

## **About School Counselling – information for students**

### **What happens in School Counselling?**

School counselling gives you the opportunity to talk in private about anything that is troubling you. School counsellors do not take sides or tell you what to do. They help you look at choices and make your own decisions. A school counsellor is someone who is trained to listen in a careful way. In addition to talking, counselling may involve engaging in self-reflective activities through art, story and games.

### **What sort of issues does School Counselling help with?**

There are many reasons a student may seek school counselling support. Students may meet with a school counsellor to discuss friendship or family issues, exam anxiety, low mood, indecision, bullying, anger or stress, insomnia, time-management, some troubling past experience, grief and loss or coping with any kind of life changes or transition.

### **Where and when does School Counselling take place?**

St Andrews 107 has one full-time school counsellor, Ms Amanda. A private counselling room is located in room 4-301, on the top floor of Building 4. Counselling sessions take place during the school day, including lunchtimes and after school.

### **How long does it take?**

One 40 minute period is the normal time frame for a given session, but this may be extended to 1 hour and 20 minutes if wanted. Students are offered weekly counselling sessions for as long as they want or need. One-off conversations can also be arranged.

### **Is school counselling confidential?**

What you talk about in your sessions will remain between you and the counsellor unless they think that you, or another person, are at risk of significant harm. If the counsellor feels that you are at risk of significant harm they will be obliged to share these concerns with your parents and/or specific members of the school's pastoral support team.

### **Can I see the school counsellor without anyone knowing?**

Whilst the service is as discreet as possible, total anonymity cannot be guaranteed in a school setting. Permission needs to be requested from teachers if you need to miss a class for a counselling session, although you do not need to give a reason or share any details. Students might be visible when entering or leaving the school counselling room. There are a limited number of appointments available during lunchtimes and after school.

### **Does the School Counsellor keep notes of our sessions?**

Confidential notes are kept securely by the counsellor for their own records. Basic anonymous data will be collected for tracking purposes. This data will be limited to year group, gender, presenting issue, number of sessions and will not include names.

### **How do I arrange to meet with a School Counsellor?**

You can email the school counsellors ([asheppard@standrews-schools.com](mailto:asheppard@standrews-schools.com) or [nlittle@standrews-schools.com](mailto:nlittle@standrews-schools.com)) or drop by the counselling room in person before school or during break time or lunch time. If you prefer you can also let your tutor or teacher know that you would like to have an appointment, and ask them to contact the counsellor on your behalf. Parents are also welcome to contact the school counsellor to discuss a possible student referral.