



CEDAR
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Counseling Protocol

Role of the school counselor:

The role of the school counselor is to develop, refine, and implement a comprehensive counseling program that supports the mission and vision of Cedar International School which supports all students in areas of academic development, social/emotional development, career development, and global development. Additionally, the school counselor aims to support teachers and parents with student development and achievement.

Counseling Methods:

First and foremost, effective counseling can only take place within the context of a trusting relationship. Therefore, it is essential for the school counselor to build trusting relationships and maintain a presence and availability throughout the school, among students, staff, and parents.

Counseling methods include a blend of three counseling approaches: a strength-based cognitive behavioral approach, a dialectical behavioral approach, and a solution-focused approach. The culmination of the three counseling methods build on one's strengths and inherent positive qualities, develops skills to apply those qualities to a larger context and other personal or interpersonal problems, and incorporates mindfulness strategies to aid in increased self-awareness and improved emotional regulation.

Individual Counseling:

The school counselor assists ALL children. While a counselor cannot provide on-going counseling, it may be appropriate for a student to receive short-term individual counseling. School counselors act as a referral agent, to assist parents/families in need of counseling services when additional attention and intervention is necessary. If a student requires ongoing counseling or therapy, a referral will be made to outside resources. (See referral list below)

Students can be referred to the counselor by parent, teacher, or administration. Students can also self-refer. If a staff member refers a student to be seen by the counselor, a referral form must be completed. The referral form identifies areas of concern, interventions/strategies used, and whether the parent(s) or guardian(s) have been contacted regarding the concern and referral. (See Appendix).

For primary students, the counselor will contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) once a referral is made via phone or email, unless there is a child protection issue. The counselor may observe the student in the classroom setting or arrange a time for 1:1 meetings with the student and/or parent(s) or guardian(s).

The counselor will maintain confidential records of student meetings and general topics covered.

Peer Mediation:

Peer mediation is a form of conflict resolution used to address student disagreements and low-level disciplinary problems. Peer mediation motivates students to resolve their conflicts collaboratively. Peer mediation motivates students to talk things out rather than fight things out.

Teachers or administrators can refer two or more students for peer mediation.

Small-Group Counseling:

The purpose of small group counseling is to complement and enhance student learning by improving their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. Small group counseling provides a safe setting where children, along with their peers, can increase their self-awareness and improve their cooperation and communication skills. During the group process, children learn from one another, giving them the skills necessary to adapt to life's changes. Every child can benefit from participating in a small group. Students may become involved in a small group through parent request, teacher or counselor suggestion, or by the students themselves.

Students are required to have parental permission to participate in all small groups. Letters describing the group process, along with a permission slip, are sent to parents. Students must return the permission form before they can participate.

Classroom Lessons:

Classroom guidance lessons are an integral part of the school counseling program and important to the academic success of all students. Guidance lessons include four domains: Career, Academic, Social/Emotional, and Global Perspectives. Large group lessons are preventative in nature, designed to reach all students, and are taught in the classroom regularly by the counselor. Teachers can request classroom guidance lessons at any time based on their classroom needs and/or curriculum. Classroom lessons can also be in response to a concern or particular dynamic within the classroom.

Classroom topics include, but are not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anger Management• Anxiety• Bullying• Careers• Communication Skills• Confidence/Risk-Taking• Conflict Resolution• Diversity• Empathy• Executive Functioning• Friendship Skills• Goal Setting• Good Sportsmanship• Gossip• Growth Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthy Choices• Kindness• Managing Stress/Anxiety• Mindfulness• Peer Pressure• Peer Relationships• Perseverance• Personal Safety• Personal Space• Role of the Counselor• Self-Esteem• Student Success Skills• Study Skills• Tattling• Test Taking Strategies
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Student Success Plan/Behavior Intervention Plan

A Student Success Plan or Behavior Intervention Plan may be developed as part of the intervention process, which will include input from all stakeholders (teacher, administration, counselor, support staff, parents, etc), as necessary. The counselor may have a role in student support or check-ins.

Education Passport:

Students identified with a social-emotional concern in their Education Passport will be provided on-going support from the school counselor. Individual, group, and/or classroom guidance may be provided.

Confidentiality:

All counseling sessions are private and confidential therefore only pertinent information will be shared with the teacher or staff member to enhance classroom management and/or educational planning for the student.

However, there are situations which may require information to be shared by the counselor to protect the safety and well-being of students:

- If a student presents verbal or behavioral threats dangerous to self or others, the parents, administration, faculty and staff will be advised and appropriate action will be taken.
- If a student is identified as a victim of abuse, the counselor will review the situation with the School Director and Child Protection Team to determine the appropriate action plan to comply with BVI law which mandates all suspected cases be reported to the Government's designated agencies: Social Development Department or BVI Police Department.

Child Protection Concerns:

The school counselor is a mandated reporter and must report suspected or known abuse or neglect. The counselor is a member of Cedar's Child Protection Team. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the counselor will follow Cedar's Child Protection Policy. (See Appendix: ***Cedar Child Protection Policy***)

Suicide Risk Assessment

If a student reports having suicidal ideation, suicidal intent, or a suicide attempt, including but not limited to self-harm, or a report is made by another individual on that student's behalf, the counselor will assess the student using a Suicide Risk Assessment and the Beck Depression Inventory.

If the risk level is moderate, high, or any level of clinical significance (Severe Depression), parents or law enforcement must transport the child to the emergency room for further evaluation (BVI Law).

Re-entry: Clearance from the hospital must be provided before the student is permitted to return to school. A re-entry meeting with the students and parent(s) or guardian(s) must take place prior to the student returning to classes for safety and support planning.

Safety & Support Planning: Staff will be provided information regarding the student's safety and support plan. Routine checks and observations will be made by the counselor during the first week the student returns. Ongoing support will be provided as needed.

Mental Health Resources:

Community Mental Health Glancina George Building Road Town Tortola British Virgin Islands VG1110 Tel: 1 284-494 3472 or 1 284-468-4525	Therapy 2 Thrive Psychological and Developmental Services Glancina George Building 3rd Floor Road Town Tortola British Virgin Islands VG1110 Tel: 1 284-542-9277	The Wellness Center Behavioral Health Tortola Pier Park Building #6 Road Town Tortola British Virgin Islands VG1110 Tel: 1 284-496-0838 www.twcbh.com
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Confidential School Counselling Referral Form

Date: _____ Referring Teacher: _____

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Reason(s) for Referral

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression | <input type="checkbox"/> Anger Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying-Victim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying- Bully | <input type="checkbox"/> Defiant | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Concerns | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Hygiene |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grief and Loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Nervous/Anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Relationship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive | <input type="checkbox"/> Inattentive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Injure (i.e. cutting) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Image/Self-Confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> Lying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Motivation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexually Acting Out |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homework Completion | <input type="checkbox"/> Always Tired | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scared | <input type="checkbox"/> Worried | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Have you informed the student about your intent to refer? Yes No

Have you informed the student's parent/guardian about your intent to refer Yes No

Student's strengths:

Explain reason(s) for referral:

Interventions/strategies used:

Best time & place to observe student during school (please be specific):

Time/Place 1: _____ Time/Place 2: _____

Best time to remove student from the classroom (please give a couple options-- Day/Time):

Cedar Child Protection Policy:

At Cedar, child protection is a priority and the responsibility of every staff member. A brief summary of Child Protection procedures appears below, but all staff should familiarize themselves with the full Child Protection Policy located here: <https://cedar.vg/resources>

SCHOOL STAFF ARE MANDATED REPORTERS

Mandated reporter must report under the following circumstances:

- A report should be made when there is reasonable cause for concern that a child may be at risk
- Reasonable cause to suspect a child who you see in your professional or official capacity has been abused (including neglected)
- When parent or legal guardian states from personal knowledge facts, conditions, or circumstances that would appear that child has been abused

IF IN DOUBT, REPORT IT

Any staff member who receives a disclosure of abuse, allegation or suspects abuse may have occurred will report it immediately to the lead or deputy Child Protection Officer (CPO)

- Director - Scott Crawford, Lead CPO
- School Counselor - Joey Wilson
- Head of Secondary - Zach Pascoe
- Head of Primary - Gemma Restell

If receiving disclosure;

- Listen to the child. Allow the child to tell what has happened in their own way, and at their own pace. Do not interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Remain calm. Be reassuring and supportive but endeavor to not respond emotionally.
- Don't ask leading questions. Staff are reminded to ask questions only when seeking clarification about something the child may have said. Use TED; Tell, Explain, Describe.
- Make an accurate record of what they have seen/heard using the schools record keeping processes, recording; people, times, dates or locations mentioned, using as many words and expressions used by the child as possible. Do not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names used by the child. Spell any words which are unclear phonetically.
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone; reassure the child that they have not done anything wrong. Explain to the child what will happen next and the need for the information to be shared with the CPO.

Procedure for staff expressing concerns or receiving disclosure:

- 1) Ensure child is in a safe place to receive support if necessary.
- 2) Initial report orally communicated to CPO comprising of a factual account (in child's own words verbatim) of incident and followed up with a referral form.
- 3) Immediately give the form to CPO by hand, signed and dated. All allegations of child abuse should be made to Royal Islands Police Force within 24 hours of initial report (by CPO).

Staff cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety. Do not attempt to investigate the allegation. All matters relating to child protection are to be treated as highly confidential, including within staff.