Newton International Academy, Barwa

NIA Whole School Counselling Policy

An International Community of Learners, Striving for Excellence and Celebrating Success

Approved by: Senoir Management Team
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Review Cycle: Annual

NEWTON INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY | BARWA

Introduction

At NIA we have a primary responsibility to attend to the welfare and safety of the students at the school, and this duty is carried out through pastoral care guidelines, which aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment. We have a well-defined Counselling department to cater to the social, emotional, psychological and behavioural needs of our students.

Aim

The aim of the Counselling Policy is to make explicitthe roles and responsibilities of the counsellor in providing pastoral support and care to all NIA students and to follow principles and procedures when referring and counselling students.

- To be able to work within a school context and promote emotional and psychological health amongst students.
- To effectively implement a counselling service that meets NIA's vision to create opportunities for the pupils to strive for excellence and celebrate success
- To be able to provideself-help resources to students, parentsand teachers.
- To be able to support teachers,parents in successfully directing students towardssocial, emotional, behavioural and academic success.
- To be able to work within a community and use therapeutic interventions.
- To caterto the well-being of staff,students and parents.

Definition of terms

- Counselling & Psychotherapy: British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) defines counselling and psychotherapy as 'umbrella terms that cover a range of talkingtherapies'. It offers children the opportunity to express and explore how they feel and what they're thinking with someone who is professionally trained, in order to bring about effective change and/or enhance their wellbeing.
- Counseling interventions: unique interrelationship between a client and a counsellor, which aims to create a change and a growthin three main areas: Personaldevelopment, social adjustment, and professional development by using a range of techniques. Interventions can range from therapy stylessuch as Cognitive Behavioural therapy,Behavioural therapy, Personcentered therapy or more expressive forms of therapy such as Play & Art therapy, Narrative & Storytelling Therapy.

Newton Group Values:

- Psych education: is defined as an intervention with systematic, structured, and didactic knowledge transfer for an illness and its treatment, integrating emotional and motivational aspects to enable patients to cope with the illness and to improve its treatment adherence and efficacy.

Role of the SchoolCounsellor

The school counsellor at NIA working closely with the Pastoral team and teachers to support the needs of students pertaining to academic success, behaviour, building character and support student well- being across the school. The role of the School Counsellor is but not limited to the following:

- Implement effective student and staff support and guidance. This includes understanding self and others, copingstrategies, peer relationships and social skills,communication, problem solving,decision- making, conflict resolution, and study skills.
- Provide individual and small group counselling to deal with issues such as self-image and self-esteem, personal adjustment, family issues, loss and grief, interpersonal concerns, academic development, and behaviour.
- Assist parents and the school community with information regarding mental health issues and challenges.
- Work proactively with the school community to promote and foster studentwellbeing.
- Work collaboratively with the Additional Educational Special Needs (AESN) department to assist students with needs for Special Educational.

Counselling Interventions at NIA

- Individual counselling: 1:1 support provided to students on a regular and weekly schedule. Issues that require external support will be directed to external agencies. Each session is properly documented to suit the counselling guidelines and work within the BACP framework.
- Small group counselling sessions: support providedto address issues such as Self-esteem, Friendships, Conflict Resolution, Anger management, Online safety, Bullying, Peer pressure etc.
- Individualised Plans: student specific plans are developed to suit the needs of students referred for counselling. Emotional Social Plan (ESW Plan),Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) and Pupil SupportProgram (PSP) are a few that are used across the school.
- Parent collaboration: the counsellor will collaborate with parents to support student progress and welfare.
- External Referrals: sometimes referrals are made to utilize the facilities and resources available at external agencies. The counsellor will communicate the requirements with parents should, this be the case for any student.

Referral Process and Procedures

Referral to counsellor

The concerned teacher/parent/ staff member can fill in the Counselling form and refer the child to the counsellor.

Initial Assessment

The counsellor will take time to assess the case referred by communicating with the concerned referrer, observing the student in class or social situations, and finally meeting with the student to understand the child perspective. A meeting with the parent is also schduled to share the concerns raised.

Support Plan

The counsellor will develop a plan to suit the needs and requirements of the student: ESW Plan, IBP or PSP. The plans will be shared, discussed and explained to parents and relevant staff. The plans will run on a termly basis.

Implementation of Plan

The developed plans will be implemented at home, in class and during sessions. sessions with the counsellor, if applicable, will last for 30 mins weekly 1 or 2 times.

Review of Support Plans

The plans will be reviwed termly to identidy whether set targets have been achieved. Accordingly the plan will either be continued with revised targets or the plan will be closed.

Confidentiality & Sharing Information

Respecting the child's privacy and confidentiality are fundamental requirements for keeping trust and respecting the child's autonomy. The professional management of confidentiality concerns the protection of personally identifiable and sensitive information from unauthorized disclosure. Any disclosures of a child's confidences should be undertaken in ways that best protect the child's trust and respect their autonomy.

At the initial session, the Counsellor will make it clear to the pupil that they may need to breach confidentiality in terms of telling others and seeking help. This may happen when the young person, or any other person (adult or child) is at risk of significant harm.
During a counselling session, children have the right to refuse or discontinue counselling at any time, and it is the counsellor's responsibility to ensure that the student's rights to autonomy are respected. It is important to recognize that pupils can only benefit if they want to be involved in the counselling process. At NIA we work in partnership with parents where ever possible except in Child Protection concerns.

Counsellors may find it necessary to liaise with, share information or refer the child to another agency for further help. This should only happen with the parent's permission. An exception to this practice occurs when the school has information that indicates that a student may be at risk of harm , in these circumstances the school then takes instruction from the Child Protection Policy on how to proceed. To contact with external agencies providing or to provide extra support a Sharing Information Consent letter will be requested to be signed by parents.

Child Protection

The school counsellor is part of the Child Protection team leadership along with the Pastoral Leader, following the Child Protection Policy currently implemented.
If a counsellor has potential child protection concerns, this could lead to a breach of confidentiality in the interests of the child's safety.

Record Keeping

The Counselling Department maintains records for each student referred to the department. All documents are printed and placed in the student file protected well within the department and also saved on the Google drive (confidential access to the folder).

Implementation Strategies

- **Regular Training for Staff:**

All staff will receive ongoing training on supporting students with SEND, EAL needs, and mental health issues to ensure that they are equipped to provide effective support. This training will include best practises for inclusive teaching and strategies for engaging all learners.

- **Collaboration with External Agencies:**

We will collaborate with external agencies, such as educational psychologists and mental health services, to provide additional support and resources for students with complex needs. This collaboration will enhance the expertise available within the school and provide comprehensive support for students.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The effectiveness of support services will be regularly monitored through feedback from students, parents, and staff. Adjustments will be made as necessary to improve the quality of support provided. This will include setting measurable goals and evaluating progress toward those goals.

Communication with Parents and Guardians

- **Regular Updates:**
  - Parents will receive regular updates on their child's progress and any support strategies being implemented. Open lines of communication will be maintained to ensure that parents feel involved in their child's education. This may include newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, and online portals for accessing student information.

- **Workshops for Parents:**
  - We will offer workshops for parents on topics related to supporting their child's learning and well-being, including strategies for homework support and understanding SEND provisions. These workshops will aim to empower parents with knowledge and resources to support their children effectively.

Compliance with CIS Guidelines

- **Inclusive Practises:**

Our support services are designed to align with CIS guidelines, ensuring that we provide an inclusive environment that respects and values diversity. We aim to foster a culture of understanding and support for all students.

- **Continuous Improvement:**

We will engage in self-evaluation processes to assess the effectiveness of our support services and make necessary adjustments to enhance student outcomes. This will involve regular reviews of policies and practises based on feedback and changing needs.

Review and Revision Process

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with current best practises and regulations. Feedback from staff, students, and parents will be considered during the review process.

External agencies

1. Sidra Medicine
2. Al Ahmadani Medical center
3. Hamad Medical Cooperation
4. Mind Institute

Associated Policies and Documents

1. Child Protection Policy
2. Primary School Behaviour and Discipline Policy