

Forest Hill School Counselling Service Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

Confidentiality

What you tell your counsellor is confidential. This means that the counsellor will not tell other people what you talk about in your counselling sessions – it is private between you and the counsellor.

However, there are some occasions when it is not possible to keep something confidential and you need to understand and agree these with the counsellor:

- where you have given her your express consent to disclose information
- where she believes that you or someone else are at risk of serious harm if information is not passed on
- where she would be liable to civil or criminal court procedure if the information was not disclosed

If the counsellor does feel that someone else needs to know, they will always try to inform you before doing so and discuss with you the best way of doing this.

Safeguarding concerns and issues are referred in the first instance, to Mr Haresign, Deputy Head Teacher. If Mr Haresign is not available, Ms Jones (Inclusion Manager) will be the next point of contact. If they are not available then another suitable senior member of staff will be contacted.

Record-Keeping and Data Protection

To help the counsellor in their work and to maintain good professional practice, the counsellor keeps written records of the sessions. Included in these records are the number of sessions taken place, dates of these sessions, a brief description of what is discussed, and main themes/concerns addressed.

These are kept safely in a locked cabinet, separate from any other school records. Counselling records are confidential and are not accessible to any other member of staff.

The records will be kept for as long as you are student at **Forest Hill** or **SFH6**, and then confidentially disposed of one year after you leave. You can look at these notes with your counsellor if you wish to, but you would need to write a request to your counsellor to do so. Records are not to be taken out of the counselling office nor are photocopies of records permitted.

You can discuss the information in this Agreement with the counsellor at any time