

**SCHOOL COUNSELLING**  
**PARENT/CARER'S CONSENT SLIP**

I give permission for  
(child's name)

Class/tutor group

to have a series of counselling sessions with the school counsellor.

I have received a leaflet and information about the counselling service

Name of parent/carer (*please print*)

Signature

Date

## **SCHOOL COUNSELLING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS**

All parents have the responsibility of helping their children to grow and develop. Children may need help with their problems and worries. Sometimes, no matter how well they get on with their parents, they may find it hard to talk to them. Children often get help and support by talking to someone they trust. Maybe a friend, a teacher, a relative or neighbour can help. Often having a problem or concern can affect a child's behaviour and school-work, and a school counsellor may be able to help.

In this leaflet, 'child' means any child or young person of statutory school age.

### **How can school counsellors help?**

School counsellors are carefully selected for their experience and counselling qualifications. Counsellors are good at relating to children and are trained to listen without judging. They can help people sort out their thoughts and feelings about what is worrying them.

Counsellors usually provide counselling from 6 sessions and the number of sessions will depend on the needs of the child. Counselling will usually take place on school premises, and usually in school time or immediately after school. The length of the sessions varies with 45 minutes as the usual duration to less for younger children.

With younger children, the sessions may involve play materials including sand tray, small play figures, playdoh and art materials.

What is discussed during the sessions is confidential, but the child is told that the counsellor may discuss their problems with other people and agencies and get help from them if he or she thinks the child is at risk of harm. The counsellor is independent from the school staff but works with teachers and other staff to help your child while at the same time keeping confidentiality.

Sometimes the counsellor, with the child's knowledge and agreement, may refer the child to other agencies who can give more specialised help.

### **How does my son or daughter get to see a school counsellor?**

Your child may ask to see the counsellor, or you or a teacher may recommend it. Counselling needs to be voluntary. Nobody should be made to go to counselling.

When counselling is offered to younger children, you will be asked to sign a form to say that you agree to your child having counselling. Older children who ask for counselling and are capable of fully understanding what is involved may get counselling in their own right, without permission from a parent.

### **What issues can school counsellors help with?**

There can be lots of pressures on young people growing up, for example friendships, teasing and bullying; exams and school work; family relationships, separations and changes; as well as illness, loss or death of someone close. Young people also have to cope with adolescence and the strong feelings and physical changes that go with it. Even quite young children can find that the time and space they get from counselling/play therapy helps them feel better, and cope better at home and in school.

### **What is family counselling?**

If it's seen as appropriate, or has been requested, your child may be offered family counselling, which involves two or more members of the family and can consist of individual and group sessions dependent upon the needs and wishes of the family. Our family counselling is designed to empower people to step out of unhealthy relationship patterns and to grow healthier relationship techniques, creating an improved awareness of the impact of their behaviour on other family members. Counselling will also equip individuals with life skills that can have long term benefits in every relationship.

### **How can a parent or carer support the counselling?**

It will help your child if you accept counselling as a normal and useful activity, and show an interest if they want to talk to you about it, without pushing it if they prefer not to discuss it.

If your child is at primary school, you will be asked to meet the counsellor at the start, to explain the process, and keep in touch with you. Counselling is not a magic solution, and sometimes it takes a while to feel the benefit.

### **Who are the counsellors?**

School counsellors are trained for this special type of work and are professionally managed and supervised by supervisors at Relate on a regular basis. They work closely with school staff and other agencies.

All counsellors work within a recognised professional code of ethics - BACP's (British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists) and are qualified Counsellors, holding a Diploma in Counselling. Our Counsellors are qualified from Level 5 Advanced Diploma, through to Masters level in therapeutic counselling, with a systemic approach.

All counsellors can provide references to show their suitability for the post and can offer evidence of having been police checked.