

Downsview Primary and Nursery School

School Counsellor

Role Profile and Person Specification

From September 2022

Downsview Primary and Nursery School

Role Profile

Job Title:	School Counsellor
Department:	People
Division:	Academic
Grade Range:	Grade 8, spine point 26
Hours:	1 day per week (Term time: 39 weeks, 6 hours per week)
Location:	Downsview Primary and Nursery School
Reports to:	Deputy Headteacher – Inclusion
Responsible for:	<p>The School Counsellor is responsible for delivering a professional and high standard comprehensive counselling service to the school community</p> <p>Providing one to one and small group counselling to pupils, as directed by the school, to maintain appropriate records and liaise with the Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion and other staff, as appropriate.</p> <p>Making contact with parent / carer as appropriate (at least termly).</p>

Role Purpose and Role Dimensions:

The counselling service provided within school should aim to offer children a safe and welcoming space for them to come, express and explore their feelings. The aim is to enable children, who are experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, to learn new skills to help them manage their lives more effectively whilst improving their self-esteem and confidence. School based counselling is a valuable resource that helps to provide positive, personal, social, health and educational outcomes for all children and their family.

To provide a high standard of professional and easily accessible counselling service to children aged 5-11 years in order to ensure all pupils needs are attended to and supported, including where special educational needs and emotional and behavioural needs are impacting on wellbeing and/or academic performance and to reduce barriers to learning. These barriers to learning may be a result of something happening within the school or externally.

A key part of the counselling service is working closely with parents/ carers of pupils accessing the counselling service to help parents to become more self-aware and more at ease in their parenting roles and better able to develop positive and supportive relationships with their children and the school.

The School Counsellor will support and work alongside teaching staff and existing pastoral systems to provide an extra layer of support for pupils. They will also provide school staff and parents with support and advice as appropriate / when needed.

Commitment to Diversity:

As a member of the school team to take individual and collective professional responsibility for championing the School's diversity agenda and proactively implementing initiatives which secure equality of access and outcomes. Also, to commit to continually developing personal understanding of diversity.

Key External Contacts:

- Parents and Carers
- Providing information for agencies such as Social Services and CAMHs, via the Deputy Head for Inclusion
- Social Services
- Deputy Head for Inclusion
- SENCO

Key Internal Contacts:

- Other members of Senior Leadership Team
- Class Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Child Protection Officers
- Inclusion Team
- Administration Team

Financial Dimensions:

Access to a small budget for resources, via the Inclusion team.

Key Areas for Decision Making:

The School Counsellor will determine, in conjunction with the Inclusion team, or make judgments on:

- Pupil suitability for the counselling services, the urgency and level of need, safeguarding and risk assessments.
- The psychological factors hindering learning and effective solutions.
- Appropriate therapeutic interventions, group work and one to one sessions
- Other supports required during and after the counselling process.
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- Effective support strategies for pupils, parents/ carers and/or staff
- Methods for evaluating and developing the service to ensure optimum performance and excellent outcomes.

Key Accountabilities and Result Areas:

Main Duties:

Key Elements:

- To provide independent and confidential individual counselling to pupils at the School through session responding to their personal, social, emotional or educational concerns.
- To provide small group counselling sessions to pupils at the school responding to personal, social, emotional or educational concerns.
- To promote a caring and supportive environment where such concerns may be explored thereby promoting mental and emotional health at the School.
- To maintain confidentiality (except in those circumstances, in line with BACP practice, where this should be breached)
- To uphold good practice as described by the BACP ethical guidelines.
- To be responsible for identifying areas for personal professional development and updating own knowledge and awareness through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) with support from the school/ line manager.
- To maintain appropriate records and to keep these secure.
- To liaise with school staff and other professionals, as appropriate, to ensure effective operation of the service.
- To be alert to trends and patterns of problems and to be willing to identify causes and recommend corrective action.
- To adhere to the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- To maintain a high level of knowledge and awareness of changes and developments in the fields of counselling and education and their impact on the delivery of the service.
- To contribute in any other reasonable fashion to promote the safety and wellbeing of the pupils, as required by the school.
- To attend meetings or discussion sessions with parents if asked and as appropriate within the agreed confidentiality guidelines.

To provide a high standard of professional and easily accessible counselling service to children

This will involve:

- Providing a safe, warm, secure and confidential space within the school for children to come, express and explore their feelings
- Providing a high standard of counselling/ school support tailored to each pupils' needs – individual and groups
- Using initiative, therapeutic interventions and an understanding of theoretical orientations to respond appropriately to individual pupil's needs and establishing treatment plans.
- Supporting pupils to develop self-esteem, confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills to help them cope with the difficulties they face.
- Aiding/developing pupils' social and emotional understanding/ development through counselling provisions and group work.
- Organising small group sessions to address assessed needs or issues
- To manage professionally the anxiety of staff, parents and carers when presented with a student who causes them concern
- Processing/ responding to referrals made by school staff / parents / external agencies for pupils where parental consent has been obtained through the referral process.

To support children, their families and school staff to reduce barriers to learning

This will involve:

- Establishing good working relationships with staff, parents and carers. Maintaining regular contact with families of children receiving support to encourage positive family involvement in the child's learning while maintaining confidentiality.
- Liaising and providing consultation to school staff, parents and carers on how best to support children through the service.
- Ensuring all work with parents and carers is in the best interest of the pupil's needs.
- Supporting parents and carers to access school and community resources.
- Liaising professionally with external agencies and other professionals to signpost families and refer for support when appropriate.
- Engaging with vulnerable families in order to formulate a package of support
- Using specialist (curricular/learning) skills/training/experience to support pupils.
- Promoting inclusion, acceptance of all pupils, emotional health and well-being to the school community.

Contribute to effective working with other agencies as part of the school's team

This will involve:

- Ensuring information is forwarded to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead, as appropriate
- Maintaining record keeping in accordance with the policies and procedures in place in school.
- Managing disclosures and safeguarding issues ethically and in line with school policy to ensure students' well-being and safety
- To comply at all times with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) professional code of ethics, Child Protection Act, GDPR Legislation and School Policy.
- To attend reviews and other meetings as required
- Providing termly reports to the headship team outlining detailed impact of sessions

Key Accountabilities and Result Areas:

Green Statement

Key Elements:

This will involve:

- Ensuring that your work and the work of the (team/section/school) meets the Council's Green Commitment Policy goals in reducing energy consumption and waste, increasing renewable energy use and recycling, contributing to a reduction in traffic congestion, and using sustainable materials.

Data Protection

This will involve:

- Being aware of the council's responsibilities under GDPR processes and comply with this.
- Maintaining client records and archive systems, in accordance with departmental procedure, policy and statutory requirements.

Confidentiality

This will involve:

- Treating all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence. There are strict rules and protocols defining employees access to and use of the school's databases. Any breach of these rules and protocols will be regarded as subject to disciplinary investigation. There are internal procedures in place for employees to raise matters of concern regarding such issues as bad practice or mismanagement.

Equalities

This will involve:

- The council has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its services to the community and in the employment of people. It expects all employees to understand, comply with and to promote its policies in their own work, to undertake any appropriate training and to challenge racism, prejudice and discrimination.

Child Protection

This will involve:

- During the course of a counselling session should a child disclose or present with child protection concerns this will be brought immediately to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead within school along with a written report of the full circumstances, which will be held within school. The Counsellor has a responsibility along with a duty of care to take all reasonable steps necessary to ensure that the disclosure is dealt with appropriately and taken in the interest of the child's safety; in accordance with the Child Protection Act, BACP Code of Ethics and safety procedures as laid down by School Policy regarding Child Protection Procedures.

Customer Care

This will involve:

- The ability to demonstrate a commitment to the council's Customer Care Policy

Health and Safety

This will involve:

- Being responsible for their own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public. Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment where necessary and report defectives and hazards to management.

Key Accountabilities and Result Areas:

To contribute as an effective and collaborative member of the School Team

Key Elements:

This will involve:

- Participating in training to be able to demonstrate competence.
- Participating in the on-going development, implementation and monitoring of the service plans.
- Championing the professional integrity of the School Service
- Supporting Customer Focus, Best Value and electronic management of processes.
- Actively sharing feedback on School policies and interventions

Person Specification

Job Title:

School Counsellor

Essential qualifications and knowledge:

- Relevant professional Counselling Qualification - Level 4 or above counselling and psychotherapy or equivalent
- BACP registered/ accreted or eligible for accreditation.
- Understanding and knowledge of theoretical orientations underpinning counselling work, with addition to those relating to counselling work with children and families such as attachment theory.
- An understanding of child development, child mental health and well-being, Child Protection / Safeguarding issues and procedures.
- Some knowledge of legislative framework around families, social work and education (including Safeguarding Children issues).

Essential skills and abilities:

- To build and maintain positive relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents and the whole school community.
- To effectively feedback to the Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion on a regular basis.
- To liaise, support and work collaboratively with the teaching staff, parents and carers and other professionals in order to ensure a high standard of care for all who use the service.
- To maintain confidentiality and appropriate boundaries for the support service within the ethos of an educational setting.
- An ability to professionally work under pressure, prioritise workload and manage time to provide a consistent and reliable service ensuring the safeguarding/ welfare of children in the school.
- To ensure the quality of services through school review and conducting/ managing service evaluation to maintain best practice.
- Demonstrates own suitability to work with children and an understanding of working with children in need, including children in need of emotional and therapeutic support.
- Ability to manage referrals and maintain an accurate, up to date and confidential system of records.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to confidently build and maintain relationships with internal and external bodies.
- Ability to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to anti – discriminatory practice in service delivery
- ICT Literate within a school setting

Essential experience:

- Experience of working in the school environment and the ability to analyse situations and systems within schools.
- Experience of working with children experiencing social, emotional, mental health difficulties
- Experience of liaising and supporting parents/ carers and school staff
- Experience of contributing to multi-agency meetings and following safeguarding procedures.

Desirable:

- A minimum of two years' experience working as a practicing therapist/ counsellor delivering counselling support to children and their families

Special conditions:

- Enhanced DBS check