



Dubai
English
Speaking
Schools

Job Description and Person Specification

Job Title:	Student Counsellor
Reports to:	Assistant Headteacher i/c Student Wellbeing
Direct Reports:	School Counsellor Team Leader
Collaborates with:	All DESS College Staff & Parents

OBJECTIVE OF THE ROLE

The School Counsellor facilitates student development in all aspects of their social, emotional and mental health through the provision of a high-quality School Counselling Service. School counsellors support effective participation of students in academic learning and social emotional wellbeing, enabling students to become independent, confident learners, in - line with the College vision. The school counsellor supports students with a wide range of social, emotional and mental health difficulties, ensuring that all students at DESS College can thrive at the College and beyond.

The school counsellor is an integral part of the pastoral care at DESS College and currently consists of the Counselling Team Leader and three school counsellors. School Counsellors play a proactive and reactive role within the wider pastoral team to support student wellbeing. The School Counselling service is central to our safeguarding provision in the College.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Supporting Social, Emotional and Mental Health:

- Provide short term counselling and support to students for any mental health concerns, academic stress and interpersonal and friendship related issues.
- Liaise with the College's House and Sixth Form teams to ensure continuity of support and progression at key transition points for students in need of social, emotional and mental health support.
- Discuss needs and options for the most appropriate and available supports for each student.
- Support parents through provided resources for external services for students who require longer term support, specialist support or crisis intervention.
- Provide consultation to staff whose role it is to support students in distress and advice and guidance to teachers on how best to support students who are receiving social and emotional support.
- Manage individual caseloads, prioritising and allocating resources accordingly, and under the guidance of the School Counselling Team Leader.
- Develop and maintain key relationships and networks with other schools and outside agencies and liaise with external services to provide continuity of care within school.
- Attend 'Team Around the Child' (TAC) meetings called by the House, Medical and Inclusion Teams.

- Provide information on the Student Advisory Service, the role of the Student Advisor and the boundaries of confidentiality to students, staff and parents
- Support with themed days and aspects of our Wellbeing Curriculum.
- Maintain comprehensive student notes, along with ensuring appropriate entries are logged onto school systems such as CPOMS and Go4Schools.

Knowledge and understanding:

- Under the direction and support of the School Counselling Team Leader, Assistant Headteacher i/c Student Wellbeing and Deputy Headteacher i/c Pastoral, acquire the appropriate skills, qualifications and experience required for the role in line with the College's ethos and approach to student wellbeing.
- Demonstrate expertise and skills in understanding how Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) work in the context of a secondary school.
- Have a clear and up-to-date knowledge of evidence-based support strategies and interventions.
- Have a clear and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of policies related to safeguarding in line with the Department for Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' legislation.
- To work in consultation with the DESS College Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.
- Share responsibility for ensuring that knowledge and understanding of social and emotional support, interventions and strategies is relevant and up to date.
- Attend monthly line management meetings with the School Counselling Team Leader
- Participate in monthly supervision
- Have a willingness to embrace, and have confidence in using, new technology in line with the College vision.
- A sound understanding of being able to assess when students need to be referred to external agencies and when cases require escalation internally, such as to the counselling team leader or DSL team.

Administration:

- Under the direction and support of the School Counselling Team Leader and Assistant Headteacher i/c Student Wellbeing, ensure that there is effective and efficient administration in relation to observations, records, reports, and information received from staff, parents, students and external services.
- Maintain appropriate records for student referrals and ensure confidentiality is maintained in all aspects of work.
- Maintain data to ensure patterns and trends within the counselling services are accurate and up to date. This entails quantitative data on how the school counselling service has been accessed by students, number of students accessing the service along with a general overview of the trends and issues within the college.
- Assist the School Counselling Team Leader and the Assistant Headteacher i/c Student Wellbeing with the review of data and information relating to the students who are receiving social, emotional and mental health support and contribute to the development of the service.
- Ability to prioritise and embody excellent time management, working autonomously to time block and ensure that administration is complete in a timely manner.
- Triage workload and calmly respond to competing demands.

Communication:

- An important aspect of this role involves making professional judgements about the support that a student requires based on information you receive. This will involve distinguishing relevant information such as how a student's difficulties are interfering with day-to-day life and progress, or how long a student has been struggling with symptoms/difficulties. This

could also involve making judgements on how much a student's safety may be compromised by their mental health difficulties. How this is communicated is a significant part of the role. Developing partnerships with families and the community is essential to the role of a School Counsellor. Working alongside the Pastoral teams, proactive engagement with teachers, families, outside agencies and the wider community will be required to promote consistent support for DESS College students' mental health and wellbeing.

- Excellent written and interpersonal communication skills, and ability to develop rapport with children and families from all walks of life.
- Transparency and integrity are imperative, and any concerns are promptly reported to the school counselling team leader and/or DSL team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The ideal candidate will have:

- Qualifications related to supporting children with their mental health, such as, MA in Psychology, Counselling or Social Work from an institution recognised by the CDA that has eligibility for CDA licensing.
- A demonstrated and genuine appreciation of children and young people and a desire to work with them in a positive way.
- Minimum 3 years' experience of working with young people in a school and/or children's care context post qualification as a School Counsellor.
- Evidence of continued relevant professional development
- Highly developed communication skills to work both autonomously and within a multi-professional team according to circumstances.
- A mature and non-judgmental outlook.
- Sensitivity to the needs of others.
- A good sense of humour whilst working under pressure.
- A passion for supporting with whole school initiatives and other opportunities outside the operational duties.
- A willingness to maintain relevant and up-to-date CPD, using this to drive meaningful change.
- An openness to learning, and ability to critically reflect of one's own practice. Using this reflection as a signpost to continually improve the counselling service.
- Professional conduct by being able to maintain confidentiality being non-judgmental.

Further desirable, although not essential, qualifications/accreditations:

- Accreditation with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) or equivalent.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, UPON REQUEST

- Have a recognised area of responsibility within the School Counselling service.
- Develop and participate in quality improvement initiatives such as:
 - Maintaining and creating mental health resources.
 - Delivering assemblies.
 - Facilitating workshops for students, parents and whole school staff.
 - Professional development presentations to whole school staff.
 - Researching and sharing current evidence based best practice.
- Attend meetings as delegated by the School Counselling team leader.

This list is not exhaustive and is designed to provide a framework for areas of development the successful candidate will have responsibility for within the College.