

# COUNSELLING POLICY

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Policy Reviewed - March 2025  
Date of Next Review- March 2026

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## **Introduction**

Counselling at Glendale international school is offered to assist students to develop appropriate skills and attitudes and resolve problems in relation to personal or academic issues. Counselling is provided within the framework of the school community, involving staff and parents as required.

In the school counselling program, students are motivated, supported, and given the tools to not only succeed at school but to go on to contribute to the local and international communities. This policy works towards building stronger students than repairing adults. A protective model that believes in being proactive, ensuring that students are learning key skills and techniques to thrive as individuals. Preventative education is delivered through various means such as individual and group sessions and classroom instruction. This program is designed to meet the needs of our students at each stage of their growth and development

## **Mission Statement**

GIS Counselling Program perfectly blends with the UAE Federal Law issued by H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan in 2006, concerning the rights and protection of people of determination. Therefore, we at GIS ensure that all the students are encouraged and motivated to reach their full potential by providing a comprehensive school counselling program that values the individuality and respects differences of each student and nurtures them to enhance their educational, academic, career, emotional and social needs.

## **Aims of the School Counselling Policy**

The aim of GIS counselling policy is to provide a framework of procedures and well-being of the students. It will ensure that the students have access to appropriate support and are treated with respect and dignity. Learning in a positive environment enables students to:

- Make informed decisions to improve their emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Experience challenge & enjoyment
- Experience the positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves
- Establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life, and which will help promote the Health
- Wellbeing of the next generation of students.
- Be empowered, and encouraged to grow in an environment of compassion and equality

### **Counselling services**

Student counselling is provided in respect of three broad aspects of development:

1. Social and Emotional
2. Academic

#### **1. Social And Emotional Development**

Social and Emotional counselling services vary according to need, but may be concerned with:

- Developmental and mental health issues.
- Interpretation of educational and psychological reports
- Addressing and resolving specific personal problems
- Making decisions.
- Stress management
- Coping with relationship crises.
- Developing personal insights and knowledge
- Improving relationships with others.

#### **2. Academic development**

Academic counselling is provided to students who may be experiencing difficulties with their studies.

Discussion with a School counsellor can help students identify their areas of difficulty and develop strategies

to facilitate improvement in their academic performance.

- Apply skills needed for educational achievement.
- Apply skills of transitioning between educational levels.
- Understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.

Focus Areas for Student Academic, Career and Personal/ Social Development	
Year 1- 5 Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Classroom behavior</li> <li>● Good touch and bad touch</li> <li>● Good Manners</li> <li>● Awareness about bullying</li> <li>● Social skills development</li> <li>● Understanding emotions</li> </ul>
Year 6- 8 Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establishing Effective relationships</li> <li>● Behavior Management</li> <li>● How to overcome Exam Stress / Anxiety</li> <li>● Awareness about bullying</li> <li>● Social Skills development</li> <li>● Understanding of Self</li> </ul>
Year 9 - 12 Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Career Exploration and Guidance</li> <li>● Establishing Effective relationships</li> <li>● Stress Management</li> <li>● How to overcome Exam Stress / Anxiety</li> <li>● Developing life skills and 'Social Grace'</li> <li>● Emotional Management</li> </ul>

The above areas of development are enhanced and developed using the following approach:

### Individual Sessions

The school counsellor(s) use many different mediums to work with students during sessions. In individual sessions, students may draw, write, sing, play, or just talk. Sometimes we work on learning a specific skill such as deep breathing for anxiety. Other times we work on role- playing situations, such as a problem with a friend or having a difficult conversation. Main therapies that are used in sessions include cognitive behavioral therapy, psycho education, mindfulness training etc. based on the type of concern. We also use rating scales and questionnaires like anxiety rating scales, self-evaluation, anger meter, self-reflection, behavioral tracker etc.

### Group Counselling

Such sessions are held with multiple students experiencing similar problems or issues, it can be helpful for them to be in a counselling group together. Group counselling helps students build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experiences.

### Workshops

The school counselling program addresses key issues faced by students of various age groups by designing and implementing workshops that provide students with key skills and techniques to navigate the world around them.

### **Training**

The counselling program offers teachers and administrators various opportunities to expand their scope of practice to include counseling. Staff are aware of counselling policies and practices, how to identify indicators for student concern and how best to serve the counselling needs of our students.

### **Referrals**

The purpose of the referral process is to provide timely and effective support to initiate an appropriate plan of action for students at various levels of need. The student counsellor recognizes the contribution of all members of the school community in the identification of early warning signs. Throughout the referral process, the student counsellor consults and collaborates with teachers, parents, administrators, other school staff, and/or outside agencies on behalf of the student.

A referral is made to the school counsellor(s) when a concern for a student arises. Possible sources of referrals may include self-referral by student experiencing a problem, concerned peers, parent(s)/ guardian(s), teachers, administrators, and/or other school personnel.

The following should be considered emergency referrals and referred immediately:

- Suspected evidence of child abuse, physical or mental.
- A child who is emotionally distressed (e.g. crying for long periods) or gets sick daily.
- A child who becomes unable to function in a normal way.
- Any behavior changes in a child that is sudden or unusual.
- A child undergoing a traumatic family experience.
- Indications of mounting hostility between a child and a teacher or his or her peer group.

### **A Staff member or Parent may refer:**

- Any child who themselves or whose parents/ Guardian requests to see a counsellor.
- Students who need individual help beyond the time permitted in the classroom.
- Students with learning difficulties.
- Students demonstrating observable changes in behavior that cannot be accounted for by the teacher.
- Students who are antisocial.
- Students who are constantly late for school or with their work.
- Students with frequent complaints of hurt or aches.
- Students who are fearful or nervous.
- Students who seem to seek only negative attention.
- Students unable to follow rules.
- Students who are often absent from school.
- Students entering a new class.
- Students who exhibit excessive aggressive behavior.
- A group of students who are unable to resolve a conflict.
- Students who seem to be involved in bullying situations.

### **A Staff member, Parent should refer:**

- Students who have experienced a death in the family or of a close friend.
- Students experiencing a divorce or separation in the family.
- Students moving to a new community.
- Students entering a new class.
- Students who exhibit excessive aggressive behavior.
- A group of students who are unable to resolve a conflict.
- Students living in a broken home.
- Students of migratory families.
- Students who seem to be involved in bullying situations

### **Counselling Process**

#### **First Step: Relationship Building.**

After a referral of a child, initial counselling shall be made for rapport building. This is when the counsellor exerts effort to establish a climate conducive to mutual respect, trust, free and open communication, and understanding, from the very start of the session.

#### **Second Step: Problem Identification and Exploration.**

To bring about proper problem identification and exploration, the counsellor should ensure that the following actions are taken:

- a. Define the Problem – describe or identify the problem as specifically and objectively as possible.
- b. Explore the Problem – identify the information needed to fully understand the problem, and how, by whom, and when this information can be obtained.
- c. Integrate the Information – all the information collected should be systematically organized into a meaningful profile of the counselee and the problem.

#### **Third Step: Planning for Problem Solving.**

At this point, it is good to identify a specific, pertinent, and attainable goal.

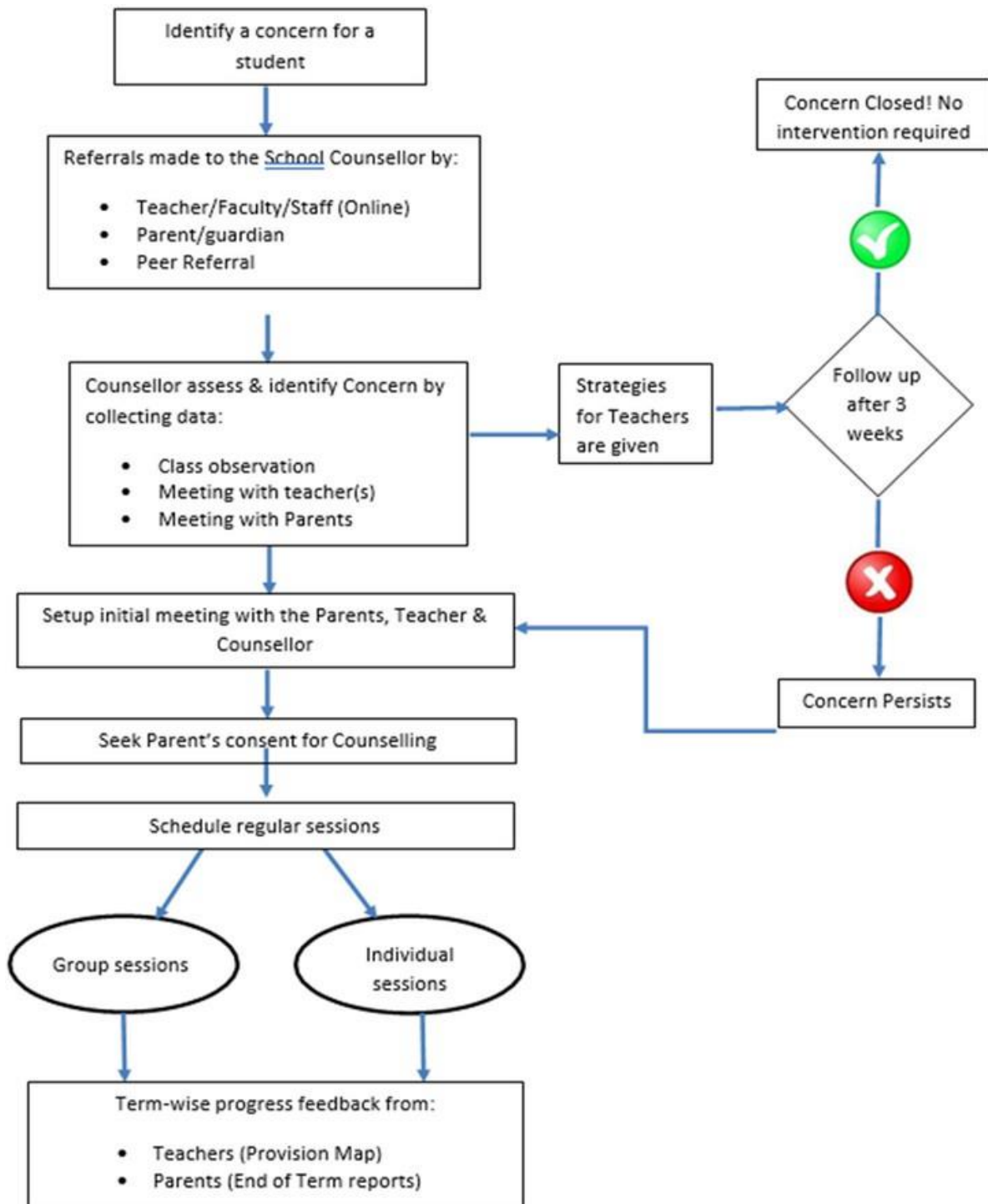
- a. Set the Goals – the counselee and the counsellor must also agree upon the goals to work toward.
- b. Identify and List All Possible Solutions – Brainstorming for possibilities, including those that seem useless or impossible, is done by the counselee.
- c. Explore the Consequences of the Suggested Solutions – It involves looking for ways to implement each solution and evaluating the possible outcomes.
- d. Prioritize the Solutions – From the remaining possibilities, the counselee prioritizes the solutions from the most likely to the least likely to produce the desired results. Once the decision is made on the best solution, the Counselee can move on to application and implementation.

#### **Fourth Step: Solution Application and Termination.**

Task distinction between the counselee and the counsellor should be clearly established: the counselee applies the chosen solution, and the counselor defines the point of termination.

Appendix F

Counselling Referral Procedure Flow Chart:



### **Guidelines for the department**

- Practices within the boundaries of individual professional competence.
- Adheres to ethical standards of the profession and relevant statutes established by the UAE government and regulatory organizations (KHDA).
- Maintains professional competence through educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills, and effectiveness.
- Maintains confidentiality of the students, staff, and parents at all times- including the protection of emotional information and record-keeping.
- Develop and maintain consistent and clear lines of communication with parents/guardians.
- Aim to provide counselling to students in a brief context and support students and families/guardians in obtaining outside services if the student needs long-term clinical counselling.
- Do not diagnose but remain acutely aware of how a student's diagnosis can potentially affect the student's academic success.
- Provide students with a comprehensive school counselling program that ensures equitable academic, career and social/emotional development opportunities for all students.
- Cooperate with all relevant stakeholders, including students, educators and parents/guardians when student assistance is needed, including the identification of early warning signs of student distress.
- Report to parents/guardians and/or appropriate authorities when students disclose a perpetrated or a perceived threat to their physical or mental well-being. This threat may include, but is not limited to, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, violence, bullying or sexual harassment.

### **Confidentiality and Record Keeping**

All counselling-related records are kept in a secure and private location. Access is granted to the SLTs and Counsellor. Each case referred to the counsellor is recorded and treated with confidentiality. Counselling records are kept separately from school records unless noted otherwise by school policy.

### **Parental consent/ access to counselling records**

Parents and guardians of students of grades 1- 8 will be notified if the counsellor is to provide individual/group counselling for their child. Counselling is voluntary and parents/carers reserve the right to consent to or decline counselling services for their child. Parents will not be granted access to counselling records, which are considered property of the counsellor/school. Parents/careers of all students will be notified immediately if there is any concern regarding the safety of their child.

### **Process for review and development**

The Counselling policy is reviewed every year to ensure that it is an accurate reflection of current practices at the school. The provision is monitored, and information records of students are updated and reviewed. School leadership team is consulted during the review

Appendix A

**STAFF REFERRAL FORM**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Section: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Area(s) of Concern:**

Personal / Social Development:

Peer Relationships  Family Relationships  Emotional Issues Other \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Development:

Grades  Attendance  Educational Planning Other \_\_\_\_\_

Career Development:

Decision-making  Exploration / Planning  Post-Secondary Options  Others

**Pre-Referral Intervention**

Strategies and Response to Intervention: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Referral: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Observable Behaviors: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Contacted" No  Yes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

**For School Counsellor Use Only:**

Informed Consent (attached):  Yes Date \_\_\_\_\_  No Action Plan Date:

Parent/Guardian  Contact  Group Counselling  Individual Counselling

School Nurse

Referral Outside Resource(s)  Special Services  Administrator Referral

Other

Follow-up with referring person Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

**STUDENT SELF-REFERRAL FORM (PRIMARY)**

Dear School Counsellor,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I am in Grade /Section \_\_\_\_\_ .

My teacher is \_\_\_\_\_ . My classroom number is \_\_\_\_\_ .

I need to talk with you about (Please tick the box):

- URGENT!!! Something private right away!!!
- The death of a person or a pet I love|
- A friend I am worried about
- My angry feelings
- How to get along better with friends/peers
- How to get along better with adults (parents/teachers)How to
- get along better with brothers and sisters How others are
- treating me
- Feeling better about myself
- Saying "NO!" and "STOP IT" when people want me to do things, I don't want to do My
- grades and schoolwork
- Planning now for the future
- Something else

Other comments \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Return this form to SEN DEPARTMENT . I will contact you as soon as possible. If you have indicated this is URGENT!!  
Return the form to a person in the department or your Class teacher or your Section Head.*

## Appendix C

**STUDENT SELF-REFERRAL FORM (PRIMARY)**

Dear School Counsellor,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I am in Grade /Section \_\_\_\_\_ .

My teacher is \_\_\_\_\_ . My classroom number is \_\_\_\_\_ .

I need to talk with you about (Please tick the box):

- URGENT!!! Something private right away!!!
- The death of a person or a pet I love
- A friend I am worried about
- My angry feelings
- How to get along better with friends/peers
- How to get along better with adults (parents/teachers)How to
- get along better with brothers and sisters How others are
- treating me
- Feeling better about myself
- Saying "NO!" and "STOP IT" when people want me to do things, I don't want to do My
- grades and schoolwork
- Planning now for the future
- Something else

Other comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix D

**PARENT/GUARDIAN REFERRAL FORM**

Urgent today!       As soon as possible       After the school counsellor and I talk

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Class Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Best times to reach me \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My child's strengths include \_\_\_\_\_

**My primary concern(s) (Check all that apply):**

- Something's wrong but I don't know what
- A loss (e.g. death of a person or pet, loss of a friendship, parents' divorce)
- Anger
- Perfectionism
- Relationships with friends/peers
- Relationships with adults (parents/teachers)
- Relationships with brothers/sisters
- How my child is treated by others
- Feelings of negativity, discouragement, self-doubt
- Unhealthy or unsafe choices
- Study skills, grades, and schoolwork
- Post-secondary options/Planning now for future

Other Concern (s)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional information regarding concern(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### **INFORMATION ABOUT COUNSELLING: Letter to Parent for Informed Consent**

Dear Parent,

If your child is referred to the school counsellor, the very word “counselling” may make it sound like a mysterious process, but it is not. Counselling is a relationship built on confidentiality and trust—student trust, parent trust, teacher trust. Adequate information is the foundation of trust—all involved must have information about the limits and processes of counselling. The following information describes the overall process of counselling.

**How does a student receive counselling at school?** Students may be referred to the School Counsellor (SC) for individual and/or small group counselling by their parents or guardians, school faculty, school staff, a concerned friend, or they may refer themselves. Once a referral is made the SC sets up a meeting with the referred student.

#### **Who provides the counselling at school?**

Counselling is provided by a certified School Counsellor (SC). The SC has a degree with an emphasis in School Counselling. School Counselling focuses on the academic development, Social/Emotional development, and career development of students.

#### **Is counselling required?**

It is your choice to give consent for your child to receive counselling. What will counselling for your child involve? Counselling may include small group or individual sessions. During the sessions, your child and an SC will work together to understand the problem, the present and future consequences, develop goals for change and a plan of action for change.

**How is the information shared?** Trust is the basis for effective counselling. TIAD emphasizes the importance of confidentiality between school counsellors and students at the same time recognizing the rights of parents. As a parent or guardian, you must trust that the SC will “take good care of” one of your most prized possessions. Your child must know and trust that what is shared with the counsellor will stay with the counsellor unless he or she permits to share information or if the counsellor suspects the child is in danger of being hurt by others, hurting himself, or hurting others.

**Confidentiality:** Trust and confidentiality work together. Counselling records do not become a part of the permanent record of the student except as required by schools’ designated Safeguarding Lead. All records prior to the safeguarding incident will be kept confidential. However, once a Cause of Concern form has been filled, all counselling records henceforth will be recorded and will be shared with the designated Safeguarding Lead. A record may indicate that a student was seen by the school Counsellor; nevertheless, the topics discussed are not included unless required by the Safeguarding Committee.

**Possible outcomes:** Through counselling, your child may be taught strategies to help him or her make more effective and healthier decisions, increase the ability to set and reach goals, build better relationships with others, and be more successful in school. We all must realize that changes take time; his or her problem did not develop overnight, nor will it disappear overnight. Counselling will be successful when students, school counsellors, teachers, and family members work together.

**Informed Consent Form**

**Cost:** There is no cost to you for any of the counselling your child receives as a part of TIAD’s Comprehensive School Counselling Program.

I have read and understand the information provided by the School Counsellor and have had an opportunity to ask questions about counselling.

- I consent for my child to participate in counselling. I understand that participation is completely voluntary, and that classroom requirements take precedence over participation in counselling.
  
- I do not consent for my child to participate in counselling.

I understand that this consent is effective for the current school year \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

Student First/Last Names (please print) and Grade /Section \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name and Signature and Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_