

Archers Brook School
School Counselling Service Policy and Procedures



SUMMARY

Document Title: School Counselling Service Policy and Procedure

Purpose of Policy: This policy sets out a framework for the effective operation of the School Counselling Service. In particular, the policy establishes the principles and procedures through which the School Counselling Service will seek consent for pupil participation in counselling and protect the confidentiality of the pupil-counsellor relationship.

Scope: The Counselling Service is available to all enrolled pupils within Archers Brook School. This policy applies to all members of the school community, including pupils, parents, school staff and external referring professionals and agencies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The School Counselling Service is designed to complement the strengths of the school's pastoral system by offering additional personal support to pupils who may benefit from working with a professional counsellor.

The School Counselling Service offers pupils time and space to talk in confidence about thoughts, feelings, and difficulties they may be having, in order to:

- Develop emotional health and wellbeing.
- Overcome barriers to learning and achieve their full potential.
- Increase resilience so they are better able to manage personal difficulties.
- Develop self-esteem and self-confidence.

The Service provides formal counselling, which is the area of the professional counsellor, acting in their specialist role, and in accordance with a strict code of ethics, which requires confidentiality, accountability, supervision and continuing professional development.

In line with nationally agreed standards for school-based counselling, the school counsellor will be upholding the standards of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). The school counsellor will be working in regard to the BACP's Ethical Framework for Good Practice.

The Framework can be viewed online at http://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework/ or on the school website. See Appendix 1 for detailed summary of ethical principles.

2. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Counselling

This policy follows the BACP's definition of formal counselling which is:

“Counselling takes place when a counsellor sees a client in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty the client is having, distress they may have experienced or perhaps their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of a sense of direction and purpose. It is always at the request of the client as no one can properly be ‘sent’ for counselling.

By listening attentively and patiently, the counsellor can begin to perceive the difficulties from the client's point of view and can help them to see things more clearly, possibly from a different perspective. Counselling is a way of enabling choice or change or of reducing confusion. It does not involve giving advice or directing a client to take a particular course of action. Counsellors do not judge or exploit their clients in any way”

For a full definition see BACP - <http://www.bacp.co.uk/education/whatiscounselling.html>

Counselling at Archers Brook School

The school will view counselling as a way of helping pupils to communicate and express their thoughts and feelings, primarily through the process of talking and listening. However, in many instances, the nature of individual pupils' difficulties will call for the school counsellor to incorporate other therapeutic activities and non-traditional interventions into their practice, in order to support pupils' communication and expression of themselves.

Research tells us that it is the quality of the client's relationship with their therapist, rather than the use of any specific technique or approach, that is the greatest predictor of successful therapeutic outcomes. Therefore, counselling will encompass a wide range of activities that support and encourage the development of a strong therapeutic alliance.

Client

‘Client’ refers to any pupil who is referred to, or who accesses the Counselling Service.

Parent

The term ‘parent’ is used as an inclusive term to refer to all adults who take on a parenting role in relation to a particular pupil, including biological, adoptive, and foster parents; extended family and other professional caregivers such as staff from group homes.

Informed Consent

The term ‘informed consent’, as it applies to school counselling, can be defined as the voluntary agreement of a pupil to participate in counselling, or the voluntary agreement of their parent for the counselling to take place, based on these persons having adequate knowledge and understanding of the counselling process, including confidentiality.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality may be defined as “when a person(s) receives information, that information is kept private and not shared or disclosed without the consent of the person(s) they received it from. This policy covers not only information given deliberately by the person concerned, or by other people about the person, but also information acquired accidentally or through observation.

3. BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

a. Voluntary Participation

It is a basic principle that counselling is a voluntary activity for the client. In most circumstances this is clearly the case: the client has sought out a counsellor as a matter of choice, rather than feeling obliged to receive counselling or having been sent for counselling.

However, counsellors working in schools often experience clients being sent to them, usually to resolve troublesome behaviour, but sometimes because an adult has recognised that a pupil is distressed and needs help. Usually, the adult sending the pupil is doing so out of a commitment to help and wants to act constructively. However, their actions pose a number of difficulties for the counsellor (Bond 1993 p 92).

First, it challenges the pupil's ability to exercise choice about whether to participate in counselling. Sometimes a pupil may not want help or even see themselves as having a problem which needs help (Prever 2010 p 70).

Secondly, it reduces the chances of successful intervention. The way counselling works is to encourage and harness a person's wish to change their situation. Counselling is rarely beneficial if a pupil does not want help, is not motivated for change, and has a dislike of the process.

Thirdly, there may be adult expectations about what the outcome of counselling may be, and these are not necessarily those of the pupil. Expectations about changes in behaviour are particularly problematic. It is the client's own process that gives the counselling direction. Any attempt by the counsellor to impose the agenda of another runs counter to the voluntary nature of counselling and indicates a lack of respect for the pupil's autonomy.

This policy aims to ensure that the Counselling Service works with, not against, the needs and culture of the school, in order to maximise pupil access to counselling, while also ensuring that it supports involved adults to respect the rights and importance of pupils participating on a voluntary, informed-consent basis.

b. Parental Involvement

Under the Gillick Competency Principle, young people aged 16 and under have the right to access confidential counselling without parental knowledge or consent, provided they are of sufficient intelligence to understand what is being proposed and the potential consequences.

As a rule, most secondary pupils are deemed intelligent enough to understand the counselling process but there are occasionally those who are not. Additionally, most pupils are willing to agree for a parent to be asked for consent, and most parents are happy to give it, but there may be occasions where a parent withholds consent, or a pupil is distressed and unwilling to involve them. In these circumstances, a decision will need to be made as to whether counselling should go ahead.

Parents can withhold consent for counselling, intentionally (explicit refusal) and unintentionally (non-return of consent forms). Non-return of parental consent forms can disadvantage individual pupils, as it may delay the start of counselling. Repeated follow-up reminders to return consent forms is also time-consuming for the counsellor.

This policy sets out the approach of the Counselling Service to consent for counselling and the procedures to be followed when pupils lack capacity to give, or parents withhold, consent.

c. Confidentiality

Confidentiality in counselling is not just a right for young people, it is important to them; in much the same way as it is for adults. Confidentiality is essential to counselling to:

- Enable the young person to develop a trusting relationship with the counsellor.

- Allow the young person to open up and share feelings without fear of blame, reprisal, or judgement.
- Allow the young person to speak freely about the issues concerning them.
- Encourage others to come forward for counselling.

Yet, the word ‘confidentiality’ means different things to different groups of people, and this can lead to misunderstandings. Misunderstandings have the potential to:

- Invalidate the informed consent given by pupils and parents for counselling.
- Compromise the privacy of pupils.
- Place pupils, or others, at risk of harm.
- Damage the therapeutic relationship when a breach of confidentiality is necessary.
- Diminish the helpfulness of counselling.

This policy seeks to ensure that within the school community there is a shared understanding of confidentiality in school counselling, including an understanding of the type of circumstances in which pupil confidentiality may be breached and the action to be taken if such circumstances arise.

d. Safeguarding and Child Protection

There is a clear tension in young people’s rights to confidentiality within counselling and the increasing policy directives on sharing information amongst professionals to effectively safeguard young people. The constraints on confidentiality which are seen as good practice among school counsellors are not always shared by other professionals, and, in a school setting, may be perceived as bad practice, fostering a sense of distance and secrecy.

This document outlines the procedures to be followed by the counsellor when child protection concerns are brought to their attention, to ensure they protect and promote the safety and welfare of all pupils and help foster confidence in the integrity of the Counselling Service.

e. Ethical Dilemmas

The challenges of working to the principles of the BACP Ethical Framework, not only with young people but also with other stakeholders including parents, school staff and external professionals, can give rise to many ethical dilemmas for the school counsellor. On occasion, different ethical principles may compete. For example, a conflict around whether to break pupil confidentiality may arise from conflict between the principles of autonomy and ensuring the welfare and safety of the pupil concerned.

This policy provides a structure for understanding and resolving any ethical dilemmas that may arise within school counselling and provides a means for explaining the reasons behind any decisions or actions taken by the counsellor.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The School Counselling Service is committed to providing counselling provision that is responsive to the needs of the school community and which conforms to current best practice and professional standards for school-based counselling. Best practice is viewed as a shared responsibility requiring the commitment of the entire school community.

The Counselling Service will support pupils as far as possible to make their own choices and decisions regarding counselling, and involve parents in counselling, provided this is consistent with the best interests of the pupil concerned. The Service recognises that pupils have the right to confidentiality in counselling, and that this is essential for maintaining trust with the counsellor but accepts that confidentiality is not absolute and safeguarding all pupils must always be at the forefront of its work.

5. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including pupils, parents, school staff and external referring professionals. The policy continues to apply after pupils' involvement with counselling has ended and after they have left the school.

6. CONTEXT

a. Legislation and Guidance

This policy and guidelines is shaped by, and complies with, key pieces of legislation and guidance, which includes, but is not limited to:

- School Child Protection Policy.
- Gillick Competence/Fraser Guidelines (1985).
- Children Act (1989; 2006).
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
- Education Act (2002).
- Green Paper Every Child Matters (2003).
- Data Protection Act (2003).
- Safeguarding Children in Education (2004).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006; 2010).
- BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy (2006; 2010).
- BACP 4th Edition Counselling in Schools (2006).

b. Key Principles

The Counselling Service adheres to the key principles laid out in the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy. Below is an overview of the key principles. Appendix 1 provides a detailed summary of the principles, as relevant to schools.

- Being Trustworthy: honouring the trust placed in the practitioner (fidelity).
- Autonomy: respect for the client's right to be self-governing.
- Beneficence: a commitment to promoting the client's wellbeing.
- Non-maleficence: a commitment to avoiding harm to the client.
- Justice: fair and impartial treatment of all clients and the provision of adequate services.
- Self-respect: fostering the practitioner's self-knowledge and care for self.

7. PROCEDURES

a. Communication of this Policy

Internal school staff will be made aware of this policy by its inclusion in the Staff Handbook.

The school counsellor will prepare separate, shortened versions of this policy (in leaflet format) for pupils, parents and professionals. Leaflets will outline the key themes of the policy as they apply to each group.

The school counsellor will provide pupils with a copy of the leaflet on their first visit to counselling. It is the counsellor's responsibility to communicate and explain the policy to pupils and ensure they understand what it means in practice.

Where parental involvement is considered to be appropriate, which will be in most cases, the school counsellor will send parents of pupils referred for counselling, a copy of the leaflet, as part of the parents' introductory pack on the Counselling Service.

In addition, the school will make leaflets for parents and professionals available in the school reception area. It will also include the full version of the policy on the school website and ensure that a paper version is made available to all who request it.

b. Referral Process

i. Self-Referral by Pupils

Pupils may approach the school counsellor directly to make an appointment, or alternatively they can ask any member of staff or a parent to make an appointment on their behalf. In cases of self-referral, the school counsellor will complete a paper referral form.

ii. Referral by Parents

Parents may request counselling for their child through the school counsellor and other school staff, or by submitting a referral form, which will be made available in the school reception area and on the school website. Where required, the school counsellor will assist parents to complete a paper referral form.

It is essential that parents have discussed the referral with their child and, at the very least; their child has agreed to attend a no-obligation introductory/assessment session with the school counsellor.

iii. Referral by Professionals - Internal and External

Referrals can be made by all school staff and external professionals working with pupils.

All referrals from professionals must be made with the agreement of the pupil concerned. Counselling should not be forced upon pupils, although clearly attempts should be made to encourage pupils to accept support and attend an introductory/assessment session.

All professionals will have to provide a referral form before the counsellor will see a pupil for an introductory/assessment session.

School staff must use the school referral form for 'Additional Support' and submit this via email to the SENCO.

External professionals should use a paper referral form and return the completed form to the school counsellor. Referral forms are available in reception and on the school website.

c. Assessment and Contracting

Once the referral has been received, the school counsellor will invite the pupil to attend an introductory/assessment session. This session is an opportunity for pupil and counsellor to explore what the difficulties may be and help the pupil to decide whether counselling is right for them.

Counselling will only ever begin, on a voluntary basis, with the pupil's informed-consent. The school counsellor is expected to facilitate the informed decision making of pupils by using the pupil information leaflet as an aide memoire to explain the nature of counselling, including boundaries of confidentiality.

Where a pupil indicates within their introductory session that they would like ongoing counselling, the school counsellor will make a verbal agreement with the pupil regarding the boundaries of counselling and work towards them signing the counselling written agreement, which includes an explanation of confidentiality.

Pupils may attend up to three sessions, either on a planned or drop-in basis (throughout the school year), in order to make an informed decision about participating in counselling, and before it becomes necessary for them to commit to signing the pupil written agreement.

d. Parental Involvement

The school counsellor will make every effort to encourage pupils to inform their parent(s) that they are receiving counselling unless this is detrimental to their safety and wellbeing.

In the usual course of events, the school counsellor will seek written consent from one of the pupil's parents after the pupil has made an agreement to engage in counselling, which usually, but not always, takes place in the introductory/assessment session.

In order to make parental consent as informed as possible, the counsellor will send the parent an introductory pack which includes: introductory letter; parents' leaflet and Parent Carer Consent & Confidentiality Agreement.

The counsellor will send the introductory pack home with the pupil and remind them of the need for signed forms to be returned. If the parent agreement is not returned within 2 weeks, the counsellor will send a further pack to the parent by post, requesting it is returned as soon as possible. The counsellor will advise that if the agreement is not received, the counsellor will assume the parent does not have objections to their child having counselling and, where appropriate, start the work.

Where a pupil requests that their parent is not informed of their involvement in counselling, the school counsellor will work with the pupil to help them to understand the potential benefits, and work towards obtaining their agreement, unless to do so would place them at risk of harm.

Pupils may attend up to three sessions with the school counsellor, either on a planned or dropin basis (throughout the school year), in order for these discussions to take place and before a decision is reached regarding parental involvement.

In the event that a pupil requiring counselling remains insistent his/her parent is not informed of counselling involvement, or where a parent withholds consent (explicitly refuses), the school counsellor and school will complete an assessment, using Fraser Guidelines (Appendix 2), to decide if the pupil is Gillick Competent and therefore able to access counselling without their parent's knowledge or consent.

If a pupil is deemed Gillick Competent, the pupil and school counsellor DO NOT have to inform the pupil's parent that counselling is taking, or has taken, place. If a pupil is deemed not to be Gillick Competent, written consent from the pupil's parent will be required before counselling can begin.

Where the school counsellor is working with children of primary school age in surrounding schools, it is expected that written consent from parents will be obtained before counselling begins. Good practice dictates that the school

counsellor should make themselves available for an initial meeting with the parent(s) to allay any anxieties they may be having about counselling.

The school counsellor will not generally encourage ongoing contact with parents (of pupils at Archers Brook or otherwise) or attend meetings about their child. Experience tells us that, even in circumstances where pupils wholeheartedly agree to this contact, the contact tends to diminish pupils' trust in the counsellor and alter their perception of counselling as 'their space'. It can also lead the counsellor to detract from the pupil's agenda for counselling.

e. Counselling Sessions

All pupils have the right to withdraw from counselling at any time and it is the responsibility of all involved adults to make this explicit to them.

While involved adults should encourage and support pupils to attend individual sessions, it is never acceptable for adults to pressure or coerce pupils to do so.

Counselling is not a reward or punishment. It should not be seen or ever used as a punitive measure, either in the sense of giving or withholding support from a pupil, based on their level of compliance at school. More often than not, when a younger person presents with 'problematic' behaviour, they are experiencing internal stress and distress, and this is the time when counselling can be of most help to them.

Where a pupil has not attended three consecutive counselling sessions, the counsellor will approach the pupil to ascertain their wishes and feelings about participation. A decision will be made about the pupil's continuing involvement in counselling.

f. Contact Time

The length and frequency of individual sessions can vary, depending on the style and orientation of the school counsellor and the needs of individual pupils and the school timetabling structure. Sessions tend to be weekly and last between 30 minutes (one lesson) and 50 minute/one hour (two lessons).

The service offered is flexible and open-ended. There is no limit to the number of sessions that pupils may have, provided that the counsellor feels reassured that the pupil is benefiting from support. The number may vary from a one-off drop-in session to resolve an immediate concern, to weekly sessions throughout the school year and beyond.

Many therapists contract with clients to review progress after a certain number of sessions. However, consistent with the principles of the person-centred counselling approach, the school counsellor shall regard review as an ongoing process and encourage pupils to reflect on whether counselling is meeting the desired outcomes as they go along.

The counsellor shall endeavour to arrange sessions around pupil and staff preferences – and rotate times and change days to help ensure that the same lesson is not repeatedly missed. However, for some pupils, it will be important that the counsellor maintains the same schedule for the duration of their counselling.

g. Confidentiality

The need to protect pupils (or other children and young people) is the paramount guiding principle in any decision made by the school counsellor.

The contents of each counselling session remains confidential between the pupil and school counsellor, unless the pupil makes a disclosure of child abuse, or the counsellor considers that the pupil (or another individual) is at risk of significant harm. Examples of significant harm include self-harm and suicidal ideation/suicide attempts, and serious crime such as murder and assault.

In addition to the above, the school counsellor is required by law to report suspicions about terrorism, serious drug trafficking and money laundering. They may be required to break pupil confidentiality if a court orders disclosure (see Access to Records).

The school counsellor is not required to pass on information about a pupil breaking a school rule or committing an offence, unless it could be deemed that by doing so, the counsellor was aiding and abetting a crime e.g. a pupil dealing drugs in school.

Where there are significant concerns about pupils (or third parties), the school counsellor will follow procedures laid out in the school's Child Protection Policy and therefore will refer the concerns to the school's designated persons for child protection (DPCP) and/or Head Teacher. These persons will, in consultation with the counsellor and possibly other staff, decide of any further action to be taken.

The school counsellor will share information about pupils with third parties on a strictly 'need-to-know' basis i.e., they will only disclose information that is necessary in order to keep the pupil and/or others safe from harm.

It is always the aim of the school counsellor to obtain consent from the pupil to share necessary information. However, if the pupil refuses to give consent to sharing information, it may be assumed that the need to safeguard the pupil (or others) will always take precedence over the pupil's right to autonomy.

The school counsellor will make every possible attempt to communicate first to the pupil, their intention to break confidentiality and to discuss the information that needs to be shared. If such conversations cannot take place, the matter should be discussed with the pupil at the earliest opportunity following referral to the DPCP and/or Head Teacher.

The school counsellor and school will endeavour to inform the pupil of any further actions that will need to be taken and will involve the pupil in the process as much as possible.

The school counsellor may seek specialist advice and guidance on safeguarding/child protection issues from their counselling supervisor.

h. Communication of Confidentiality

The school counsellor will explain to pupils, the level of confidentiality offered by the Counselling Service through:

- Displaying a brief confidentiality statement in the counselling room.
- Verbal discussion at introductory session and throughout the counselling relationship.
- Use of the counselling written agreement.

The school counsellor will explain the same information to parents by forwarding them a copy of the Parent Carer Consent and Confidentiality Agreement.

i. Record Keeping and Data Protection

The School Counselling Service keeps written records about pupils in counselling. These records are kept to the absolute minimum necessary for the protection of pupils and are strictly confidential and exempt from disclosure to third parties unless the Service is legally required to do so.

Counselling records include material such as reasons for referral to counselling, number of sessions attended, and an account of the topic discussed in each session (a brief sentence to reveal the core issue). They may also include reports of safeguarding issues.

The school counsellor is responsible for ensuring that they record any child protection concerns which emerge during the course of a pupil's counselling. Records must clearly document all discussions with the pupil and third parties regarding the concerns, together with the key decisions reached during these conversations, actions to be taken and outcomes.

Counselling records are not held in the school central system but in a locked cabinet in the counselling room, which is only accessible to the counsellor. However, the counsellor shall ensure that a copy of any progress report and ending (summary) report is placed on the pupil's school file.

The school counsellor does not make/keep a detailed record of the contents of individual sessions. However, they may keep notes on sessions for the purposes of monitoring feelings generated by their work and for discussion during (external) supervision. These notes belong to the counsellor and are destroyed (within a secure and confidential process) after an interval of one month, to allow sufficient time for the counsellor to take her notes to her next supervision session.

Counselling records are retained for a period which is informed by current DPA legislation and good practice within the education sector.

j. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Counselling Service will keep completed evaluation forms that are used to evaluate therapeutic change and monitor the outcomes of counselling, and which form the basis of a progress report to be prepared by the counsellor for pupils' School Annual Reviews. Within these reports, the counsellor must not reveal the content of what is discussed in sessions without the expressed permission of the pupil concerned.

The Counselling Service may use information kept in individual pupils' files to influence counselling provision within the school. Data may be circulated across the staff cohort but will not be disseminated in any form that could identify individual pupils.

k. Access to Records

i. Pupils

Under the Data Protection Act (1998), pupils who access the Counselling Service have the right to see information recorded about them by the school counsellor. The only exception is if a disclosure of information would be likely to cause serious harm to the pupil. Pupils cannot see information which is considered third party, or records concerning another person, unless that person has agreed.

Where pupils wish to see their file, they should ask the counsellor and the counsellor should be present to explain what the file contains and the reasons why.

ii. Parents

According to guidance from the Information Commissioner, under data protection law, parents have an independent right of access to education records, despite objections by the child, and school counselling records could be classified as such.

This could potentially lead to a situation of a parent seeking access against the pupils' wishes and presumably, those of the counsellor. In this instance, Archers Brook School would use Schedule 2, Section 4(3) 6(1) of the DPA 1998, on the grounds that any such processing or disclosure is "unwarranted in any particular case by reason of prejudice to the rights and freedom of legitimate interests of the data subject" (i.e., the pupil concerned).

Where a parent requests to gain access to their child's counselling records, they should make these in writing to the Head Teacher, briefly stating their reasons. A request for access needs to be dealt with within 15 days. The final decision on parent holding of information sharing will be a joint decision by the counsellor and the Head Teacher.

Information that may become evidence in a joint investigation by Police and Children's Services into alleged child abuse is an exception to the principle of open access.

iii. Court

In the event of any court case involving a pupil, the Judge has power to subpoena counselling notes, or request that a counselling report is provided as evidence for the case.

School is under a duty to assert public interest immunity in respect of counselling records, so any party to court proceedings should name the Chair of Governors in a witness summons.

Where the court orders disclosure of counselling records, the school should contact their legal representative immediately who should communicate directly with the Judge about what is in the best interests of the young person before a court hearing. Advice from the Local Education Authority may help limit the disclosure of confidential counselling material that is not relevant to the court proceedings.

8. APPENDIX

a. Appendix 1: Summary of Ethical Principles for Counsellors and Psychotherapists. (BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy)

Ethical Principle
<p>Being Trustworthy: Honouring the trust placed in the practitioner.</p> <p><u>Examples</u> Act in accordance with the trust placed in them. Strive to ensure that clients' expectations are ones that have reasonable prospects of being met. Honour their agreements and promises. Regard confidentiality as an obligation arising from the client's trust. Restrict disclosure of confidential information about clients to furthering the purposes for which it was originally disclosed.</p>
<p>Autonomy: Respecting the client's right to be self-governing.</p> <p><u>Examples</u> Ensure accuracy within information given in advance of services offered. Seek freely given and adequately informed consent. Emphasise the value of voluntary participation in the services being offered. Engage in explicit contracting in advance of any commitment by the client. Protect privacy; protect confidentiality. Normally make any disclosures of confidential information conditional on the consent of the person concerned.</p>
<p>Beneficence: Commitment to promoting the client's wellbeing.</p> <p><u>Examples</u> Acting strictly in the best interests of the client based on professional assessment. Working strictly within one's limits of competence, training and experience. Using regular and ongoing supervision to enhance the quality of services provided. Commitment to updating practice by continuing professional development.</p> <p>An obligation to act in the best interests of a client may become paramount when working with clients whose capacity for autonomy is diminished because of immaturity, lack of understanding, extreme distress, serious disturbance, or other significant personal constraints.</p>
<p>Non-Maleficence: Commitment to avoiding harm to the client.</p> <p><u>Examples</u> Avoiding sexual, financial, emotional or any other form of client exploitation. Avoiding incompetence or malpractice. Not providing services when unfit to do so due to illness or personal circumstances. Strive to mitigate any harm caused to a client even when the harm is unavoidable or unintended. Challenging, where appropriate, the incompetence or malpractice of others.</p>
<p>Justice: Fair & impartial treatment of all clients & provision of adequate services.</p> <p><u>Examples</u> Being just and fair to all clients and respecting their human rights and dignity. Considering conscientiously any legal requirements and obligations. Remaining alert to potential conflicts between legal requirements and ethical obligations. Appreciation of differences between people and a commitment to equality of opportunity. Strive to ensure fair provision of services, accessible & appropriate to needs of clients.</p>
<p>Self-Respect: Fostering the practitioner's self-knowledge and care for self.</p> <p><u>Examples</u> Appropriately applies all of the above principles as entitlements for self. Includes seeking therapy and other opportunities for personal development as required. Using supervision for personal and professional support and development. Seeking training and other opportunities for continuing professional development.</p>

- b. **Appendix 2: Assessing competence to consent by children and young people.** The following guidance is based on the Fraser Guidelines and adapted for application to counselling.

Factors to Consider	Checklist for Questions
<u>Immediate Issues</u>	
Child's Age:	How old is the child or young person?
Gillick Test:	Does the child or young person understand the counselling? Are they refusing to allow their parents to be involved? Do their best interests require that the counselling be given without parental consent?
<u>Short-Term Issues</u>	
Nature of Contact:	Is the contact with the counsellor controlled entirely by the child or young person?
Support Systems:	What support does the child or young person have access to alongside or in the place of counselling or therapy, should contact be broken or withdrawn?
Nature of Immediate Issue or Problem:	What is the degree of risk, if any, posed by the child to him or herself or to others (e.g., drugs, abuse, suicide, arson?) Is the risk significant, immediate, or longer term?
Child Protection Responsibilities:	Is the counsellor required by their conditions of employment, or agency policy, to report all suspected child abuse to social services?
<u>Longer-Term Issues</u>	
Stage of Cognitive and Emotional Development:	Does the child or young person understand the nature of the issue or problem? Their own needs and the needs of others? The risks and benefits of counselling or therapy? Does the child or young person have a sense of their own identity? A sense of time, past, present, and future? Source: Jenkins, 1997: 216-7 (abbreviated version)