

Job Description: School Counsellor



Organisation: Westside School

Location: London

Reporting to: Headteacher / SENCO / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Contract Type: Full-time TTO

Salary: £45k - £48K – dependent on experience

Purpose of the Role

The School Counsellor will provide a high-quality, confidential counselling service to students, supporting their emotional wellbeing, mental health, and personal development.

Working within an **alternative provision setting**, the role is critical in supporting students who may present with **social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs**, trauma, behavioural challenges, and complex life circumstances.

The postholder will contribute to creating a safe, supportive environment that enables students to engage positively with education and achieve their full potential.

Key Responsibilities

1. Counselling & Student Support

- Provide **1:1 counselling sessions** to students experiencing emotional, behavioural, or mental health difficulties
- Deliver **short-term and, where appropriate, longer-term interventions**
- Support students with issues such as:
 - Anxiety, depression, trauma, bereavement
 - Behavioural challenges
 - Family or social difficulties
- Maintain appropriate records in line with confidentiality and safeguarding requirements

2. Safeguarding & Wellbeing

- Work in line with **safeguarding policies and procedures** at all times
- Report any concerns to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** promptly
- Contribute to safeguarding meetings, risk assessments, and support plans
- Promote a **culture of emotional wellbeing and safety** across the school

3. Collaboration & Multi-Agency Working

- Work closely with:
 - SENCO
 - Pastoral staff
 - Teaching staff
 - External professionals (e.g. CAMHS, social workers, local authority teams)
- Attend and contribute to:
 - Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings
 - EHCP reviews
 - Behaviour and pastoral support meetings

4. Preventative & Group Work

- Develop and deliver **group sessions/workshops** on:
 - Emotional regulation
 - Resilience and self-esteem
 - Healthy relationships
 - Coping strategies
- Support whole-school initiatives promoting **mental health awareness**

5. Advice, Guidance & Staff Support

- Provide guidance to staff on **supporting students with SEMH needs**
- Offer strategies to manage behaviour linked to emotional wellbeing
- Contribute to staff training where appropriate

6. Record Keeping & Compliance

- Maintain accurate, confidential case notes in line with:
 - GDPR
 - School policies
 - Professional counselling standards
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of counselling interventions

Person Specification

Qualifications & Training

- Recognised counselling qualification (e.g. Diploma/Degree in Counselling or equivalent)
- Membership (or working towards) with a professional body such as:
 - British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
 - or equivalent
- Safeguarding training (or willingness to undertake)

Experience

- Experience working with **children and young people**
- Experience in a **school or alternative provision setting** (highly desirable)
- Experience supporting students with:
 - SEMH needs
 - Trauma or adverse childhood experiences
 - Challenging behaviour

Skills & Knowledge

- Strong understanding of:
 - Child development
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Safeguarding procedures
- Ability to build **trusting, professional relationships** with vulnerable students
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team

Personal Attributes

- Empathetic, calm, and resilient
- Non-judgemental approach
- High level of professionalism and confidentiality
- Committed to safeguarding and promoting student welfare

Safeguarding Statement

Westside School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The successful candidate will be subject to:

- Enhanced DBS check
- Satisfactory references
- Safer recruitment checks in line with statutory guidance

Additional Duties

- Participate in CPD and training

- Contribute to the wider life of the school
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the role as directed by the Headteacher

Why Join Westside School?

- Opportunity to make a **direct impact on vulnerable young people**
- Supportive and collaborative staff environment
- Meaningful work within a **transformational alternative provision setting**