

What is counselling about?

Life, as a young person, can feel hard. Moving up to secondary school and changing from being a child to a young adult can feel like a lot to cope with. If there are pressures at home too then life can feel even more difficult.

If you are having a tough time or just feeling unhappy then talking to someone else can often help. It can be difficult to talk to parents, friends or teachers about things that are making us anxious. You may worry about whether they will understand, whether you can trust them, whether they will blame you or ignore your feelings or be able to give you the time you need. This is when you might think about talking to one of our school counsellors.

Counselling is about helping you to work things out for yourself, to make sense of thoughts and feelings to understand why you feel the way you do, to make decisions and choices and to look at things differently. It can help you to feel better about yourself and others.

How are counsellors different?

- We don't blame or judge you
- We don't tell you what to do
- We are there for you - whatever the problem
- We are good at listening carefully
- We can see you in school time
- We help you sort things out in a way which suits you
- We can get you more help, information and support if you need it
- We can give you the time and space you need

My problems and worries are private. Will other people know what I have talked about?

No. What you talk about is confidential. That means it's between you and your counsellor and the counsellor will not discuss what you have talked about with anyone else. The counsellor will keep confidentiality unless you are at risk of harm. The counsellor may then need to talk to someone else to help keep you safe, but will always try to talk with you about this first. You can come to counselling without your parents being informed.

What kind of things can I talk about in counselling?

Whatever is on your mind; problems, decisions, worries, changes, making friends or girlfriend/boyfriend relationships, parents separating, losing your temper and getting into trouble at home or at school, teasing and bullying, feeling lonely or that you don't fit in, losing someone special, health worries, exams and coursework. All these things can affect how you feel and how you behave. Talking with you about your worries and problems is the start of helping you sort them out.

How do I get to see a counsellor?

You can call in to see Liz Dean the Lead Counsellor at break times on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursdays in Oasis at East site where you can ask questions, find out more and see the counselling rooms. If you wish, Liz can arrange an appointment time for you to come back for a longer introductory confidential session with her where she and you can decide whether some further counselling sessions might be a good option. You may have to wait a little while for a regular weekly session, but we try to keep waiting times as short as possible.

Alternatively, you can talk to a teacher, Student Support Advisor or to Miss Jukes who can make a request on your behalf for an initial counselling appointment with Liz.

You can change your mind at any time – counselling is voluntary, and you have the choice to come or not. Whatever you decide will be okay.

Where will counselling take place?

We have 2 quiet and comfortable counselling rooms which are based in Oasis at East Building.

When is counselling available?

Pre-arranged counselling sessions are held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

How long does counselling last?

Counselling sessions are up to 50 minutes long and take place during lesson times. How many sessions you are offered will depend on why you come to the counsellor - not every person is the same. Liz Dean will discuss this with you during the first session. Pupils are normally offered up to 6 sessions. This is then reviewed between you and your counsellor and if it is decided that further counselling will be beneficial, more sessions may be offered.

Will anything be written about me?

Keeping information about people safe and confidential is very important to the Counsellor. Records of pupils that come to counselling are kept safely locked in a filing cabinet in line with the service Confidentiality Policy. All counsellors discuss their work with a counselling supervisor regularly. This person checks that your counsellor is working well with you. These discussions are anonymous and the counsellor protects the identity of the young people he or she is working with.

After you have finished counselling you will be sent an evaluation form. This form is anonymous but the feedback you give will let us know how well we are helping the young people at school and how we can improve the service.

Who are the school counsellors?

The Lead Counsellor Liz Dean, is professionally qualified and experienced in working with young people. She is a registered member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and the BACP Children, Young People and Families Division and works within their Ethical Framework for The Counselling Professions. Sometimes we have other counsellors working in the service who are managed by Liz.

“Counselling has helped me to know that I am normal!”

Year 8 boy

“It allowed me to release all the raw emotions that were building up inside and allowed me to become more relaxed”

Year 11 boy

“It is very helpful and makes you feel more positive and confident. You learn ways to deal with problems and how to talk to someone if you’re worried and in general makes you feel better. A great service!”

Year 8 girl

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accredited register



Here for You



Carlton le Willows Academy
Counselling Service
Information for Young People
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