

# ABOUT COUNSELLING IN EDUCATION SETTINGS



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Area 43's Independent School and Community-Based Counselling Services provide the opportunity to talk about things that are of concern to a child or young person, in confidence, with a qualified counsellor.

Counsellors are trained to listen without judging to help people sort out their thoughts and feelings about whatever is concerning them. What is spoken about will depend on the individual, but common themes are stress, relationships, change, loss, distress, and traumatic events.

Counselling supports the emotional health of children and young people which underpins their academic achievement and facilitates the building and management of helpful relationships in educational environments.



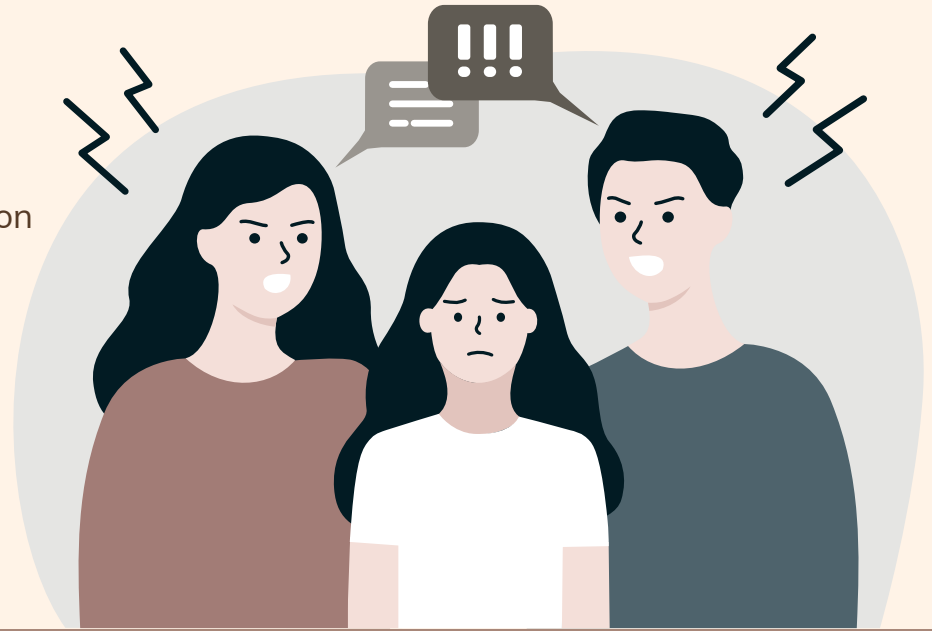
## **Please consider the following issues when referring a child or young person for counselling:**

1. What are your reasons for the referral?
2. What has been tried already and what has been the response from the young person?
3. How is this child or young person functioning in the education setting? (academically, socially, behaviourally)
  - How extreme is their behaviour or attitude?
  - How long or persistent is it?
  - How sudden is the change?
  - Are your concerns shared by other members of staff?
  - How is the behaviour affecting other members of the community?
4. How do you expect counselling to help this child or young person?
5. Has the pupil been fully consulted about their referral and given information about counselling?
6. Has the child or young person been consulted about whether or not their parents will be informed about the proposed counselling?
7. Is there any other information regarding family background or other agencies' involvement, which may be helpful to the counsellor?



# REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COUNSELLING MAY INCLUDE:

- Feeling low
- Standard of work dropping dramatically
- Becoming subdued or over-excited
- Sudden changes, marked mood swings and/or behaviour that appear out of character and/or extreme
- School/College refusal
- Those who bully others and those who are victims of bullying behaviour (including cyberbullying and sexting)
- Children and young people who are known to or who are suspected of having been sexually, physically or emotionally abused
- Have difficulties due to family breakdown
- Domestic abuse in their household
- Caring responsibilities
- Peer group difficulties/relationships
- Have been bereaved or suffered loss or separation
- Low self-esteem
- Self-harm e.g. cutting
- Misuse of alcohol and drugs
- Transgender issues
- Suicidal ideation

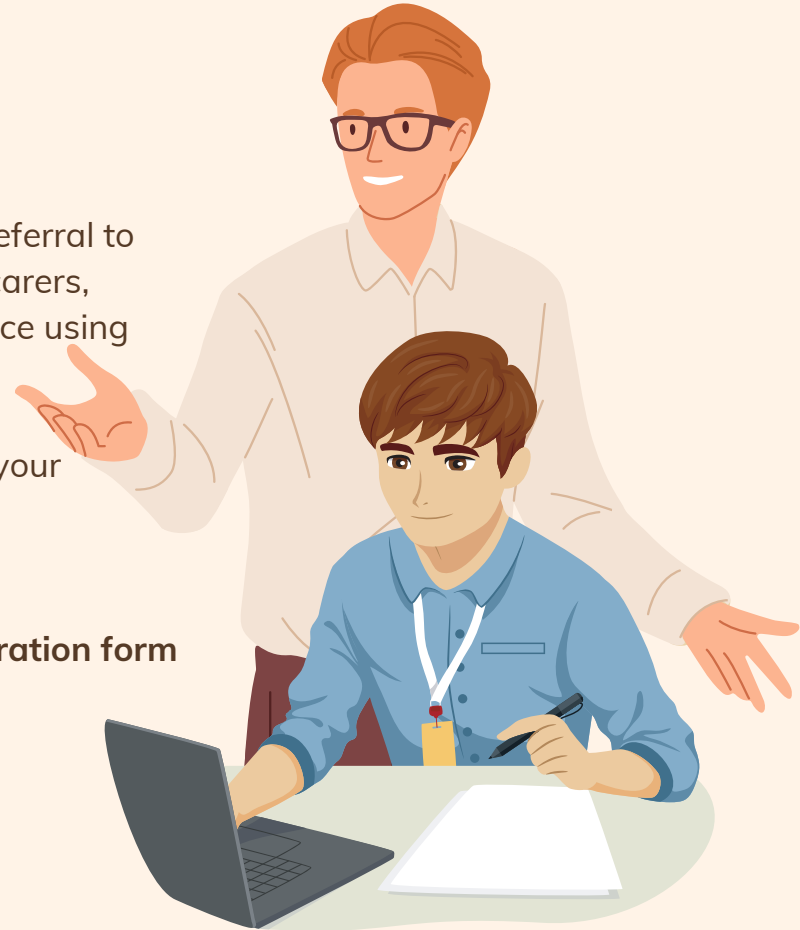


# MAKING A REFERRAL

Our children and young person-centred ethos encourages self-referral to the counselling service, enabling autonomy. However, parents, carers, education staff, GPs and other agencies can all refer to the service using the same registration form.

It may be helpful to discuss any concerns with the counsellor in your setting, to clarify the most appropriate way forward.

SCAN or CLICK the QR code for your area to access the registration form



POWYS



WEST WALES



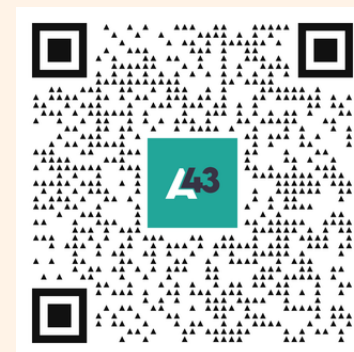
**AREA43**

# INFORMATION ABOUT COUNSELLING

Area 43 has a variety of leaflets about counselling aimed at children, young people, young adults and parents/carers which may help facilitate a conversation about counselling with the child or young person you would like to refer.

This information will help them to understand what is involved and that this is an ordinary approach to supporting children and young people who may be facing difficult times. The care that is taken with this can make a big difference to whether or not they attend the first appointment, or how they approach it.

**CLICK or SCAN the QR code for our information leaflets.**



# CONSENT

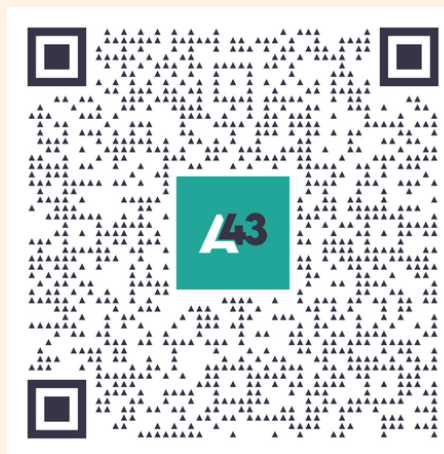
Area 43 promotes the articles of the UNCRC (1989) in our practise through our children and young people-centred ethos, supporting self-referral to the counselling service, and, when appropriate, granting autonomy.

Our practitioners assess Gillick competency and use Fraser guidelines to balance the requirement to ensure the safety of children and young people with our obligation to listen to the voice of the child or young person.

In general, young people of secondary school age are not likely to need a parental agreement for counselling, although in the majority of cases, written parental/carers consent will be required for primary school age children, before counselling can take place.



**CLICK or SCAN the QR code for our bilingual parent/carers consent form.**



# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO ACCESS COUNSELLING SUPPORT

We will always encourage a child to tell their parents or carers about the decisions they are making. If they don't want to do this, we will explore why and, if appropriate, discuss ways to help them inform their parents or carers, but this decision always remains the child or young person's choice.

Even if the young person has informed their parents they wish to receive counselling when their parents disagree with their decision, counselling can still proceed if the child has been assessed as Gillick competent in line with Article 12 of the UNCRC.

If our counsellors don't think a child is Gillick competent or there are inconsistencies in their understanding, we will seek consent from their parents or carers before proceeding.





# ACCESSING COUNSELLING

Our support is easily accessible and tailored by counsellors to appropriately meet children and young people's needs reflective of their age, language preference, level of understanding and their choice of engagement platform.

Counsellors explain the benefits and limitations of counselling at an assessment meeting and clarify confidentiality and safeguarding. It is also an opportunity for both counsellor and client to decide whether counselling is appropriate and explore the nature of their difficulties.

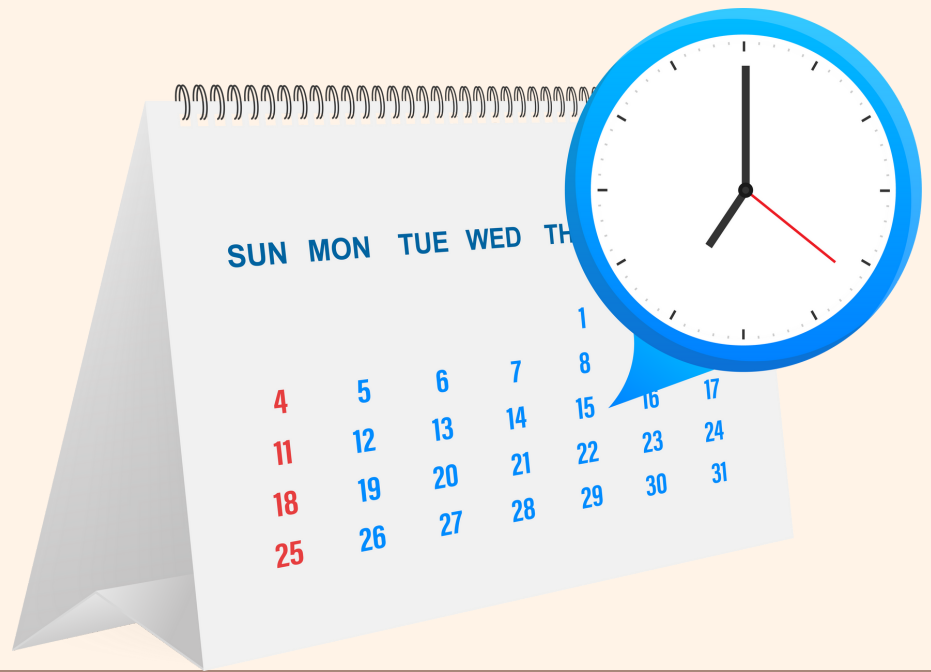
Counselling relationships may enable children and young people to feel empowered and supported to access additional specialist services and our counsellors will support those transitions and make referrals or signpost as appropriate.



# HOW LONG WILL COUNSELLING LAST?

Counselling sessions usually last up to 50 minutes, depending on the age and attention span of the child or young person. Area 43 offers 6 – 8 sessions, but this is reviewed regularly between the child or young person, the counsellor and the counsellor's supervisor.

To give time to process and practice support strategies learned in counselling, we ask that you wait at least 8 weeks before asking for counselling again.



# SAFEGUARDING

We collaborate with children and young people, pastoral teams, and other service providers to develop a service that places safeguarding, agency, and wellbeing at the heart of its provision.

Our counselling services complement the HM Government's (2006) Working Together to Safeguard Children, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Welsh Government's (2012) Together for Mental Health Strategy, and The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015). Therefore, we take our responsibilities to keep children and young people safe very seriously.

Safeguarding means protecting people from harm, including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial harm and neglect. Counsellors must recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and act on any concerns, based on legal responsibilities set at the local authority level, by the Children Act (1989) and the Education Act (2002).

Area 43 counsellors follow the BACP Ethical Framework and are required to make a record of any suspicions or concerns regarding the safeguarding of all children and young people. They will work together with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the child or young person's education setting (if relevant) and Area 43's DSL or Clinical Director to take forward any reporting of safeguarding concerns to other agencies such as police and social services.

The counsellor would aim to discuss the need to report concerns with the child or young person and parents or carers may be contacted where it is appropriate and safe to do so.



# CONFIDENTIALITY

Careful consideration needs to be given to the management of how the young person is given information, spoken to about counselling and excused from lessons to attend and discreetly access counselling sessions. Young people may not want their peer group to know (for many different reasons) that they see a counsellor.



Respect for the child or young person's right to privacy is paramount. Counselling sessions must be voluntary and confidential, they are a means of support, not a disciplinary measure. It should be made clear that counselling offers an opportunity to talk about problems and worries with an independent person to resolve or manage them more easily.

Our services are confidential between counsellor and client. The young person should never be questioned about the sessions they attend. We will only discuss counselling session content with the education setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the parents/carers (if appropriate) in the event of a safeguarding concern.

# DATA PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Area 43's online registration form populates a secure, GDPR-compliant client management system (Lamplight). The data we hold includes personal details and demographic information as well as brief, factual session notes and follows guidelines from the Welsh Government on managing referrals.

We use a simple contract (including an accessible version) that sets out the level of confidentiality. The Human Rights Act 1998 gives every individual the right to respect for their private and family life. This includes having any personal information held in confidence in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR 2018.

This right, however, is not absolute and can be overridden if necessary, such as for a safeguarding concern.



# QUALITY MONITORING AND SERVICE EVALUATION

Area 43 is an active member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), including the children and young people's division. We have an established team of bilingual counsellors who are qualified, experienced and BACP members (or equivalent body), holding or working towards BACP accreditation. Area 43's monitoring meets the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (2018).

We work in collaboration with education settings to conduct focus groups with children, young people, parents, carers and education staff (as appropriate) to gain insight into their perceptions of the development of the service, and to feed into the wider systems approach, ensuring youth-led provision which meets the needs of children and young people.



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# COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

We value your feedback and would love to hear your suggestions or compliments about Area 43.

In case we have fallen short, please share your concerns with us openly, so that we can make the necessary rectifications and improve our services. Yours and your child's satisfaction are our priority, and we take any complaints or issues seriously. This helps us to better understand and serve our clients. To submit a testimonial, share a suggestion, or make a formal complaint, please email us at [counselling@area43.co.uk](mailto:counselling@area43.co.uk).



# WHAT IF I NEED HELP NOW?

- **Papyrus - HOPELINEUK**  
Freephone **0800 068 41 41**
- **Samaritans 116 123**
- **ChildLine 0800 1111**
- Text **SHOUT** to **85258** for 24/7  
crisis text support  
[www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org)
- **C.A.L.L. Mental Health Helpline**  
**0800 132737** or text **HELP** to  
81066







**[counselling@area43.co.uk](mailto:counselling@area43.co.uk)**



**[area43.co.uk](http://area43.co.uk)**



**01239 614 566**

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