



المدرسة الأمريكية
للإبداع العلمي
AMERICAN SCHOOL
OF CREATIVE SCIENCE

Counselling Policy

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Introduction

The American School of Creative Science Counselling program is designed to assist students in making the most of their educational experience. This comprehensive program refers to a sequential, development program designed to benefit all the students in the preparation of their futures. Such a program includes a curriculum organized around three areas essential for a students' growth and development from the Kindergarten Stage up to High School in three key areas:

- Academic Development
- Emotional-Social Development
- Career Development.

In the school counselling program, students are motivated, supported, and given the tools to not only succeed at school but to go on to contribute to the local and international communities. This policy works towards building stronger students than repairing adults. A protective model that believes in being proactive, ensuring that students are learning key skills and techniques to thrive as individuals. Preventative education is delivered through various means such as individual and group sessions and classroom instruction. This program is designed to meet the needs of our students at each stage of their growth and development.

Counselling Mission Statement

At ASCS, we work proactive to

- Cultivate the mindset and behaviors required to engage not only members of our school community but also the wider community within UAE and abroad.
- Encourage, motivate, and inspire all students to reach their full potential by providing them with a comprehensive school counselling program that values the individuality and respects differences of each student and nurtures them to enhance their educational, academic, career, emotional and social needs.

Aims of the School Counselling Policy

The aim of ASCS's school counselling policy is to provide a framework of procedures and well-being of the students along with the career and academic guidance they will be provided with during their time at ASCS. It will ensure that the students have access to appropriate support and are treated with respect and dignity. Learning in a positive environment enables students to:

- Make informed decisions to improve their emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Experience challenge & enjoyment
- Experience the positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves

- Establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life and which will help promote the Health and Wellbeing of the next generation of students.
- Be empowered, and encouraged to grow in an environment of compassion and equality

Guidelines for the department The Social Worker(s)

Practices within the boundaries of individual professional competence

- Adheres to ethical standards of the profession and relevant statutes established by the UAE government and regulatory organizations (KHDA)
- Maintains professional competence through educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness
- Informs students, teachers and parents of the purposes, processes and goals of counselling at or before the time when the counselling relationship is entered
- Maintains confidentiality of the students, staff and parents at all times- including the protection of emotional information and record-keeping
- Develop and maintain consistent and clear lines of communication with parents/guardians

Partners:

Administrators (include the Principal, Heads of Sections, and non-teaching staff) support the counselling program in numerous ways, including implementing and upholding policies and procedures. Together with the school counsellor(s), they develop partnerships with resources in the community that contribute to the counselling 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 counselling process. As such, teachers work closely with counsellors to assess and monitor students' progress and well-being. Various opportunities are provided through which students can benefit from the school counselling program such as group counselling and workshops, in addition to self-referrals.

Parents/guardians work in partnership with social workers to help their student be successful in school. The school counselling 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 counselling 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.

Confidentiality

All the students are entitled to confidentiality. This means that the information they bring to the session will be held in confidence between themselves and the social worker. Information will not be shared unless the young person has agreed to it. The social worker will, however, state that they may need to break confidentiality should they deem the young person at significant risk of harm to themselves or others. At this point, information may need to be shared with another party, either within the school e.g. Designated Safeguarding Leads. Counsellors are aware of the Child Protection procedures and adhere to those at all times.

Parental consent/ access to counselling records

Parents and guardians of students will be notified if the social worker is to provide individual/group counselling for their child. Counselling is voluntary and parents/guardians reserve the right to consent to or decline counselling services for their child. Parents will not be granted access to counselling records, which are considered the property of the social worker/school. Parents/guardians of all students will be notified immediately if there is any concern regarding the safety of their child and will receive an end of term feedback report.

Services provided

The counselling program targets three main areas of development:

- Academic
- Emotional & Social
- Career Development.

Academic Development:

- Apply skills needed for educational achievement
- Apply skills of transitioning between educational levels
- Understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community

Emotional/Social Development:

- Understand self as an individual and as a member of diverse local & global communities
- Interact with others in ways that respect individual & group differences
- Apply personal safety skills & coping strategies

Career Development:

- Apply career exploration & planning skills in the achievement of life career goals

- Know where & how to obtain information about the world of work & post-secondary training/education
- Acquire skills to investigate the world 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
- Foster an understanding of the relationship between emotional qualities, education, training and the world of work.

The above areas of development are enhanced and developed using the following approach:

Individual Sessions

The school social worker(s) use many different mediums to work with students during sessions. In individual sessions, students may draw, write, sing, play, or just talk. Sometimes we work on learning a specific skill such as deep breathing for anxiety. Other times we work on role-playing situations, such as a problem with a friend or having a difficult conversation.

Group counselling

Such sessions are held with multiple students experiencing similar problems or issues, it can be helpful for them to be in a counselling group together. Group counselling helps students build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experiences.

Workshops

The school counselling 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.

Training

The counselling program offers teachers and administrators various opportunities to expand their scope of practice to include counselling. Staff are aware of counselling policies and practices, how to identify indicators for student concern and how best to serve the counselling needs of our students.

Referral process and feedback

The purpose of the referral process is to provide timely and effective support to initiate an appropriate plan of action for students at various levels of need. The social worker recognizes the contribution of all members of the school community in the identification of early warning signs. Throughout the referral process, the social worker consults and collaborates with teachers, parents, administrators, other school staff, and/or outside agencies on behalf of the student. A formal referral system facilitates gathering and analyzing information systematically and objectively to plan for the students' social, academic, and career development. In order to maintain a relationship with the individuals involved in the referral process, it is recommended that the social worker follows up with the referring individual, stating that the situation has been addressed. A referral is made to the social worker(s) when a concern for a student arises. Possible sources of referrals may include self-referral by student experiencing a problem,

concerned peers, parent(s)/ guardian(s), teachers, administrators, and/or other school personnel – through the online referral process. Emergency interventions are required in those situations that need immediate attention (i.e. peer concern about the emotional safety of another student, death of a family member and abuse). The social worker may determine that other resources would be appropriate, including referral to other individuals within the school, such as the school nurse. An outside referral may be necessary when a concern presented is beyond the scope, training, and/or expertise of the social worker. In the case of suspected abuse or neglect, the referrer is required to fill out the 'Report a Concern' form (Students and Parents) or access the secure Safeguard my School platform (staff) and inform the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Faculty Referral Form

Link to referral form: [Click Here](#)

Student Referral Form

Link to referral form: [Click Here](#)

Parent Referral Form

Link to referral form: [Click Here](#)

Counselling Referral Procedure Flowchart

The Flowchart is available separately at the end of the policy as Appendix B.

Criteria for students to access the school counselling services

The counselling services help to increase the students' learning potential inside the classroom. Teachers and parents are the key people in the recognition of counselling services for each child. Only through this combined team effort can the school's teaching goals be pursued. The following should be considered emergency referrals and referred immediately:

- Suspected evidence of child abuse, physical or mental.
- A child who is frequently tearful or reports feeling unwell.
- A child who becomes unable to function in a normal way.
- Any behavior change in a child that is sudden or unusual.
- A child undergoing a traumatic family experience.
- Indications of mounting hostility between a child and a teacher or his or her peer group.

A Staff member or Parent may refer:

- Any child who requests to see a social worker.

- Students who need individual help beyond the time permitted in the classroom.
- Students with learning difficulties.
- Students having difficulty with special relationships.
- Students demonstrating observable changes in behavior that cannot be accounted for by the teacher.
- Students whose parents request counselling.
- Students who appear withdrawn or are experiencing difficulty forming positive relationships.
- Students who are constantly late for school or with their work.
- Students with frequent complaints of hurts or aches.
- Students who are fearful or nervous.
- Students who seem to seek only negative attention.
- Students unable to follow rules.
- Students who are often absent from school.

A Staff member, Parent should refer:

- Students who have experienced a death in the family or of a close friend.
- Students experiencing a divorce or separation in the family.
- Students moving to a new community.
- Students entering a new class.
- Students who exhibit excessive aggressive behavior.
- A group of students who are unable to resolve a conflict.
- Students experiencing significant change or difficulty within the family.
- Students whose families relocate frequently.
- Students who seem to be involved in bullying situations

Counseling Support Design

Tier 1- Universal Support

- COMPREHENSIVE (open access to well-being support and resources for all staff and students)
- DEVELOPMENTAL (Mental Health Awareness for all staff, students and parents through Webinars and Coffee mornings)

- PREVENTIVE (share well-being resources with staff for students to work on regular basis)
- PROACTIVE (On request 2-3 group support sessions for students with similar concerns; after teachers have secured consent from parents for the same with specific reasons stated as per their observations)

Tier 2- Targeted Support

- Cohort specific workshops.
- Progress monitoring - Regular and on-request consultations with teachers and parents
- Collaboration with teachers for class recommendations
- Referrals to in-school support systems (Supervisors, Team Leads, Heads of Sections, Peer mentors, Mental Health First Aiders)

Tier 3- Intensive Support

- 1:1 dedicated counseling sessions with the School Social Workers
- Regular meetings and progress related consultations with the Teachers and Parents

Tier 4- External Support

- Referral to external agencies for extensive support after exploring the intervention made available within school.

Links to other policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Inclusion policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Career & Academic Counselling Policy

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Ms. Rabia Ahmed, the Head of Inclusion. At every review, the policy will be approved by Ms Sara Hollis – Principal.

Appendix A: Informed Consent

Dear Parent,

If your child is referred to the school social worker for counselling, hearing the word “counselling” may make it sound like a mysterious process, but it is not. Counselling is a relationship built on confidentiality and trust—student trust, parent trust, teacher trust. Adequate information is the foundation of trust—all involved must have information about the limits and processes of counselling. The following information describes the overall process of counselling.

How does a student receive counselling at school? Students may be referred to the School Social Worker for individual and/or small group counselling by their parents or guardians, school faculty, school staff, a concerned friend, or they may refer themselves. Once a referral is made the Social worker sets up a meeting with the referred student.

Who provides the counselling at school? Counselling is provided by a certified social worker. School Counselling focuses on the academic development, Social/Emotional development, and personal development of students.

Is counselling required? It is your choice to give consent for your child to receive counselling.

What will counselling for your child involve? Counselling may include small group or individual sessions. During the sessions, your child and the social worker will work together to understand the problem, the present and future consequences, develop goals for change and a plan of action for change.

How is the information shared? Trust is the basis for effective counselling. We emphasize the importance of confidentiality between school social workers and students, at the same time recognizing the rights of parents. As a parent or guardian, you must trust that the social worker will “take good care of” one of your most prized possessions. Your child must know and trust that what is shared with the social worker will stay with the social worker unless he or she gives permission to share information or if the social worker suspects the child is in danger of being hurt by others, hurting himself, or hurting others.

Confidentiality: Trust and confidentiality work together. Counselling records do not become a part of the permanent record of the student except as required by schools’ designated Safeguarding Lead. All records prior to the safeguarding incident will be kept confidential. However, once a Report a Concern form has been filled, all counselling records henceforth will be recorded and will be shared with the designated Safeguarding Lead. A record may indicate that a student was seen by the School Social Worker; nevertheless, the topics discussed are not included unless required by the Safeguarding Committee. The social worker may talk with the classroom teacher about how he or she can help your child in the classroom; however, specific information will not be shared.

Possible outcomes: Through counselling, your child may be taught strategies to help him or her make more effective and healthier decisions, increase the ability to set and reach goals, build better relationships with others, and be more successful in school. We all must realize that changes take time; his or her problem did not develop overnight, nor will it disappear overnight. Counselling will be

successful when students, school social workers, teachers, and family members work together. If required, the social worker would inform parents if any further support is required from external therapist.

Cost: There is no cost involved in any of the counselling services your child will receive as a part of any counselling service in the school.

I have read and understand the information provided by the Social Worker and have had an opportunity to ask questions about counselling.

Student's Name	
	I consent for my child to participate in counselling. I understand that participation is completely voluntary and that classroom requirement takes precedence over participation in counselling.
	I do not consent for my child to participate in counselling
Parent's Signature	
Date	

This form is provided digitally to parents via this link:

<https://forms.edunation.app/ks8mjnz45j>

Appendix B: Counselling Referral Procedure Flowchart

