

## *Parents and Carers Frequently Asked Questions....*

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*My child/young person has been allocated a school counsellor, what does this mean?*

This means that they will be offered regular counselling sessions with one of the school counsellors. The school counsellor is a fully qualified, professionally registered Person Centred counsellor with integrity, experience and competency in working with children and young people. Sessions normally take place weekly for up to 50 minutes and are accessed from a safe, confidential base. The purpose is to enable the child/young person to express how they feel, become clearer in their thinking and then use both to discover what behaviours work best for them.

*Why can't my child just speak to me?*

Having a safe space to talk to a trained, caring adult outside of the family can be easier because there is no need to protect anyone's feelings. Supporting your child to express him or herself openly in sessions will greatly enable him or her to get the most out of counselling. Our main aim is to enable your child to feel happier, safer and more able to make the most of life now and into the future. The Person Centred approaches works with the belief that each individual has an innate capacity and tendency to fulfil their best potential.

*Is it OK to talk to my child about their sessions?*

Confidentiality is paramount for the trust that is needed for counselling to be effective. Some children/young people choose to talk about their sessions at home, while others may not. It is best to take your lead from them. Your child may sometimes be more emotional when feelings have emerged, but that is generally a positive and necessary step towards change.

*Can I be in touch about how the sessions are going or if I am worried about my child?*

If you feel concerned about your child or have important information concerning his or her wellbeing or safety then please don't hesitate to be in touch with the school counsellor, directly or through your child's identified school LINK. If ever a counsellor has a safeguarding concern, while seeking to preserve trust and gain a child's consent before involving others, the counsellor will always follow Shetlands Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures. Safeguarding is monitored responsibly and sensitively and the boundaries of confidentiality are explained clearly in the Working Together Agreement made between the school counsellor and a child/young person.

*How do I get in touch with the School Counselling Service?*

If you have any further questions about what is involved in counselling or about your child accessing counselling, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the School Counselling Service.

Directly by email [schoolcounsellingservice@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:schoolcounsellingservice@shetland.gov.uk)

or; phone the Senior Practitioner, School Counselling Service Louise Wood on 01595 745594

or you can make contact through your schools identified LINK.