

The School Counselling Service



Helping Children and Schools
to Succeed Together



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Introduction

We offer a school counselling service tailored to fit the needs of your school. Your named school counsellor will work with you and your senior team to help meet the health and wellbeing needs of your school; act as a bridge between your SLT and staff; and reinforce your ethos while promoting your values.

The Vision

That every primary school in our region has affordable and sustainable access to the School Counselling Service allowing children and schools to succeed together.

The Mission

We will deliver the highest standard of therapeutic support to reduce mental ill health and increase mental wellbeing for the whole school community. We strive to increase pupil and parental engagement, improve attendance, significantly reduce risk of exclusions, and promote an overall improved culture of collaborative working.

The service provides a named school counsellor who will be with you for a full day each week working to:

- Reduce exclusions
- Increase engagement and attendance
- Provide a high level of therapeutic support
- Reduce the overall incidence of poor mental health
- Bespoke supervision for the designated safeguarding leads and members of your SLT

We will assist you in the delivery of a trauma informed and attachment aware approach. We are committed to providing a uniquely responsive and flexible model of working which Head Teachers tell us works.

"I have seen this service grow from its inception 6 years ago. Since then, the service has offered support to; children, staff, and parents. It has without doubt prevented exclusions, supported with referrals, improved behaviour, offered a sounding board to SLT, and most importantly improved the mental health of our whole school community. The team provide a service that I wouldn't be without because it supports so many aspects of school life."

Adam Breakwell, Executive Head Teacher, Orleton and Kimbolton Primary Schools.

We are not 'prescriptive'. We will not provide 6 sessions when only one or two are needed, nor will we not walk away after 6 sessions if a much longer period of support is needed, and the length of our sessions can be anything from an hour to a 10 minute check in.

We will be there to support the child, their family, staff, and your SLT, whilst working collaboratively with other involved partner agencies to ensure the best outcome.

If the situation changes and a safeguarding concern requires a more intensive approach, the counsellor will correspond with you, prioritising his or her caseload as appropriate.

An example of how our service works....

"We had a challenging incident occur during a whole class residential trip, we expected a significant level of child and parental concern. Having Libby available, we were able to use a restorative approach across the whole class on their return, having negotiated with other HTs to release Libby for a week of mornings, whilst still maintaining her caseload in other schools during the afternoon. The support was responsive, including a home visit. Children told us they felt supported and parental concerns were skilfully managed. As part of the package, a restorative approach with classmates and the school team was in place. Ultimately, a situation that could have resulted in a high level of parental complaints, pupil anxiety and a long exclusion was resolved swiftly with positive feedback from all stakeholders."

Adam Breakwell, Executive Head Teacher, Orleton and Kimbolton Primary Schools.



Who is in the Team?

Adam Breakwell

As an experienced executive Head Teacher for Orleton and Kimbolton Schools, Adam is well placed to oversee the service. With a solid background in Psychology (BSc Hons Psychology, specialising in Child Development and Research,) qualifications in coaching / mentoring and a well developed leadership role in safeguarding and supervision, Adam ensures the service is delivered with integrity and in line with the needs of our educational settings.

Libby Bevan

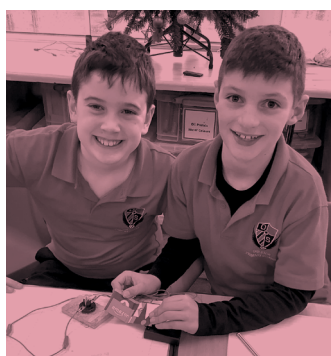
Libby, as Lead Counsellor, has worked closely with Adam over the past 6 years to develop a service which is tailored to the individual needs of a school. Libby is an experienced senior nurse, having worked for the NHS, in the private sector as an Occupational Health Specialist, and as a Practice Nurse. She is experienced in working with line management, supporting matters relating to health and wellbeing. As a qualified counsellor of 30 years, Libby is adept at securing therapeutic relationships with children in schools, helping them to negotiate their way through the education system.

She is committed to providing all children in primary schools across Herefordshire with access to an affordable provision of therapy using an integrated model of counselling support.

As a qualified clinical supervisor, Libby is also able to offer supervision for your staff should you wish.

Kerry Jones

Kerry is a qualified counsellor who joined the service 2 years ago. She worked with us while completing the training and development period required to work with the school counselling service. She now consistently and successfully manages a caseload of 8 children in each of her 5 schools. Kerry works enthusiastically with her school communities and can provide well assembled and user friendly feedback to her SLTs and relevant staff. Kerry is equally able to provide specific counselling support to staff where time allows.



What makes us different?

Most counselling services / talking therapies offer a long wait time, 6 sessions of planned intervention with little or no feedback to school. Often, referrals can be difficult to achieve, and a school left wondering what is happening...

We do not work like this!

Following receipt of a referral:

- Safeguarding / urgent requests will be supported quickly if school counsellor is on site. The counsellor or lead counsellor will aim to be available should you need to discuss.
- Following receipt of the completed referral and consent forms, children will be seen within 2 weeks for assessment.
- Your school counsellor will be available to discuss referrals at any point.
- Interventions will be tailored to the needs of the child and the individual situation.
- Some concerns benefit from an in-class observation and liaising with classroom / other staff. We can provide this.
- We are available to provide 'one-off' interventions with children.
- We are available to work with children for the duration of their time in your school.
- We can work with all members of school staff, parents, and other partners involved with the child / family.
- The School Counsellor can, with notice, be available to participate in other professional meetings, i.e. TAF, and assist with Early Help Assessments. How you use the time allocated to you each week is at the discretion of yourself as Head Teacher and the school counsellor.
- The Lead Counsellor can be available to provide supervision for staff in your school and to provide advice at a higher level if needed.
- The school counsellor will become a member of your school team and as such can be your listening ear when you need it, your eyes on the ground where helpful and can regularly feedback to you as Head Teacher on topics such as staff wellbeing.
- Knowing that your staff have access to feedback at the point of service delivery is felt to be incredibly useful for teaching staff. We aim to do this whilst on site.
- Our counsellors are trained in the use of 'myconcern' as a safeguarding tool and will comply with all relevant safeguarding policies.

All this at an affordable level!

Where can we work?

We are currently working in schools in Herefordshire.

We are now ready to grow the team and are seeking two school counsellors ready to land in their own schools in September '24.

5. What can we offer?

Following receipt of a referral:

- Access to an affordable professional team of counsellors working under the directorship of a Head Teacher who understands the challenges of leading in education, the School Counsellor will deliver a bespoke package of mental health and wellbeing support to your whole school community.
- The knowledge that our counsellors are qualified to a minimum of level 5 and have undertaken the required training to work as a School Counsellor in your school.
- Your own School Counsellor who will work with you and your team to reduce the risk of exclusions, assist in raising attendance, support safeguarding whilst actively providing tailored integrated counselling support for your children and staff if needed.
- A professional who can work successfully alongside your Senior Leadership Team in developing further your whole school approach to good mental health and wellbeing practice, be your listening ear when needed, and help to deliver the right messages throughout your school.
- Supervision from the Lead Counsellor is available to you and your teams if needed.



How much does it cost?

Having already been trusted to work with 11 local Primary Schools, we aim to expand further, aspiring to support all local primary school children.

We want to be the affordable choice, providing you with a counsellor who will become one of you, a team member who will develop relationships with your workforce, assisting you in your capacity as Head Teacher, to deliver the service you need.

The costings for the next academic year (a 6-hour working day) are £5562.53. This equates to £185.00/child when looking at 30 children being supported in any one academic year.

This cost includes any additional training, the counsellor's clinical supervision, planning and preparation time, staff management, IT support and equipment and of course, insurance.

**Any additional hours worked will be charged at £22/hour and agreed between yourself and your school counsellor.

What do we need from you?

All we ask from you is a commitment, the desire to work with us for a whole academic year (and hopefully for much, much longer.)

We believe this will give the right amount of time for you to be able to measure results in whichever way you choose to do so. This could be around exclusions, attendance, and referral rates, SLT time saved or perceptions through staff, parent, and student surveys. Whichever method you choose we are sure you will see results that offer value for money.



Testimonials

"Libby is an essential part of our school; her work has direct impact on children's wellbeing and their academic outcomes. What this service gives is what we all need for our schools; a highly professional specialist who is responsive to the needs of our children. Referrals are simple, session length and times can vary, all ages can be supported, and all of this is responsive to your needs. School, parents and Libby work together to make a difference."

Claire McKeown, Head at St. Thomas Cantilupe, Hereford.

"The ability to have ruffled feathers smoothed, parental concerns listened to, and children able to have access to an affordable and accessible therapy service is so beneficial for our school, having a colleague to download to is immeasurable."

Wellbeing team Ludlow Primary.

"The School Counselling Service has been invaluable to the children and staff of Bishop's Castle Primary School. From the outset, our school counsellor, Kerry Jones, has demonstrated an understanding of the unique needs of each of the children that she supports. Her empathetic and compassionate approach has created a safe space for open communication, fostering trust and confidence. Each week, the children look forward greatly to their sessions with Kerry, giving them an opportunity to talk openly about how they are feeling as well as providing effective coping strategies for when they are finding things difficult.

Alongside this, the supervision offered by Libby Bevan has been excellent. During these sessions, the emphasis is on creating a supportive and non-judgmental space, where open and honest discussions can take place. This has been crucial in developing a deeper awareness of my own practice and its impact, leading to continuous improvements in my safeguarding efforts. Libby has shown a genuine commitment to understanding the unique challenges within my school context, offering insightful perspectives and practical strategies to help navigate challenging and complex situations."

Katie Froggatt, Head of School, Bishops Castle Primary.

"Kerry joined us last year on a weekly basis and it has helped transform our approach to well-being in both schools. The referral process is straight forward and we meet weekly to prioritise cases across both schools. Kerry is great at listening and quickly builds a rapport with children of all ages. She has helped improve attendance for individuals and the children that receive her support are managing to flourish academically too. Kerry gives children tools to help them cope with anxiety and any issues that may be affecting their mental health.

The benefit of having the counselling in school weekly is that between us we can decide how many sessions a child will receive, this can be flexible depending on the need. This far outweighs organising an external agency (that could take months) for just 6 sessions when we know they will need more to support them going forwards. We consider Kerry to be an integral member of our family at both schools and see the service as invaluable"

Mish Lewis, Executive Head Teacher, St. Michael's and Burley Gate.

When asked, Deputy Head Teachers who have been using our service for at least 3 years have told us that

- *"Having our own school counsellor has helped us identify issues 'on the ground'" before they happen by having the means to positively listen to our staff. This allows us to take more meaningful positive steps more quickly."*
- *"The counsellor is in a unique position to reinforce the culture they as Heads, want to see across the school."*
- *"Our counsellors develop positive working relationships with the families they support. As such, they hold significant knowledge about the child / family. This often means referrals can be completed quicker which leads to a reduced overall workload and teacher stress."*

And finally...

Our team are proud and privileged to work in primary schools. The opportunity to work closely with School Leaders to affect change is immensely rewarding.

Much of the work we engage in is with pupils who have either high level or complex needs, and as such we too value the chance to learn from our experiences as key members of the school team.

If you would like to find out more about us or to arrange a visit to your school, please do not hesitate to contact Adam or Libby at Orleton Primary School.

Our school office number is **01568 780366** and we will call back.

Or alternatively you are more than welcome to email us on:

abreakwell@orleton.hereford.sch.uk

lbevan@orleton.hereford.sch.uk

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