



مدرسة ايليت الانجليزية
The Elite English School

EES Counseling Policy

Review:

This policy was reviewed on 5th April 2023. It will be reviewed and updated annually by the school management.



Counseling Policy

1 Rationale, Aims and Objectives

Rationale

The Elite English School offers a counseling service to currently enrolled students of the school. Counseling is an essential part of the welfare services provided at the school and is provided to students when issues are compromising a child's learning, or directly impacting on their mental health. Benefitted by this support, students develop skills and attitudes through which they are capable of resolving their issues related to the areas of academic, social, mental health and wellbeing. The vital part is identifying and offering a therapeutic service to the students who need such a service.

The Elite English School intends to ensure that students receive the services they need to prevent more serious behavioral, psychological and/or social problems from arising in the future. This approach will not only benefit the individual student, but his/her family and environment as well.

Aims and Objectives

The Elite English School Counseling Policy aims at providing students and the school community with a safe place to respond to their mental health and wellbeing. One of the main counseling objectives is to create and maintain an atmosphere where pupils feel they are recognized, safe, valued, respected and happy. This is implemented through a compassionate response to concerns, apprehensions and anxieties of the individual. Overall, the counseling department intends to:

- Care for every individual
- Value the formation of healthy relationships rooted in trust and respect
- Celebrate the distinctiveness of individuals, while upholding universal dignity at all times
- Respect the various needs that exist between persons at different stages of their life
- Manage behavior with understanding, empathy, equality and justice
- Explore avenues for the recognition of latent potential within all individuals
- Offer leadership opportunities to all students, without exceptions
- Encourage resilience and interconnectedness in a protective surrounding
- Strive towards the integration of physical health, mental health and educational outcomes

2. School Counseling Program Services

The EES Counseling Policy provides direction by assisting students to attain knowledge, attitudes, strategies, and skills within the three main domains of student development:

Academic Development

Based upon knowledge of the learning process and academic environment, the School Counselor develops programs and interventions that promote the achievement of all students.

- Consult with teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians concerning the academic needs of all learners
- Consult with SMLT and teachers to ensure that all students are provided with the most effective opportunities to succeed academically in school, as also ensuring that students' instructional needs are being supported to the required extent
- Provide support to all students to ensure their academic success

Personal/Social Development

The School Counselor comprehends the developmental needs of students of all age, and develops programs and interventions that encourage optimum personal and social development.



- Self-awareness, self-management and personal safety and coping skills help students to focus on their personal development
- Interpersonal skills such as skills for building relationships and expectations of behavior in a group make students aware of the importance of Social development

Career Development

The School Counselor carries expert knowledge about work environments, career theories, and related life-processes, and develops programs and interventions to promote the career development of all students. The Counselor helps -

- identify and better understand one's interests and skills (apart from academics) for the achievement of life and career goals
- acquire skills to explore the sphere of work in relation to knowledge of self as it relates to culture and family values, and make informed career decisions
- employ strategies to achieve future career goals and satisfaction
- facilitate the investigation of careers and university majors/courses that support careers with advice on appropriate post-secondary placement for desired career training

These programs are developed and delivered through interventions such as:

- Individual Counseling

Individual Counseling with students is a useful intervention when dealing with psychological, emotional, social and behavioral issues. The Counselor may use a range of therapeutic interventions and modalities as appropriate to the student's needs. The goal of the individual counseling is to assess and understand the needs of the student, help the student to think and act differently by developing a plan of action best suited to the student, and to provide individual support as maybe required.

- Group Counseling

Group Counseling may be useful in situations where a number of students are displaying similar challenges and a group environment may be more conducive to progress in therapy. It can be used for issues such as self esteem, social skills training, resilience training, bullying issues, anger management and other such matters. Group counseling helps students build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experiences.

- Whole-Class Interventions

Whole-Class integrated programs are similar to that of group counseling, but are designed for the whole class and are not specific to a child's specific issues and needs but the class as a whole. This can be integrated into academic programs parallel to Key Learning Areas such as Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. These programs may be related to bullying, conflict resolution, Grief and Loss, Self Esteem and Changing and Relationships. This type of intervention may also be appropriate when an unlikely event or situation has caused distress among students of the whole class (e.g. traumatic events, grief and loss, etc).

- Whole-School Interventions

Whole-school projects such as ongoing health promotion, self esteem programs and mental health activities should be conducted to integrate all students and staff into learning about mental health and partaking in activities that may be beneficial to them. Whole-school interventions such as anti-bullying awareness and mental health programs may be implemented when a need is identified.



- Crisis Intervention

The School Counselor understands and implements an appropriate response to a crisis and utilizes a variety of intervention strategies for students, families, and the community when facing emergency situations.

- Workshops

The school counseling program addresses key issues faced by students of various age groups by designing and implementing workshops that provide students with key skills and techniques to navigate the world around them.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the School Counselor

The School Counselor is a part of the student welfare and learning support team. The role of the School Counselor is not only limited to providing direct services to students, but to consider a holistic approach which involves all whom are involved in the well-being of our students. This means that the counselor will be working in collaboration with the student, his/her family, teachers, other relevant staff members and the general community in order to ensure the well-being of the students. In addition the School counselor will also:

- Optimize students' potential and enhance their overall wellbeing
- Promote and help students maintain effective learning and positive physical, mental health
- Help students develop appropriate skills, attitudes and pro-social values and behaviors
- Practice within the boundaries of individual professional competence
- Adhere to ethical standards of the profession
- Maintain professional competence through educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness
- Maintain confidentiality of the students, staff and parents at all times- including the protection of information and record-keeping
- Develop and maintain consistent and clear lines of communication with parents/guardians
- Provide professional development or information sessions and resources about issues impacting on student learning, mental health and wellbeing and strategies to enhance learning and wellbeing.

4. Training

Staff Interventions

Taking care of teachers and staff is also an integral part to the School Counselor role. If the school is not functioning, students will be impacted. It is for this reason that professional development for teachers may be necessary in some circumstances.

Further to this, supporting teachers individually in dealing with particular student issues or classroom management is often appropriate and may assist in the students' academic progress and overall well-being.

5. Counseling Support Systems

Administrators (include the Principal, Vice-Principal and non-teaching staff) support the counseling program in numerous ways, including implementing and upholding policies and procedures. Together with the School Counselor(s), they develop partnerships with resources in the community that contribute to the counseling process.

Teachers are a valuable resource as they spend the most time with students and are able to provide key information and feedback, which informs the counseling process. As such, teachers work closely with counselors to assess and monitor students' progress and well-being. Various opportunities are



provided through which students can benefit from the school counseling program such as group counseling and workshops, in addition to self-referrals.

Parents/guardians work in partnership with School Counselors to help their student be successful in school. The school counseling program ensures that parents are given the tool to help their student with his/her developmental, emotional and social needs. Parent/guardian support is vital to the success of all counseling endeavors.

Community members such as psychologists, psychiatrists, other medical and university/educational professionals' partner with the school in a variety of ways, providing workshops, assessments and consultations that contribute to students' development.

6. Referral Guidelines

The Elite English School asks teachers and staff to refer students with the use of the School Counselor Referral Form. Students should be referred for academic, social, behavioral and psychological concerns which are impacting on the student's capacity to learn and function at school.

Teacher referral: Although behavioral issues and conduct management issues can invariably take its toll on teachers and the whole class, behavior issues should be referred to the school discipline system first. If the issues cannot be dealt with via the use of effective teacher and classroom strategies, a referral to the School Counselor may be appropriate.

Parent referral: Parents can initiate a referral to the School Counselor through the supervisor if they experience learning difficulty in their child; need some support or counseling to help their child.

Self referral: Students can also refer themselves for counseling if they experience a need or difficulty of any sort.

7. Reasons for Referral

Students who are experiencing the following challenges may require a referral to the School Counselor:

- Anxiety/ Depression/Low self-esteem
- Learning difficulties which have not improved with learning support
- Traumatic experiences
- Social skills difficulties – including bullying (victim/perpetrator), friendship difficulties, isolation, etc.
- Anger Management
- Attention Deficits and Hyperactivity
- Oppositional and Defiant Behaviors which have not improved with school discipline intervention
- Suspected evidence of child abuse, physical or mental.
- Suicidal/self-harm ideation and/or behaviors

8. School Counseling Process

Each student deserves the best possible care that can be provided by The Elite English School. The School Counselor has an essential role in ascertaining whether a student may need intervention within the school or in an out of school setting.

Assessment

Once the School Counselor receives the referral from the teacher/staff member or parent a comprehensive initial assessment must take place. This can be in the form of teacher/staff



interviews, student observations, parent interviews, classroom/playground observations, psychometric and/or educational assessments and student interviews.

Teacher Interviews

After receiving the school counseling referral form, the counselor may need to discuss the referral with the teacher and obtain further information about the student. The counselor may wish to look at some of the students' school work and enquire about their academic progress.

Observation

Observation is crucial and usually indicative of any issues with the child. All observations should be documented and compiled into a student's case file.

Parent Interviews

Parent interviews are conducted by the School Counselor to obtain as much information as possible about the student's history and current life. This includes birth history, medical and developmental history, educational history, history of previous mental health issues, issues of trauma, family support systems, family history of mental health concerns or disabilities, and other relevant information. Interviews should always be respectful, and remain confidential.

During this interview, the current referral and presenting problems are discussed in detail. Parents are made aware of the process to follow. Parent Consent is obtained in writing in order for further school counseling intervention to begin.

Educational Assessments

Educational Assessments are important when a student is referred for learning difficulties, or when the counselor identifies the need for this type of assessment. These assessments must be conducted by a registered psychologist and strictly under standardized conditions. The assessments provide information about the child's intellectual and academic functioning relevant to their age and grade.

Student Interviews

The counselor may, with the written consent of the parents, conduct student interviews in order to obtain further information on the student's social, emotional, psychological and academic well-being. The most important part of these sessions is gaining rapport with the child, and initiating a therapeutic relationship. All notes should be recorded.

Once the assessment process is complete, the School Counselor will develop an action plan for the student outlining the intervention methods necessary and who will take responsibility for these interventions. This may include teacher, in-class recommendations and parent recommendations.

9. Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

Confidentiality

School counselors are bound by law to maintain client confidentiality when collecting, recording, storing, disseminating, and disposing of information. However, not all information that a School Counselor collects can remain confidential. This is especially true when:

- There is a concern that the student will cause himself/herself harm
- There is a concern that the student will cause harm to another person
- The student discloses criminal activity such that it may impact on the welfare of the student or others or the reputation of the School
- The student discloses that he/she has suffered harm or the counselor reasonably suspects that the student has suffered harm, sexual abuse or neglect



- Teachers, coordinators and the principal must be made aware of the referral and any progress made

Students and parents should be made aware of the limits of confidentiality before counseling begins.

School Counseling files must remain in a locked filing cabinet with access only given to the School Counselor and the principal.

Mandatory Reporting

If the School Counselor is made aware of anything which leads to the suspected risk of harm, abuse or neglect of any student, this must be reported immediately and directly to the school principal who will take appropriate action.

UPDATED AND REVIEWED

03RD APRIL 2023.