

KINGSMEAD SCHOOL HOYLAKE TRUST LIMITED
Including Boarding and Early Years Foundation Stage

Counselling Policy

Introduction

Kingsmead is committed to improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. We are aware that issues such as anxiety, low mood, depression, conduct and eating disorders can impact significantly on children's happiness and their future life chances.

Kingsmead has a counsellor, Mrs Ann Renison, who is recognised on accredited voluntary registers, and as a staff, we work closely with Mrs Renison to support various children.

Definition of Mental Health

Mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual recognises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community (World Health Organisation 2014).

Approach to Service Delivery

Kingsmead makes use of Mrs Ann Renison who is a qualified counsellor who has the following qualifications M.A. Cllg. John Moores University.

Mrs Renison has weekly one to one sessions with pupils and liaises with the relevant heads of department and head master. The methods of counselling that Mrs Renison uses are the Person Centred and the Cognitive Counselling methods.

Making use of the services of a counsellor has become increasingly normalised at Kingsmead, for both the children and the staff. Mrs Renison is also in contact with parents if this is requested.

In order for a child to access counselling, a member of staff telephones the parents to request their permission and speaks to the child to ascertain whether they are willing to engage with the counsellor. A letter is then written to the parents, summarising the initial period of contact and the cost per session. The parent is requested to respond in writing to give or withhold their permission for the counselling. At the conclusion of the number of agreed sessions, another letter is sent to parents to conclude the contract.

Raising Awareness of Mental Health Issues through the Curriculum

Kingsmead also teaches pupils about mental health through our PSHE programme.

Promoting Staff Health and Wellbeing

The Governors have been actively approached in order to support staff who are dealing with difficult issues, such as safeguarding issues, in school. In addition, staff are able to make use of Mrs Renison's counselling programme if required.

Interaction with the Pastoral System

Kingsmead's pastoral system is excellent and our counselling services are considered within this context. All of our SMT members have clear links between Mrs Renison and understand how

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counselling fits in with the school approach to emotional health and wellbeing. In addition, the school on occasions works with CAMHS with regards to individual pupils.

Kingsmead also promotes external access to Childline.

Leadership Role

Mr Wilson is the key contact person for Mrs Renison with regards to pupils in the senior department and Mrs Gibbons is the key contact person with Mrs Renison with regards to children in the junior department.

Line Management and Supervision of School Counsellor

The Headmaster meets with the school counsellor on a weekly basis to review her progress with individual children as does the Senior Master. Mrs Renison receives clinical supervision from her external Supervisor.

Mrs Renison provides the school with a list of who she has counselled on a particular week as well as a brief summary of what progress, if any, has been made. This helps the school to assess the impact of the counselling on the child or young person as well as helping Kingsmead to assess the effectiveness of the service as a whole.

Sharing Information

Respecting the young person's privacy and confidentiality are fundamental requirements for keeping trust and respecting the young person's autonomy. Any disclosures of a young person's confidences should be undertaken in ways that best protect the young person. Mrs Renison will work in a multi-disciplinary way and communicates with school staff and other agencies and specialist services whilst maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality.

Diversity and Additional Learning Needs

Kingsmead School is committed to providing services to young people that take account of cultural differences and Additional Learning Needs including disabled young people.

Complaints Procedure

All complaints should be raised with the school following the usual school complaints procedure which can be found on the school website.

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