



FOREST HILL SCHOOL

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

SPECIALIST SCHOOL IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

September 2018

Dear Year 7 Parents and Carers,

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of the families of our new, Year 7 students; I am pleased that you have joined our community here at Forest Hill School. This is a big time of transition and change, both for yourselves and for your sons. The move from Primary to Secondary school is not always smooth or straightforward – there are sometimes bumps along the way as the students adjust to the new building, new teachers, new students, new everything! However, it is also a time of much anticipation and excitement; there are many opportunities that come with starting Secondary school, and I hope that you and your family are able to make the most of what is on offer during your time with Forest Hill School.

I am writing to introduce myself to you; I am the school counsellor here at Forest Hill. The school takes the emotional health and well-being of their students very seriously, evidenced by the many years the school has had a counselling service. The service has been an important source of support for many students, who have at some point experienced difficulties during their time at school. The service is confidential, open to all students and can be accessed several ways at any time throughout the school year. The main ways are for a student to access the service are:

1. Self-referral
2. Referral by a member of school staff
3. Referral by parents/carers

Many students self-refer, sometimes after a conversation with a member of staff. I will always encourage the students who self-refer to let their parents/carers know, but if they are not yet ready to do this, I will respect their confidentiality.

Parents and carers of students in Year 7, have the option to request that your child does *not* have counselling. This can be done by writing a letter to the school to my attention stating so. Students who are *12 years and older* do have the option to seek advice and support themselves.



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Over this Half Term, I will be making visits to Year 7 classes to introduce myself, talk about my role as the school counsellor and explain a bit about what counselling is. This is something that I have done in previous years, and students have found it very helpful.

The school and I make every effort to keep families and students informed about the counselling service, but there are information sheets available through the school website that you might find helpful to read; they explain more about the counselling service so you have an idea of what to expect. There are also links to websites/organisations specifically for parents/carers around matters pertaining to young people and mental health that you might find useful.

I also run a Parent/Carer Consultation Service, for those parents/carers who have any concerns or worries about their son. I would be very happy for you to contact me to talk through any concerns you might have; we can then arrange a time to have a meeting at school or simply continue to talk over the phone.

I am looking forward to the start of this year and to continuing my work supporting students' emotional well-being within the school. I am grateful for your on-going support of this valuable service!

With best wishes,

Colette Rhodes
School Counsellor

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