

### **What if my child insists you don't contact me?**

The Law says a young person can access counselling without their parents' consent or against their parents' wishes if they understand what's involved in the process. Where a pupil refuses contact with parents/carers, the school will assess if the pupil is able to make their own decision.

### **Does it mean I'm failing as a parent/carer?**

No! We all experience times when it feels hard to speak to those closest to us. This can be because we don't want to worry those we love, or we want help thinking things through with an independent person. The counsellor will not be judging you or your child but helping your child to find a way forward.

### **Can I support the counselling?**

Yes. The most helpful thing you can do for your child is show acceptance of counselling as a 'normal' and useful activity and show interest if your child wishes to talk about it, without pressuring them. You can help us by filling out a questionnaire about your child at various stages in the counselling

### **How do I arrange counselling for my child?**

You can contact the counsellor, Rory Formstone Roberts, or any member of school staff, or you can fill out a referral form, which is available for download on the school website. Please ensure you have discussed the referral with your child before you make the referral and return the referral form to Rory Formstone Roberts.

We understand that it's natural for parents/carers to feel anxious about their child having counselling. If you have any questions or concerns that are not answered by this leaflet, please do not hesitate to contact Rory at:

ARCHERS BROOK SCHOOL  
Chester Road, Great Sutton, Cheshire, CH66 2NA  
Telephone: 0151 338 2141



Archers Brook School

## School Counselling Service for Pupils

What is counselling?

How does it work?

How can it help?

Is it safe?

Is it confidential?

How do I arrange it?

How can I help?



Information for Parents & Carers

### **What is counselling?**

Counselling is an opportunity for your child to talk, in confidence, to a qualified counsellor, about things that are bothering or worrying them. The aim is for the counsellor to help your child find their own solutions to problems and help them become more in charge of their life.

### **What does a counsellor do?**

Counsellors are trained to listen in a way that makes it easy to talk to them. They listen without judging and try hard to understand how things are for a person from their point of view. This helps the person understand themselves and their feelings better, make their own choices and find their own answers.

### **What is counselling, NOT?**

- right for everyone
- something we can make someone do
- a quick-fix
- a miracle cure
- about getting information out of a person
- giving advice
- telling someone what to do
- pushing people into dealing with things
- forcing a person to change
- making someone 'behave'

### **How can counselling help?**

Counselling can help young people to say how they feel, rather than act-out feelings through unhelpful behaviours. It can help them to solve problems for themselves, feel happier, get on better with others, and concentrate and learn in the classroom.

### **What do young people talk about in counselling?**

Young people come for counselling for all sorts of reasons. No problem is too big or small. Pupils might talk about:

- alcohol/drugs
- anger
- anxiety
- behaviour
- being in 'care'
- bullying
- depression
- exam stress
- family relationships
- friendships
- growing-up
- hating school
- loss & bereavement
- parents breaking up
- self-harm
- self-esteem & confidence
- suicidal thoughts

### **Where and when - and for how long?**

The counsellor sees pupils in a private room at school usually for 30-50 minutes each week, during the school day, in term time only. Pupils can come for counselling for as long as is helpful to them. They can also call-in to see the counsellor, without an appointment, during drop-in times.

### **Will I be told what my child talks about?**

Counselling is confidential. The counsellor won't discuss details of sessions with anyone else, including parents/carers & school staff, unless a pupil asks or agrees for this to happen. The only exception is when a pupil (or another person) is at risk of significant harm. Please see our Confidentiality policy.



### **Why is the counselling confidential?**

Keeping things private builds trust and safety for young people. It means they can be completely honest about their situation and express difficult feelings. During your child's first session, the counsellor will always explain the rules about confidentiality, and ask them to enter into a 'counselling agreement'.

### **Does my child have to come to counselling?**

Counselling is voluntary. It's up to your child to decide if they come or not and they can stop coming whenever they want. We prefer to have your support for the work, so we always ask for your permission. We do this after a pupil has said they want to meet with the counsellor on a regular basis. Pupils may attend up to 3 sessions, throughout the year, without your permission, to use the drop-in, or use planned sessions to decide if counselling is for them.