



Catholic Education

Diocese of Rockhampton

2022 Counselling Information for Parents/Carers

Dear Parent or Carer,

As you are aware your child has been referred to the school counselling service. To assist you, we have provided some information about the counselling service, which we encourage you to read before signing the consent form attached.

Why school counselling?

At different times families and children may benefit from our counselling service. Counselling is the process that occurs when a student and counsellor set aside time to explore issues or concerns.

These concerns might include stress, illness, grief and loss, or significant change at home. At school, the student may require support with goal setting, decision making, learning difficulties, anxiety, anger, attention, self-esteem, building resilience and negotiating friendships. A school counsellor can assist children and families by providing support and strategies to help at school and home.

Working in partnership

Parents are seen as integral to the school counselling process. Research indicates that whilst children benefit from counselling, the gains are even greater when parents are involved. This is why, from the beginning, the counsellor will speak with you about your concerns and observations of your child.

The counsellor then arranges sessions with your child throughout the term to provide support and strategies. The frequency of sessions could vary from weekly, fortnightly or as needed. The information discussed in these sessions is confidential, but key themes and take-home messages are communicated to you, as you are their main support outside of school.

Throughout this process, parents and carers are encouraged to collaborate with the counsellor to discuss the progress of their child.

Confidentiality

As your child will have appointments during the school day, it may be necessary that your child's teacher and principal are aware of the counselling. However, the information you and your child provide during the counselling process will remain confidential. In some instances, prior consent will have been obtained from you permitting the counsellor to discuss certain issues with another person or agency.

The only instances when a counsellor would need to break confidentiality are:

- Failure to disclose information would place the safety of your child or another person at risk
- Information is subpoenaed or required by the court.

Parent Consent Information

Please understand that:

- The collection and storage of personal information by the school counsellor is the property of Catholic Education, Rockhampton Diocese. All information is stored in a secure location for the time period required by law.
- A third party may be present during sessions if required (eg: counselling supervisor or other school counsellor).
- When appropriate, collaboration and sharing of necessary information with teachers may be necessary to support the student.
- Other school counsellors, counselling supervisors or the Principal, may need to access your information, in order to:
 - Continue service if school counsellor is absent
 - Support in critical incident situations when additional personnel are assisting
 - Undertake quality assurance activities
 - Fulfil requirements of the law

Student Protection Contacts at St Patrick's Primary School are as follows:-

- Mark Fox – Principal
- Tracey Cook – APC
- Annette Hammermeister – APA
- Clare Clarke – APRE
- Claire O'Connell - OSHC Co-ordinator
- Cleone Heath – Counsellor

If you have any questions about the school counselling service, please do not hesitate to contact me through the school.

Yours faithfully,

Cleone Heath

cleone_heath@rok.catholic.edu.au

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