Coláiste
Bhaile Chláir

COLÁISTE BHAILE CHLÁIR

Counselling Policy

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

21/3/2019

Approved by Galway & Roscommon Education & Training Board

9 APRIL 2019

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS, STUDENT COUNCIL, STAFF, THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND GALWAY AND ROSCOMMON EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

1. Definition of Counselling

“Counselling takes place when a counsellor sees a student in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty the student is having, distress they may be experiencing or perhaps their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of a sense of direction and purpose”

2. The Role of a School Counsellor

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir has guidance counsellors and a psychotherapist to assist in addressing the emotional needs that young people can have in response to experiences such as family breakdown, bereavement, loss, family and peer relationship difficulties, anxiety and bullying.

Counselling can be an effective source of support for these students, enabling them to function better both academically and socially thus enhancing their resilience and giving them resources to manage any future difficulties.
The counselling available at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir is part of the Student Support Services within the school, and is an onsite response for those students needing the additional expertise that counselling brings to the overall pastoral support system.

The guidance counsellor, psychotherapist and the pastoral care team will offer support to students who are presenting with mild to moderate level of emotional distress that can be supported during school term.

For students who present with moderate to server emotional distress, that require more intensive work and out of school hours support the student support services will provide assessments, recommendations, and referrals to appropriate agencies

2.1 Associate Counsellors

In addition to the School Counsellor, there maybe Student Counsellors on placement at the school, who are attending a recognised university or college course in Counselling. They will also be in a position to offer support and counselling sessions. They will work to a recognised ethical framework such as that of the Irish Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy, and they will be mentored and regularly supervised by the School Counsellor.

Associate counsellors wishing to use students for written case studies for university assessments, need to discuss the matter with the Counsellor and Principal before any consent can be given.

2.2 Other Professionals

In line with good ethical practice and in order to reduce any potential conflicts of therapeutic effort, the School Counsellor and Associate Counsellors will not provide counselling to young people who are currently in receipt of other support from another agency, i.e. CAMHS, Youth Work Ireland, Jigsaw etc.

2.3 Supervision

All counsellors will engage in regular clinical supervision to maintain and monitor standards and to comply with their ethical code. School counsellors should undertake counselling supervision with a supervisor who has experience and understanding of children and young people and of the school setting. Associates are responsible for making their own arrangements for supervision, in accordance with their I.A.C.P and or I.A.H.I.P body's minimum requirements.

2.4 Statement of Good Practice

The Counsellor and Associates must be members of a governing professional body, and be familiar with and work to the guidelines of the ethical Framework. Any breaches will be dealt with through the complaints procedures of the members' governing body. Counsellors must notify Coláiste Bhaile Chláir if they are subject of a complaint to their professional body. In the instance of risk to self or other, confidentiality may be broken and the named Child Protection Officer shall be contacted. This will be outlined in the consent form for the young person from the outset.

3. Administration

Appointments, cancellations, contracting arrangements and all relevant paperwork will be responsibly held by the School Counsellor at all times, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

School Counsellors will notify management if they are suddenly unwell/unavailable are away from the school and unavailable to take referrals.

Counsellors should not normally take new referrals if they are coming to end of term and holidays unless to make referrals to external agencies who can support the child.

4. Referral

Referrals are made by students, parents, teachers, year ceannairí, deputy principal and principal but the student will make the final decision if they engage in the counselling process in lines with good practice guidance for counselling in schools.

Referral by staff, parent and students can be made via the studentsupport@cbcg.ie where this is discussed at the relevant Pastoral Care Meeting and an action is devised on what support is most appropriate for the student.

Students may also self-refer by dropping into the student support office or email the studentsupport@cbcg.ie

4.1 Consent

As part of the pastoral care and student support policy guidance and counselling is considered a regular education service provided by the school so all students can access this service unless specifically stated by a parent on the enrolment policy.

The counsellor is responsible for the student who is engaging in the service where the parent's needs are considered but the needs of the students come first, above all others.

4.2 Initial Assessment

After a referral has been made, an initial assessment form will be completed by the School Counsellor or other member of Pastoral staff. The assessment will measure of risk, and used for on-going reviews and evaluations of the service. For students who present with medium to high risk issues they will be referred to appropriate agency who can provide the most appropriate support.

4.3 Session Allocation

Appointments are made on a basis that best suits the student needs but would typically be weekly or fortnightly for a maximum of six sessions. Any extension to these sessions is through discussion and review with the Year Head and member from the Management Team.

4.4 Confidentiality

"Confidentiality is a professional's promise or contract to respect clients' privacy by not disclosing anything revealed during counselling, except under agreed upon conditions or if it." The exceptions to this which is outlined to all students who engage with the service are

- Someone is hurting you
- You want to hurt someone
- You want to hurt yourself

Ethically, school counsellors are required to take appropriate action if students engage in behaviour that presents clear and imminent danger to themselves and others these include but are not limited to self-injury, indicates an eating disorder, possible drug or alcohol issues, runaway plan or other dangerous behaviour.

All staff at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir are required to take appropriate action if students engage in behaviour that presents an imminent danger to themselves and others by making a referral to the Designated Liaison Person in line with Children's First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

Respecting the young person's privacy and confidentiality are fundamental requirements for keeping trust and respecting the young person's autonomy. The professional management of confidentiality concerns the protection of personally identifiable and sensitive information from unauthorised disclosure. Disclosure may be authorised by the young person's consent or the law. Any disclosures of a

young person's confidences should be undertaken in ways that best protect the young person's trust and respect their autonomy.

Client consent is the ethically preferred way of resolving any dilemmas over confidentiality, but exceptional circumstances may prevent the Counsellor from seeking client consent to a breach of confidence, due to the urgency and seriousness of the situation, for example, preventing the client causing serious harm to self or others. In such circumstances the Counsellor has an ethical responsibility to act in ways which balance the client's right to confidentiality against the need to communicate with others.
Counsellors should expect to be ethically accountable for any breach of confidentiality.

Confidential information about clients is typically shared with the Pastoral Care Team and this information is adequately protected from unauthorised further disclosures.

4.5 Where counselling will take place

Counselling will take place in Student Support Services. A member of staff from Student Support Services will mark the young person present when in attendance with the Counsellor; over-riding any absence marks a teacher may have made, for not being seen to attend a time-tabled class.
As part of the agreement between the Counsellor and the young person, any missed appointments, without prior discussion, will be counted as one of the six.

4.6 Sharing Information

The Counselling Service will work in a multi-disciplinary way and communicate with school staff, other agencies and specialised services, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality. Counsellors may find it necessary to liaise with, share information or refer the young person to another agency for further help. This can happen without the young person's permission as it is to support the student.

4.7 Diversity & Additional Learning Needs

Coláiste Bhaile Chláir is committed to providing services to young people that take account of cultural differences and Additional Learning Needs. This includes disabled young people and lesbian, gay and bisexual young people whose identity and experiences may not have been represented in the school setting.

5. Record Keeping

The school adopts a Data Protection policy in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, and it is updated as necessary to reflect best practice in data management. Each young person's records are and stored in a cabinet, in a locked room in Student Support Services. Statistical data will be collated on an annual basis and no student will be identified within the data collected.

5.1 Access to Records

The young person has a general right of access to educational records, and this includes confidential counselling material. A parent/carer however does not have this right, any disclosure or processing of such material 'is unwarranted in any particular case by reason of prejudice to the rights and freedoms or legitimate

interests of the data subject' (i.e. the child concerned). The counselling service would consider any request against the child's wishes, to be undermining the child's own right to privacy and confidentiality.
Counselling records, including process notes, may be requested by the courts during hearings about the welfare of children. If the School Counsellor is given a court order to appear in court or produce their process notes, they may obtain legal advice so that they can make representations to the court in the appropriate manner, to limit disclosure of non-relevant sensitive client information.

5.2 Child Protection

If a counsellor has potential child protection concerns, this could lead to a breach of confidentiality in the interests of the child's safety. Therefore, as part of the initial assessment, the counsellor will explain the procedures and possible consequences of involvement by other agencies.

5.3 Evaluation and Reporting to Management

The Year Ceannaire, teacher, School Counsellor and Pastoral Care Team will meet regularly to review the service and address any weaknesses in the system.

5.5 Complaints Procedure

In the first instance all complaints should be raised with the school following the usual school complaints procedure.

YP-THERAPY ASSESSMENT FORM v1.

Site ID

Age

Client ID (letters / numbers)

Male

Female

Sub Codes: TH ID number / SC2 numbers / SC3 numbers

Ethnic Origin

Referral date (D D / M M / Y Y Y Y)

Previously seen for therapy in this service? Yes / No

Episode

Date first seen (this episode) (D D / M M / Y Y Y Y)

Months since last episode

Referrer(s) *Please tick up to three boxes*

- Self
- Parent/Carer
- Guidance/Pastoral care teacher
- Health (GP, hospital, school nurse, etc)
- Social Services
- Private counsellor/Psychotherapist
- Voluntary organisation (eg, Mind, Relate)
- Other school staff
- Other education agencies
- Not known
- Other (specify below)

Brief description of reason for referral

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Identified Problems/Concerns

Severity	Anger	Anxiety/Stress	Behaviour problems	Bereavement/Loss	Bullying	Depression	Family	Health
< 6 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6-12 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
> 12 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recurring/ continuous	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Severity	Interpersonal/Relationship	School/Academic	Self and Identity	Self-esteem	Self-harm	Trauma/Abuse	Other (specify below)
< 6 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6-12 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
> 12 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recurring/ continuous	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Risk

	None	Mild	Mod	Sev
Suicide	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self harm	☐	☐	☐	☐
Harm to others	☐	☐	☐	☐
Legal/Forensic	☐	☐	☐	☐

Assessment outcome *(tick one box only)*

- ☐ Assessment/one session only
- ☐ Accepted for therapy
- ☐ Accepted for trial period of therapy
- ☐ Long consultation
- ☐ * Referred to other service
- ☐ * Unsuitable for therapy at this time

* If the client is not entering therapy give brief reason

Comments / Notes

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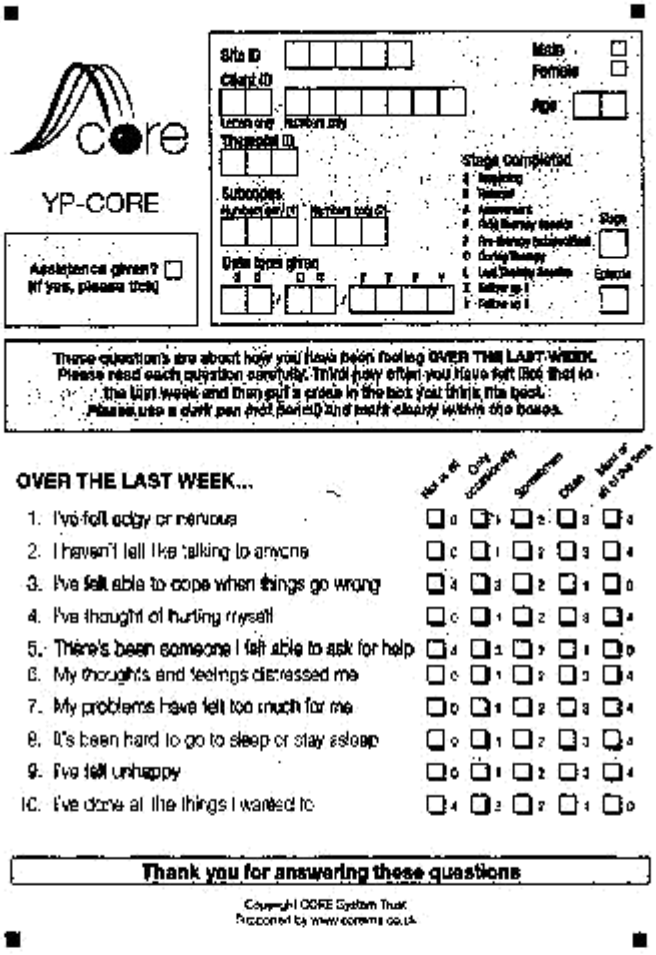

YP-CORE

Site ID

Client ID

Therapist ID

Male ☐
Female ☐

Age

Stage completed

Subscales

Stage

Assistance given? ☐
(If yes, please tick)

Date types given

Extents

These questions are about how you have been feeling **OVER THE LAST WEEK**. Please read each question carefully. Think how often you have felt like that in the last week and then put a cross in the box you think fits best. Please use a dark pen and BLOCK CAPITALS and mark clearly within the boxes.

OVER THE LAST WEEK...	Not at all	Only occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Most or all of the time
1. I've felt edgy or nervous	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
2. I haven't felt like talking to anyone	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
3. I've felt able to cope when things go wrong	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1	☐ 0
4. I've thought of hurting myself	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
5. There's been someone I felt able to ask for help	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1	☐ 0
6. My thoughts and feelings distressed me	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
7. My problems have felt too much for me	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
8. It's been hard to go to sleep or stay asleep	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
9. I've felt unhappy	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
10. I've done all the things I wanted to	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1	☐ 0

Thank you for answering these questions

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