

Academy Counselling Service

Information for Parents

There are times when we all need someone to talk to. This is only too true for young people who face many challenges whilst growing up, and may find at times that they need someone to talk to outside home or school. Counselling is a process which offers support and guidance when things feel particularly difficult. The counsellor will listen and provide a safe place for a young person to explore thoughts and feelings which perhaps are overwhelming and upsetting.

Issues they may be struggling with include:

- Bullying
- Academic pressure
- Parental divorce or separation
- Peer pressure
- Drugs and/or alcohol
- Sexual health
- Arrival of new sibling
- Low mood
- Anxiety
- Exam stress
- Bereavement
- Confusion
- Anxiety about the future
- Struggles making decisions

St John's is proud to offer a counselling service for all students between Years 7 and 13. This is run by an experienced and qualified school counsellor who is available throughout term time to help manage the psychological well-being of all students at St John's.

Rona Muller, Academy Counsellor is available on a Wednesday and Thursday. As a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), our counsellor is bound by their Code of Ethics. More information can be found at www.bacp.co.uk

Appointments can be made by various means. Students can make appointments directly with the counsellor, or alternatively they can speak to any member of staff who can make an appointment on their behalf.

All referrals made externally by either a parent or a member of staff will have to provide a referral form for the counsellor before an appointment is made. The referral acts as a primary

link to understanding the issues that the young person is facing. It may mean that the young person has other needs outside counselling that the school needs to manage. This may involve signposting to other agencies, either within or outside of school.

Once the referral has been made the counsellor will meet and assess the student. This process is important to identify the needs of the young person. It may be that they have not wanted to come along to the session therefore it is key this is discussed. **Counselling must be voluntary.**

The assessment also provides an opportunity for both student and counsellor to meet to decide on the best course of action.

Students can come for counselling for as long as is required which will often be discussed at the first session with the counsellor. This can vary between a one-off session in order to offload, or may lead to weekly sessions throughout the term. It is more common in schools that young people will attend for a maximum of six sessions.

Due to the nature of the individual counselling process, students are encouraged to come alone for their counselling, though will be seen alongside friends, family or teachers as appropriate. Counselling involves an active drive to build family relationships so it may be that the counsellor will ask permission from the student to talk to a parent on the phone or will invite a parent/s in to meet with themselves and the young person to discuss how to make improvements in their relationships.

Confidentiality

All young people are entitled to confidentiality within the confines of counselling. This means that the information they bring to the session will be held in confidence between themselves and the counsellor. Information will not be shared unless the young person has agreed to it.

The counsellor will however state that they may need to break confidentiality should they deem the young person at **significant risk** to themselves or others. At this point information may need to be shared with another party, either within school, or with an appropriate referral to an outside agency. The student will be informed of this, and included in the discussion as much as is possible.

Counsellors are strictly bound by Child Protection procedures adhered to at St John's and are aware of the Designated Child Protection Officers and the appropriate procedures should they need to be followed.

“As a general principle it is legal and acceptable for a young person to ask for confidential counselling without parental consent providing they are of sufficient understanding and intelligence.”

(Gillick v West Norfolk AHA, House of Lords 1985)

Since this ruling all young people are entitled to confidential counselling. *Gillick competence* will be assessed by the School Counsellor in the primary meeting with the young person and if deemed competent the young person will be able to give consent to counselling. Assessment of competence based on the Gillick principle depends on:

- The maturity of the young person
- The young person having sufficient intelligence and understanding of the consequences of his or her actions
- The young person having sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable them to understand what is being proposed, i.e. counseling.

As a rule most secondary students are deemed mature and intelligent enough to understand the counselling process, but there are occasionally those who are not. It is critical at this point that parental consent is obtained. Every effort is made to engage parents and where appropriate, young people are encouraged to inform their parents that they are receiving counselling.

Counselling and Self Help Webpage

There is a webpage designed specifically for the Counselling Service which can be accessed via the main school website.

From here students can access a counselling appointment with discretion, or e-mail the counsellor for further guidance. They can also gain information on all mental health concerns and issues, ranging from depression to eating disorders, via self-guide literature which are available to download. There is also a list of external agencies offering help and support for young people.

External Agencies offering support and advice

Young Carers

Wiltshire Young Carers

www.youthactionwiltshire.org

Email: yc@youthactionwiltshire.org

Telephone: 01380 720 671

Fax: 01380 720 681

YAW runs the Wiltshire Young Carers project. A young carer is a child or young person between the ages of 5 - 25 years whose life is affected by caring for another, over and above just 'helping out'. We provide time out opportunities and strive to bring about recognition and respect for their role.

Self-harm

National Self Harm Network

www.nshn.co.uk

email: nshncg@hotmail.co.uk

Our priority is to support survivors and people who self-harm. We also support the people it indirectly affects, like family and friends, so they can discuss the issue and gain effective support in our forums. We offer resources and information for people who self harm.

www.selfharm.org.uk Are you worried about self-harm? If you don't understand why it's happening to you or someone else, and you're looking for help and support, we're here to help. This is a website for young people who self-harm, their friends and family.

Eating Disorders

Beat

www.b-eat.co.uk

Telephone: 0845 634 1414

Opening hours: Monday-Friday 10.30am-8.30pm, Saturday 1pm-4.30pm

B-eat are the leading UK charity for people with eating disorders and their families.

B-eat are the working name of the Eating Disorders Association, and we continue to build on the strong foundations of the past 18 years of work. Eating disorders are a serious mental illness affecting 1.1 million people in the UK. **b-eat** provides helplines for young people, online support and a UK-wide network of self-help groups to help people beat their eating disorder.

Drugs & Alcohol

Alcohol Concern

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

National Association for Children of Alcoholics

www.nacoa.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 358 3456 – free helpline

Drinkline: 0800 917 8282 helpline

Alateen - an organisation offering support and advice to young people affected by a problem drinker.

www.Al-anonuk.org.uk

Helpline: 02074 030888 10am – 10pm

Al-Anon Family Groups - For young people, aged 12 – 18 who are affected by a problem drinker. Provides support to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking. We believe alcoholism affects the whole family, not just the drinker. We are an international organisation with over 800 support groups in the UK and Republic of Ireland. Al-Anon is a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience in order to solve their common problems.

Motiv8 - Young People's Alcohol and Drugs Service

www.sparksite.co.uk/entries/motivate_young_peoples_alcohol_and_drugs_service_wiltshire

Frank : 0800 776600 – Helpline

Email: frank@talktofrank.com

www.talktofrank.com

Helpline advice and information to people concerned about drugs.

Sexual Health

No Worries!

www.ruthinking.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 28 29 30

Confidential advice on sexual health and contraception.

Wiltshire Rape Support Helpline

wiltshire@victimsupport.org.uk

www.rapeline.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 800 1144

Phone: 01380 729476

Fax: 01380 720539

Opening hours: Thursday only: 9.30am-12.30pm & 7-10pm. Answer machine at other times.

Free and confidential service offering support for anyone (male or female) who has been raped, sexually assaulted or is an adult survivor of child abuse or domestic violence. Support is also available for family and friends.

Local GP Surgeries

Old School House Surgery 01672 870388 (Marlborough)

Ramsbury Surgery 01672 520366

The Marlborough Surgery 01672 512187

The Sprays Surgery 01672 810566 (Burbage)

Mental Health

YoungMinds

www.youngminds.org

Telephone: 0800 018 2138

Opening hour: Mondays 10am-1pm, Tuesday 1-4pm, Wednesday 1-4pm and 6-8pm, Thursday 1-4pm, Fridays 10-1pm.

YoungMinds is the national charity committed to improving the mental health of all children and young people. YoungMinds Parents Information Service provides information and advice for any adult with concerns about the mental health of a child or young person.

Generic Help

Youth Access

www.youthaccess.org.uk

2 Taylors Yard, 67 Alderbrook Road, London SW12 8AD

Telephone: 0208772 9900

Provides information, advice and counselling services throughout the UK for young people aged 12-25 years. Can give details of appropriate local agencies for young people.

Youth2Youth

www.youth2youth.co.uk

Helpline Telephone: 020 8896 3675

Opening hours: Monday and Thursday 6.30-9.30pm

Email: help@youth2youth.co.uk

Confidential and anonymous email and telephone helpline support, run by young volunteers. Offers sympathetic listening and information about practical help.

Get Connected

www.getconnected.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 808 4994

Opening hours: 7 days a week 1-11pm

This service provides a unique, free and confidential helpline for young people as a signpost to relevant sources of help.

There4me

www.there4me.com

Email support services for young people between 12-16 years. There's on-screen advice about all sorts of things e.g. bullying, relationships, exams, drugs, difficulties at home, to name just a few. Or you can send an e-letter to Sam either agony aunt. If you'd prefer a confidential private session, you can talk 1-2-1 in 'real time' with an NSPCC adviser, or email for a reply within 24 hours. You don't have to say how you are – you stay in control.

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

Freepost NATN1111, London E1 6BR

Telephone: 0800 111 – 24hrs

Textphone: 0800 400 222

Opening hours: Monday-Friday 9.30am-9.00pm, Saturday-Sunday 9am – 8pm

Childline is the UK's free helpline for children and young people. It provides a confidential telephone counselling service for any child with any problem. It comforts, advises and protects.

Youthline

Telephone: 0845 634 7650

Opening hours: Monday-Friday 4.30pm-8.30pm, Saturday 1pm-4.30pm

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence Support

Helpline: 01225 709 493

Childhood Bereavement

Winstons Wish

www.winstonswish.org.uk

A leading childhood bereavement charity and the largest provider of services to bereaved children, young people and families in the UK

For any further information about the counselling service, please contact Rona who would be happy to help.

Rona Muller

Academy Counsellor

01672 519530

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