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| **ST ANDREW’S COLLEGE POLICY DOCUMENT** | |
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| Authorised by: Helen Widdall  Date: 15th August 2019 | Signature |

**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

* **Mental health policy**
* **Safeguarding policy**

***Equality and diversity statement***

*It is the policy of* ***St Andrews College, Cambridge*** *to recognise and encourage the valuable and enriching contribution from all who work and learn here and the rights of all individuals who come into contact with the College, such as prospective students and job applicants.*

*We believe that people from a range of backgrounds and experiences can enhance the life and development of the institution and that all individuals should be treated on the basis of individual merit and without prejudice. The College will, therefore, aim to provide an education service that actively promotes equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on grounds of age, cultural background, economic status, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion/belief, marriage/civil partnership or sexual orientation in both education and employment. We will strive vigorously to remove conditions that place people at a disadvantage and will actively combat bigotry and discrimination. The College expects all employees, students, and associated partner organisations to adopt this policy.*

**1. Background to the policy**

St Andrew’s College recognises that people may face a variety of difficulties and challenges whilst at college, which impact on the chances of success and progression. Counselling can help students (and staff) to work through personal or mental health issues and to form coping strategies and build resilience.

Offering counselling within the college provides students with easy access to a valuable mental health service. It forms an integral part of the college pastoral care system and the whole school approach to mental health.

**2. Definitions**

Counselling- Counselling takes place when a counsellor sees a client in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty the client is having, distress they may be experiencing or perhaps their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of a sense of direction and purpose. (The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2004)

**3. Scope of the policy**

The counselling service is available to all currently enrolled students within St Andrew’s College, irrespective of the level, mode or duration of study. An exception to this is for those that are known to the counsellor on a personal level. In this instance these students will be referred to relevant external services.

This policy covers:

• Entitlement to counselling

• Accessing the service

• Assessment of need and allocation to the counsellor

• How support is agreed between the client and the counsellor

• What can be expected from counselling, including number of sessions

• Reviewing and monitoring

• Data protection and confidentiality

•How counselling sits within the college pastoral care system

**4. Policy statement**

St Andrew’s College is committed to providing a safe, professional, accessible and confidential counselling service which supports students to overcome issues which may be affecting a student’s ability to study at College.

**Entitlement to counselling**

This service is available to students of the College, who may be experiencing emotional or psychological problems that could inhibit their personal development and/or chances of success and progression. The service aims to promote and contribute to the wellbeing and achievement of students.

To ensure this aim is met, we commit to:

• Offering a service that conforms to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) code of ethics. Information on these codes of ethics is communicated to each client when they first use the service.

• Encouraging equality of access and promoting a sense of welcome and privacy through inclusive and appropriate publicity and accommodation for the service. The service is offered to students regardless of age, disability, gender (including gender reassignment), marital status, race, religion/belief, and sexual orientation.

• Offering a one-to-one counselling service for enrolled students, at a reasonable fee.

• Delivering the service through staff trained to diploma standard, or currently undergoing recognised training, who are professionally supervised as required by the BACP and have a commitment to ongoing training, personal development and study.

• Providing a response to a counselling request within 2 working days and an initial appointment within 7 working days.

• Ensuring confidentiality for the student in accordance with the BACP’s Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy. Tutors, relatives, friends etc. are not involved in the counselling process.

• Keeping accurate and up-to-date information on other sources of support and signposting students to other agencies if appropriate.

• Listening to clients

• Reviewing the counselling service regularly and providing an annual report which will be produced by the Head of Pastoral Care in conjunction with the counsellors, drawing on data collated throughout the year.

**What can be expected of one-to-one counselling**

• The service currently offers an ‘open-ended’ provision. However, there may be occasions when the demand for the service is so great that a limit needs to be imposed. If this is the case existing clients would be given 6 sessions notice of the change and the subsequent sessions would run consecutively.

• The service will be delivered in a private, comfortable and welcoming environment.

• Each session is usually 50 minutes long although clients may wish to shorten the session if they choose.

• The service is client-led and the counsellors will not be directive with regard to topics for discussion. Clients will have the opportunity to express themselves through their preferred media. This is usually talking but art, music or any other method is welcomed.

• It may be the case that a counsellor and a client will meet outside the counselling room, for example when working with certain issues. The client will be informed of the possibility. The counsellor will not acknowledge the client outside the counselling setting. Clients will be given the opportunity to discuss unplanned meetings and any concerns raised at the next session.

• An important aspect of the counsellor’s work is to recognise the onset of serious physical and psychological disturbances and refer appropriately. This may be to a GP or psychiatrist or other medical consultant for expert opinion. The referral will usually take place in consultation with the client. Therapeutic sessions can continue with the counsellor if agreed by the referral agency and the client.

**Data protection and confidentiality**

All sessions with a counsellor are confidential. Information will only be shared with your explicit and informed consent. The only time the counselling service will share information without consent is if it is felt that a client, a child or a vulnerable adult is at risk from significant harm. In these circumstances, the procedures within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed. The service will usually (but not always) discuss with a client what will be shared and will seek to obtain the client’s consent where possible.

The counsellor works openly and honestly and information recorded about clients is available for the client to see. All information about clients, both paper-based and computerised, is held securely and each client is coded.

A record is kept of the following information:

• Referral and assessment forms, including client name and contact details

• Counselling contract

• Session notes

This information allows the service to maintain contact with the client and work within ethical and professional guidelines. Session notes ensure that counsellors are able to develop their sessions to meet the needs of the individual client.

Counselling is confidential, unless safeguarding concerns are raised. The Head of Pastoral Care will be aware of the names of clients accessing the service but will not have access to any detail of presenting difficulties or session content.

Parents/carers, tutors, teachers or support staff do not have access to information about students receiving counselling and will not be informed that students are accessing the service.

All information is stored for seven years and then destroyed, in line with BACP guidelines. If a client wishes for their information to be destroyed before this deadline, they should speak to their counsellor.

**5. Procedures associated with policy**

**Accessing the service**

The counselling provision is communicated through posters, the College website, induction sessions and by tutors. Clients can also access information through the Counselling Referral Form (Appendix 1).

Clients can access the service through the following mechanisms:

• Direct contact with a member of staff by phone, text or email.

• Referral by tutor or other member of staff.

• Completing a counselling referral form (available throughout the school).

• Referral by General Practioners or other healthcare professional.

• Posting a request for an appointment and contact details in the post boxes at reception.

The Counsellor keeps accurate and current information on all other sources of support, both internal and external, and can signpost or refer to other agencies when appropriate.

**Assessment of client needs**

The counselling service aims to provide a non-directive counselling experience.

The counsellor will complete an assessment with each client at the first appointment. This information is then held confidentially in a secure location.

**How support is agreed**

Clients are encouraged to use the sessions in whatever manner is most helpful. The counsellor will talk through a ‘contract’ with the client in the first session that outlines expectations of both the counsellor and the client. The contract also covers confidentiality and safeguarding (please see Appendix 2).

If a client feels that they have been placed with a counsellor who does not suit them, the Head of Pastoral Care will attempt to offer sessions with an alternative provider.

**Reviewing and monitoring**

•R eview discussions will take place at regular intervals between the client and the counsellor to ascertain how beneficial the sessions are. This is to ensure that the client’s needs are being met.

• If a client accesses the service for longer than twelve weeks, a review will take place between the counsellor and the Head of Pastoral Care to ensure that the needs of the client are being met. No confidential information will be shared at this meeting.

• When the counselling takes place because of a safeguarding issue, the Counsellor, Head of Pastoral Care and Designated Safeguarding Leads will work together whilst simultaneously respecting confidentiality agreements, to ensure that all processes work effectively.

• Clients will be asked to complete an initial questionnaire which they then complete again in their final session. They are also asked to complete an additional feedback form in every session. This allows data to be collected on the effectiveness of the counselling, even if the client does not complete all planned sessions. The data from these forms will then be passed to the Head of Pastoral Care, without revealing clients’ personal data, so that the service can be monitored and analysed and areas for improvement can be identified.

• Clients are encouraged to give informal feedback on all aspects of the service, including promotion activities and methods and policy.

• If clients have concerns about the service they are receiving, they are strongly encouraged to speak to their counsellor or the Head of Pastoral Care. Formal complaints should be directed to Hanna Claydon (basement of 13 Station Road), using the Complaints procedure. If the complaint is not resolved the client can then make a formal complaint via the BACP (Appendix 3)

**6. How counselling sits within the college pastoral care system**

The counselling service is distinct from college pastoral care and SEND provision, and it is important that students understand that the counsellor is independent from the college and will maintain confidentiality except where child protection is a concern. However, it is equally important that appropriate links are established and maintained between the counsellors and the Head of Pastoral Care, SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Leads. Ways in which this is achieved are:

* The Head of Pastoral Care, as the mental health lead for the college, will act as the named link between the counselling service and the college.
* The counselling service is advertised throughout the school on posters, in handbooks and in newsletters so that students are aware the service exists and is available to them.
* All staff are encouraged to refer students for counselling (with the student’s informed consent), if they notice behavioural or mental health problems that they think may be alleviated through counselling.
* Staff may also refer a student (with the student’s consent) to counselling for assessment purposes, so the counsellor can identify specific issues and ways in which the student can be supported to seek advice or treatment for such issues.
* If the counsellor suspects that a child may be experiencing, or is at risk of significant harm, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the college safeguarding policy.
* If counsellors find that they are supporting a number of young people with issues which are related to the school environment, such as bullying, academic pressure, or the handling by teachers of difficult issues such as gender identity, they should advise the college so that the college can identify where a change in policy or practice may be needed. Counsellors must seek permission from children and young people, or their parents/carers where appropriate, to share information that would identify any children and young people who are using the counselling service.
* Counsellors should share information with the college, in accordance with confidentiality and reviewing and monitoring procedures described above, so that the effectiveness and usefulness of the counselling service within the college can be assessed.

**Reviewed: August 2017, June 2018, August 2019**

Next review: August 2020

**Appendix 1**

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| **COUNSELLING REFERRAL FORM** | | |
| STUDENT NAME | | |
| COURSE | | |
| EMAIL ADDRESS | | |
| MOBILE NUMBER | | |
| BEST METHOD OF CONTACT  ☐ PHONE CALL  TEXT  EMAIL | | |
| BRIEF REASONS FOR WANTING TO ATTEND COUNSELLING (OPTIONAL) | | |
| PLEASE STATE WHAT DAYS AND TIMES WOULD BE CONVENIENT FOR YOU TO ATTEND | | |
| MONDAY | MORNING | AFTERNOON |
| TUESDAY | MORNING | AFTERNOON |
| WEDNESDAY | MORNING | AFTERNOON |
| THURSDAY | MORNING | AFTERNOON |
| FRIDAY | MORNING | AFTERNOON |
| YOUR DETAILS WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE COUNSELLING DEPT. WHERE YOU WILL BE CONTACTED TO ARRANGE YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT. IF YOU PREFER TO BE CALLED, WHEN WOULD BE THE MOST CONVENIENT TIME TO CONTACT YOU? | | |
| SOURCE OF REFERRAL  ☐SELF  PERSONAL TUTOR  HEAD OF PASTORAL CARE  PRINCIPAL  TEACHER  HOUSE MANAGER  HOMESTAY | | |
| NOTES/COMMENTS | | |
| **PLEASE PUT YOUR COMPLETED FORM IN ENVELOPE PROVIDED AND RETURN TO**  **HELEN WIDDALL AT 13 STATION ROAD** | | |

**Appendix 2**

**COUNSELLING AGREEMENT**

Please read the following information carefully before signing below. If there is anything that you are unsure of please ask before signing:

CONFIDENTIALITY

Everything we discuss in our sessions together is confidential except:

1. for the purposes of supervision

2. where in my opinion, there may be a danger to yourself or to others

3. I am made accountable by a court of Law or for any legal reasons

4. you consent for me to talk to a third party on your behalf

Supervision sessions are to allow me to gain support and guidance in my work and also to check that I am working ethically and competently. When I discuss the work that I am doing with you, I will only refer to you by your first name (if this is agreed by yourself otherwise we could find an alternative) and any other distinguishing details will be altered to keep your identity anonymous.

FREQUENCY, CANCELLATION AND LENGTH OF SESSIONS

Sessions are 45 minutes in duration but you are free to leave whenever you wish. We would normally meet once weekly. We will review the work that we are doing on the sixth session, giving us both a chance to assess how the relationship is working out and to make sure that the counselling sessions are helpful to you. If you did decide to stop coming for counselling, please inform me if possible in order that we can have an ending session.

Please give 48 hours notice in advance if you can't make a session, or as soon as possible in

exceptional circumstances. I will follow the same procedure if I need to cancel a session too. You can do this by email: counselling@standrewscambridge.co.uk

LIMITS FOR COUNSELLING:

It is not okay to attend counselling sessions whilst under the influence of drink or drugs or to harm yourself in any way during the sessions. I would need to be informed if you are prescribed any medication.

We do not usually work with a client who is seeing another therapist due to conflicting interests. If you did see someone else this is something that I would need to know about so that we could discuss it.

CODE OF ETHICS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

If you are not happy with anything at all this is something that I am happy to discuss with you in the first instance. If we still cannot resolve the issue then you can make a formal complaint in writing to Hanna Claydon via the school website.

I work within the BACP code of ethics. This is to ensure that you receive a good service and means that I am accountable to a higher national organisation and must work within their guidelines. They have their own complaints procedure. Copies of this are available on request.

AGREEMENT

I have read and understood the above information and agree to the conditions for

counselling as made clear to me.

Signed..................................................................... Date...................................

**Appendix 3**

Complaint Form

Name of complainant: (Please supply contact details on separate sheet)

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Name of member/registrant against whom you wish to complain:

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Full contact details of member/registrant: *(Where known)*

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Description of the professional relationship you had with the member/registrant: (*Please include start and finish dates for this relationship).* Continue on separate numbered sheet(s) if necessary.

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Description of the complaint against the member/registrant: *(This should include details of dates when the event(s) giving rise to the complaint occurred)* Continue on separate numbered sheet(s) if necessary.

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Detail any attempts you have made to resolve your complaint with the member/registrant concerned: *(If not, give an explanation why)*. Continue on separate numbered sheet(s) if necessary.

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| **Signature:** | **Date:** |

**NOTE: Please return this completed and signed form together with all supporting evidence to the address below. Please also note that a copy of this complaint form will be made available to the member/registrant complained against:**

**Professional Conduct Dept.**

**BACP**

**BACP House**

**15 St. John’s Business Park**

**LUTTERWORTH**

**LE17 4HB**

**Feedback**

**As part of its further commitment to customer care, BACP is seeking your feedback on the complaint process. If you have any feedback that you would like to submit to BACP regarding its complaints process, please provide this to the following dedicated email address:**

**registerfeedback@bacp.co.uk**

**Please note that your feedback can also be submitted anonymously by post, addressed to the Professional Conduct Department, and will be used with the sole intention to inform and improve our handling of complaints. Please note that no individual responses will be made to the feedback received. Your co-operation in this matter is much appreciated.**