

# Borrisokane Community College

## One-to-One Policy – Counselling and Teaching



### Mission Statement

*We seek to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the education of our students and where each individual is valued as a unique human being.*

*"Is ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid"*

*It is the policy of this school that one-to – one counselling and teaching is often in the best interest of the student. Where one-to one sessions occur, this will take place in an open environment i.e. staff member and pupil visible through a glass panelled door.*

### **One-to-One counselling (External Counsellor/Guidance Counsellor) Procedure**

#### **General**

The external counsellor is a fully qualified IACP counsellor and garda vetted. The guidance counsellor is a fully qualified guidance counsellor member of the Teaching Council and Garda Vetted.

As a full member of the (IACP) Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy the counsellor is compliant with IACP the Code of ethics and practice for Counsellors/Psychotherapists. The guidance counsellor is a full member of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) and is available to attend five sessions of Supervision through the IGC each academic year.

The counsellor will have sensible regard for the student's beliefs and values. They will work in ways to promote the students' personal autonomy, freedom of choice and self-direction. The counsellor records a list of students detailing who they met on a one-to-one basis and relevant notes regarding the sessions.

All one-to-one meetings with students take place in the counselling/guidance office. Any concerns (Child Protection) that the counsellor has regarding the safety of a student is discussed with the Principal (DLP) as a matter of urgency. If the principal is unavailable, the issue will be discussed with the Deputy Principal (DDL P).

#### **Responsibilities and Duties of the Counsellor:**

Students may be referred to the external counsellor by the Student Support Team following consultation with the Principal. Students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by the Student Support Team, Year Head, SEN team or can self-refer. In the sessions the counsellor should always be mindful of

- their role and explain the boundaries within the counsellor/student relationship
- their qualifications, areas of expertise and relevant limitations
- the nature of counselling activities involved and the reasons for undertaking them and the benefits to the student in the case of counselling
- any referral options which may benefit the student where any presenting issue is beyond the external counsellors current level of competency

- confidentiality in the counselling process and the limits of confidentiality
- the students right to engage in and withdraw from involvement in the process at any stage
- seeking consent in advance from parents/guardians for the student to attend counselling session(s). Written permission will be obtained from at least one parent/guardian prior to the commencement of therapy.
- keeping all written records in a locked filing cabinet in the guidance counselling/Principal's office. When making or keeping records, care should be taken to distinguish between fact, observation and opinion and, to include only such information as is required for the purpose of professional involvement with the student. Where a decision is made, the basis for the decision is noted. Statutory and data protection responsibility with regard to records applies to all media, whether written hardcopy, electronic or digitally recorded.

## **One-to-One Meeting/Teaching with Students**

### **General**

All one-to-one **meetings** with students take place in an open environment with a glass panelled door. One to one **teaching may** occur between students and Special Education teachers. Work carried out by Special Needs Assistants will also be completed in an open environment under the direction of a class teacher.

From time to time outside professionals may be required to meet with/assess students in a one to one setting. This includes visits from external agencies for example, NCSE, NEPS, SEC, TUSLA etc. All personnel working with children on a one to one basis must be Garda Vetted.

### **Responsibilities and Duties of Teachers**

Teachers have a responsibility to inform students of the extent and limitations of confidentiality with respect to the schools policies and safe guarding of the wellbeing of the student. Students should be informed of the limits of confidentiality where information about them may need to be shared. If issues of safety override those of confidentiality and a concern around child protection arises the concern will be discussed with the DLP as a matter of urgency. DLP/Principal will inform parents of any child protection related issues in line with Child Protection procedures.

### **Record Keeping and Access to Records**

All written records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the teacher's office and/or recorded on School IT based reporting system. When making or keeping records, care should be taken to distinguish between fact, observation and opinion and, to include only such information as is required for the purpose of professional involvement with the student. Where a decision is made, the basis for the decision is noted. Statutory and data protection responsibility with regard to records applies to all media, whether written, hardcopy, electronic or digitally recorded. For SEN students all student support files recorded and stored in accordance with the SEN Policy.

This policy was ratified by Borrisokane Community College Board of Management on June 14<sup>th</sup> 2018. This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

