



## PARENT/CARER INFORMATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDING COUNSELLING AT THE CLINIC

### What is Counselling?

The opportunity to talk about things that are of concern to the young person in confidence with a qualified Counsellor. What is spoken about will depend on the individual but common themes are:

- School/exam/studying stress
- Stresses of family life
- Relationships with others
- Difficult emotions
- Anxiety
- Feeling low
- Self-harm,
- Sex/sexual identity
- Events from the past that still upset them
- Difference/additional needs

### What does a Counsellor do?

A Counsellor gives the client a confidential space to talk about what is troubling them in order to uncover any root causes and identify their specific ways of thinking. The Counsellor then looks to create a plan in partnership with the young person (and **with their permission** their parents/carers) to help them reconcile and work-through their difficulties to reach a psychologically healthier space and to promote sustainable long-term emotional wellbeing.

### Why have Counselling?

If young people are able to receive emotional support from a qualified professional, they will have greater opportunity to fulfil their potential. Research has shown that supporting the wellbeing of young people in a contained setting when they are in emotional distress helps them to recover quicker, empowering them to deal with their difficulties and to build resilience in the longer term.

### How long will the counselling sessions last, what's the structure?

Counselling takes place once a week and each session lasts for 50 minutes. The session will be at the same time and location each week, with the same counsellor.

The number of sessions that a young person may attend counselling for will depend on the unique needs and wishes of the individual, however as a guideline for young people in therapy, we would aim for up to 16 weeks working with a therapist with the possibility of further 8 sessions if necessary. ***Therapy for young people is a specialist service and the cost is £48 or £58 dependant on the most suitable and available therapist. The Rock Clinic will invoice for these on a monthly basis and a parent contract outlining the terms and conditions for sessions, payments and contact will be sent to you prior to sessions starting.***

Before meeting with the Counsellor, the young person will attend an initial interview session, lasting up to 30 minutes. The assessment will take place via Zoom. The young person will complete a client registration form and discuss their current concerns with another counsellor to enable them to be allocated to a suitable young persons' therapist. It is important that the young person completes the form in their own words. All sessions are ***confidential*** between the counsellor and young person.

#### What is confidential?

As recommended by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) ethical framework for good practice, a key feature of the service is that information in the counselling session is treated confidentially. Counselling is a time when it is ok to talk about concerns without fear of them being discussed elsewhere. This includes not discussing the work with parents or carers, unless the young person requests or gives consent for this.

*This can be hard for parents/carers to accept at times, but ensuring the confidentiality of the counselling is crucial for establishing trust so that the young person can feel confident to speak openly and freely about what is concerning them.*

However, if it becomes clear that the young person is in severe mental distress it may be appropriate to seek help from other agencies for example their GP or CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) to keep them safe.

Confidentiality will be broken in cases where there is concern for the young person's safety i.e. they are at risk to themselves or others, or if there is a safeguarding issue, in which case the disclosure will be responded to as set out in the school's safeguarding policy. Finally, all Counsellors receive clinical supervision of their work with young people, to ensure the quality of their practice and this is confidential, the individual client's details are always anonymised in supervision.

#### Can I talk to the Counsellor or Clinic staff directly?

Counselling is a confidential process that takes place between client and therapist. We appreciate that parents are very concerned about the issues affecting their child and how difficult it is not to be able to discuss this directly with the counsellor or to make arrangements for appointments on behalf of their child.

Unless the counsellor has specific concerns (as outlined above), we would respectfully ask parents not to contact the counsellor directly by email or phone calls to the Clinic. *Clinic staff and counsellors will correspond directly with the young person and not directly with parents. Communication with parents is only possible with the young person's consent.*

### Can I support the counselling work?

Our experience shows that the most helpful thing a parent/carer can do is to show an acceptance of counselling as a normal and useful activity, and to show an interest if their daughter/son wishes to talk about it, but not to press them if they do not. We acknowledge that this is not an easy task, and is quite natural to feel anxious about what your child has said in the sessions.

It is always our hope that talking with a Counsellor will lead to greater openness with parents/carers and families, but you will need to allow a little time for this to happen.

We all experience times when it is hard to speak to those closest to us about things which are bothering us. Often this can be because we do not want to worry those we love the most, or because we want help thinking things through with someone else outside the family. The Counsellor will not be judging you or your child, but looking to support and help them find their way through whatever is troubling them.

### Data Protection Procedures and evaluation

All information about counselling work undertaken is kept securely by the Counsellor in line with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and ICO guidelines.

After the counselling has finished your child will each be given an evaluation form to complete anonymously and return to via email. This is to ensure that the young person has a voice to feedback on the service received and to help develop our services.

September 2023

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