualified therapist, you're almost like a blank canvas. The therapist knows nothing about you which makes it easier for the student client to be and feel heard.
- Everything said in the counselling session is strictly private and confidential. The sessions take place within a private and confidential space. A counsellor does not give advice, tell you what to do or make you feel ashamed, But no matter what the situation, the sessions are about helping you through your worries and problems, looking at your worries in different ways to help you make good choices in order to create a positive change.

What are the benefits of seeing the school counsellor?

- Can help you hear your thoughts in different ways and change negative thoughts.
- Help you cope with your feelings
- Learn coping strategies and create a tool box to help deal with stress, anxiety and low moods.
- A counsellor will not blame or shame you.

- You can see the school counsellor within school hours
- A place to off load
- Help you gain a deeper understanding of yourself and others
- Helps you make good choices to create positive changes
- Improves your confidence and self-esteem.

Will the school counsellor tell my parents or teachers what I have said in the counselling session?

No. Everything that is said in the counselling session is totally private and confidential. The only time that the counsellor would share information, is if you tell the counsellor that you or someone else you know is in danger of emotional or physical harm, then the counsellor will discuss the situation with you to explore the best way forward. The counsellor has a **duty of care** to all the students they work with which means they may need to share the information for your safety and the safety of others.

If I want to see the school counsellor who do I speak to?

Seeing a counsellor may be your idea, your parents/carers or a teacher might suggest that this may be good for you. If counselling is suggested by any of the above, and if you feel that you do not want to do counselling you don't have to. If you are under 14 year of age, the school (your year leader) will have to get signed permission from your parents.

You can refer yourself for student counselling if you are 14 and over without informing your parents/ carers, all you would need to do is speak to your year leader/ Mrs Lattimore and they will make a confidential referral to the counselling service. You are also more than welcome to go and see the school counsellor, introduce yourself and maybe, if you feel comfortable speak a little about what's bothering you, and get to know the counsellor. After this you are likely to be offered an appointment which will lead to exploring if counselling is for you and if so, the counsellor will place you on the schedule to start your batch of sessions for the period of six weeks within a private and confidential space (the school counsellors office) where you won't be disturbed.

You don't have to decide straight away. - it's your choice, and whatever you decide is OK.

What can I talk about with the school counsellor?

Whatever is on your mind, problems, decisions, worries, and changes. It could be lots of different things

- Anxiety, low mood,
- Lack of focus and motivation
- Making friends, relationships,
- Parents separating,
- Losing your temper (anger management)

- Getting into trouble at home and at school,
- Teasing and bullying,
- Questioning Sexuality
- Transgender
- Bereavement -losing someone special
- mixed-up feelings
- health worries,
- exams, coursework and more.....

All these things can affect how you feel and how you behave. We are not our behaviour. Our behaviour can be a symptom of what's really going on inside. Talking about your worries and problems is the beginning of helping you piece things together. The more honest you are with yourself and what is actually going on inside you, gives the counsellor room to be able to help you navigate through the hard times, make good decisions in order to create a life you are proud to own.

You can contact **Ms Renee Bond Folio Trust Senior Counselling Lead**
via email reenebond@foliotrust.uk

Working days - **CWS**- Tuesdays, Thursdays, Friday afternoons

WCGS- Mondays, Wednesdays, Friday mornings.