

Main tasks and duties of a Primary School Counsellor

Job Scope

As a Primary School Counsellor at JESS, your primary purpose is to enhance the overall well-being and academic success of primary school students by providing comprehensive counselling services. This role aims to foster a positive and inclusive learning environment, addressing the diverse social, emotional, and behavioural needs of students, thereby supporting their holistic development.

The counselling team is an integral part of pastoral care across the 3 schools. The school counsellors play proactive and reactive roles within the wider pastoral team to support and ensure the well-being of our students. The counsellors are central to our safeguarding provision in the school.

Safeguarding Statement

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. All staff working at JESS will have some contact with children and young people and will therefore be in a position of trust. Staff with teaching duties will be responsible for the students that they teach and may also have additional specific pastoral or other responsibilities for other students they do not teach. In addition, all staff will regularly interact with students who may seek assistance or otherwise interact with them whilst moving around the school. In all cases, the staff's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the students is to adhere to and always ensure compliance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures to include whistleblowing ensuring all concerns are immediately passed on to the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) (DSO).

Main Tasks and Duties

This not an exhaustive list of duties/responsibilities. Please note that this is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the School Counsellor will carry out. The postholder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role, as directed by the Head of Department and/or Headteacher. The responsibilities outlined may be modified by the Headteacher, upon mutual agreement, to reflect or anticipate changes in the role:

Students

- To provide a supportive and secure environment for students.
- To promote a caring and supportive environment for students in which their concerns may be explored.
- To work with students with a diverse range of issues including bereavement and loss, transition, eating disorders, self-harm, depression, anger issues, concerning behaviours, abuse of any kind, anxiety and fears
- To conduct one-on-one or small group counselling sessions with students to address personal, emotional, or academic concerns.
- To develop personalized intervention plans to support students facing challenges.
- To provide social skills training to small and large groups of children where necessary
- To work closely with the school's wellbeing and leadership team in planning and delivering counselling to students who may need it.
- To consult and collaborate effectively with parents and teachers/colleagues regarding students with identified concerns and needs.
- To collaborate with school psychologists, special education teachers, and other support staff to address diverse student needs.
- To implement appropriate use of assessment tools for determining and structuring counselling sessions
- To identify trends and patterns of concerns, potential causes and possible supports
- To implement effective referral and follow – up processes.
- To collaborate with Lead Counsellor and Headteacher on referrals/signposting to external sources of psychological/psychiatric support
- To provide immediate support during crisis situations, collaborating with relevant authorities and stakeholders to ensure the well-being of students.
- To provide In-house service training if required. Topics may include behaviour management; functional behaviour analysis; neuro linguistic programming techniques.
- To observe Ensure appropriate confidentiality of sensitive information; maintain appropriate and confidential data and records of counselling sessions and support.
- To meet and collaborate with the Lead Counsellor to discuss active caseload.

Behaviour and Safety

- To effectively contribute and provide best practice in combatting risk pertaining to cyber safety, health safety and child protection.

Safeguarding

- Work in line with statutory safeguarding guidance the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Work with the designated safeguarding officer (DSO) to promote the best interests of students, including sharing concerns where necessary.
- Promote the safeguarding of all students in the school.

Networking

- To develop a thorough knowledge of support services available locally and develop strong working relationships with specialists such as clinical or educational psychologists and psychiatrists within these services.
- To network with personnel from other agencies and counsellors from other local schools.

Other

- To have professional regard for the ethos, policies and procedures of JESS and maintain high standards in attendance and punctuality.
- To maintain smart and professional standards of appearance.
- To maintain high standards of conduct both in and out of the classroom.
- To act in a way that conforms to the school's ethos and values and values of the UAE.
- To participate in professional development activities, keep up-to-date with research, developments and best practice for counselling with the intention of improving professional knowledge and skills as well as the counselling service provided.
- To adhere to the expectations set out in the staff handbook, staff code of conduct, Ministry of Education Code of Conduct, and the school policies.

Key Relationships

Internal - Students, Counsellors, Learning Support Assistants, Teachers, Year Leaders, Subject Leads, Oasis Team, SLT, Headteacher, Admin team

External – Parents, KHDA, Regulatory authorities and other professional third parties