



# The Polesworth School Counselling Service

## About Counselling

**What is counselling?** Counselling gives young people a regular and confidential space to talk about worries or problems they are experiencing. Talking things through in a confidential setting, with regular appointments can often help young people gain new and different perspectives. This can lead to changes in how they feel about themselves, their relationships with others, their thinking, and their behaviour - both in and out of school.

**How does counselling work?** Having thoughts, feelings and worries listened to, clarified, or understood by someone who is not directly involved in problems or concerns can be hugely beneficial. Often, young people find that having a confidential setting and regular time to talk enables them to build a trusting relationship with which to understand themselves better or get further help in other places if they need it.

Counselling can also enable young people to see alternative choices for moving forwards. Sometimes just 'talking things through' can help young people to feel clearer or more confident about something they had in mind already.

**Some of the issues a young person might talk to a counsellor about-** Anxiety, exam stress, bullying, family relationships, bereavement, self-harm, depression, sexuality, divorce & separation, substance misuse.

## Confidentiality

**Is counselling confidential?** Yes, however there are exceptional circumstances when confidentiality needs to be broken. This is clearly explained to the young person at the start of any counselling relationship.

**Why is it so important that counselling sessions are kept confidential?** For young people to feel completely safe and trust the counsellor to help them with their concerns, it is essential for confidentiality to be maintained. Confidentiality also supports young people when they want to change their behaviour or be completely honest about some of the more difficult feelings in life, such as sadness, anxiety, fear, shame, or anger.

**When would confidentiality be broken?** Confidentiality will be broken if the counsellor deems a young person at significant risk of harm to either themselves or others. In these cases, the counsellor will speak to a member of the safeguarding team and agree the next steps, together with the young person (wherever possible). As well as informing parents/carers to ensure the care and safety of the young person.

## Appointments

**What should I do if I think a young person could benefit from counselling?**

If you believe a young person might benefit from talking to the school counsellor, you can contact the school and speak to a member of the safeguarding team, Head of Year or the SENCO. They will be able to create a referral to counselling if this is suitable.

**Can I make an initial appointment on behalf of a young person?** Yes, however, only if the young person requests this or agrees for you to do this on their behalf. It is always a young person's choice about whether to come to counselling and they should not be 'sent' to counselling for help or persuaded one way or another, even if school staff, parents/carers or other adults think they could benefit from talking to a counsellor.

**How can young people access the service?** There are several ways young people may access the service. They can speak to their form tutor or Head of Year or access support through Student Services.

**When and where do appointments take place?** Appointments take place weekly in the counselling room in the Editha building, next to the library. This is a designated counselling space.

**What if a young person misses an appointment or is not in school?** If a young person misses two consecutive appointments and the counsellor does not hear from the young person, the counsellor will attempt to check in with the young person at an alternative time. Counselling will stop if they no longer wish to continue, or contact has been unsuccessful. The young person is free to return at any time in the future and this is clearly explained during the first session.

**What if a young person wants to stop coming to counselling?** Young people are free to end counselling at any time. During the first session they are advised of this and are asked to let the counsellor know.

### **About the counsellor**

The school counsellor is Mrs Asbury.

### **What qualifications, experience and supervision does the counsellor have?**

I hold a Level 7 Diploma in Integrative Psychotherapeutic Counselling. I am a registered member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), engage in regular training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and work with BACP's Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy.

In addition, I receive regular, ongoing Clinical Supervision. This is where a counsellor meets with another counsellor, who is their supervisor. Counsellors discuss their caseload during Supervision and receive support and guidance for their work with young people. I also have twenty years' experience working with young people within a school setting.

### **Further Information**

For further information about counselling and to view a copy of the Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy, go to [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk).

Any questions or queries please contact [L.Asbury@thepolesworthschool.com](mailto:L.Asbury@thepolesworthschool.com)

Lorna Asbury  
School Counsellor

The Polesworth School, Dordon Road, Tamworth, Staffs, B78 1QT  
Tel: (01827) 702205 Ext 482