



CO-ORDINATOR  
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Further Education Centre  
The Neale Road  
Ballinrobe  
Co. Mayo

## Counselling Policy at Ballinrobe Youthreach

Counselling is an interactive process between counsellor and student, which address in a holistic way, personal, educational and/or vocational issues. Moreover, the availability of a counselling service can support individual students inside/outside the classroom context, the pastoral and the disciplinary structures in the school. Competitiveness, bullying, social exclusion, family crisis, scholastic under-achievement, abuse, homophobia, peer pressure, substance mis-use and racism are some of the problems which can be assisted with the support of counselling. Counselling at Ballinrobe Youthreach facilitates meaningful understanding of the self and environment and/or clarification of goals and values for future behaviour.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All students have a right to confidentiality in their dealings with the counsellor. The right is not universal, however, and there are some cases in which - for the student's best interest - confidentiality cannot be guaranteed e.g. in the case of abuse, bullying, and risk to another student's life. In counselling the student, the counsellor should make the student aware that confidentiality could not be guaranteed in any of the above cases and that information of this nature would have to be referred on to the Co-ordinator or designated person for Child Protection at the centre. In short, students who meet with the counsellor will be informed of the following:

- 1) All things discussed are confidential between the student and the counsellor except when the student himself or another person is at risk.
- 2) Any information which highlights that the student or another person is in danger.
- 3) If the student is in danger of doing grievous harm to himself/herself.





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## **ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Ethical awareness is a prerequisite for the counsellor. He/she is obliged to operate, in policy, process and practice in an ethical manner.

The counsellor's primary focus is the welfare of the student and he/she is ethically bound to act in the best interest of the student. The counsellor must act within the law and within the ethical guidelines as outlined by his/her profession. The counsellor is expected to be competent in and mindful of the legal and ethical responsibilities of his/her work.

### **Referrals:**

In the first instance, every student is introduced to the counsellor for an initial contact and possible assessment.

The student can then self-refer after the initial contact if they feel the need.

The counsellor may suggest that further intervention is needed following the assessment.

If an incident occurs either inside or outside the centre that requires short term intervention then the staff may suggest to the student that counselling is a positive option.

It may be a requirement in order for a student to maintain his/her place in the centre that they engage in counselling.

### **Record Keeping:**

The counsellor carries out his/her work using the following methodologies;

- One to one sessions in an informal manner
- The documentation of relevant content of each session takes place.
- Hand written observations

All information gathered will be kept in a safe, secure location under the safe keeping of the counsellor.





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