



**BLOOM WORLD
ACADEMY**

Reference Number

BWA-09

Counselling Policy	
Audience and coverage	School Community
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Owner	Nicola Upham, Principal – Primo & Junior School and Well-being & Development
Reviewer	John Bell, Executive Principal 



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1. Aim

Bloom World Academy (BWA) considers this policy to be:

- an essential part of the school;
- supportive to staff and students in managing certain situations;
- an important framework that will ensure consistency in applying values and principles throughout the establishment;
- a roadmap for day-to-day operations;
- compliant with laws and regulations, gives guidance for decision-making, and streamlining internal processes;
- designed to influence and determine all major decisions, actions and all activities taking place within the boundaries set by them;
- aligned to the school's guiding statements and identified goals which are formed in strategic leadership meetings.

2. Statement of intent

BWA believes this policy to be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, mission and vision, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the relevant UAE legislation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all *stakeholders*

4. Unique definitions

A shared understanding of the following definitions are integral to the implementation of this policy, and as such staff should endeavour to use the correct terminology at all times.

5. Processing and practice

The follow narrative is explicit in its guidance, consistency, accountability, efficiency, and clarity on how the school operates with regard to Clinic procedures and medical information

The goal of our school counselling program is to offer an inclusive and well-rounded approach to student support and development that aligns with the school's mission and goals. Our program is designed to support and nurture the academic, personal, wellbeing, and social growth of every student through a range of counselling services and guidance. Our program also prioritises inclusivity, equity, and accessibility for all students with the aim of helping them reach their full potential and succeed in life after school. By providing comprehensive and



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holistic support, we aim to empower students to overcome their challenges and thrive in their academic and personal lives.

Early Intervention and Prevention: The school counselling program emphasises the importance of early identification and intervention for students who may be experiencing emotional, behavioural, or academic challenges. This includes regular screenings, teacher referrals, and self-referrals, which help identify issues early on and provide timely support.

Consent will be obtained from the parents or guardians of the student before on-going counselling services begin where a referral is made from another member of staff. Emergency check-ins and crisis interventions do not require parent consent. Students who self-refer do not require parental consent. Parents/guardians will be updated as necessary following confidentiality/safeguarding protocol.

Services provided by the counsellor

- **Individual Sessions:** The school counsellor uses a variety of methods and techniques during individual sessions with students. These sessions allow students to express themselves through various mediums such as drawing, writing, singing, playing, reading stories, using worksheets, or talking. The counsellor may also focus on teaching specific skills, such as deep breathing for anxiety, or role-playing exercises to help students practice dealing with difficult situations such as problems with friends or having a hard conversation. Sessions will be tailored around the students' individual needs including creating healthy relationships with devices if any concerns have been raised regarding addiction e.g. social media. All of these techniques are rooted in evidence-based psychological interventions that our school counsellors are fully trained to deliver.
- **Group Counselling:** Counselling groups are held with multiple students who may be experiencing similar problems or issues. Being in a group setting can be beneficial as it allows students to build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experiences. Group counselling can also provide a sense of support and encouragement for students as they work through their challenges.
- **Workshops:** The school counselling program addresses various issues faced by students of different ages by designing and implementing workshops that provide students with the skills and techniques they need to navigate their lives and the world around them. These workshops aim to empower students with the knowledge and tools they need to address and overcome the challenges they may be facing.
- **Training:** The counselling program also offers teachers and administrators opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills related to counselling. Staff are trained in counselling policies and practices, how to identify indicators of student concerns, and how best to support the counselling needs of our students. This training helps ensure that all staff members are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively support and serve the counselling needs of our students.



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- Whole-school approach: The school counselling service operates within a comprehensive, whole-school framework that integrates mental health promotion, prevention, and targeted intervention across all levels of the school community. By embedding emotional wellbeing into daily school culture, routines, and policies, the counselling department ensures that every student develops key resilience factors while receiving the appropriate intensity of support.
- Risk assessment and management: Counsellors will follow systematic risk assessment and management protocols whenever a student presents indicators of acute distress, risk to self, risk to others, risk from others, or other vulnerabilities. Each intervention requires a written safety plan, objective documentation completed within 24 hours and stored separately from academic records on CPOMS, and appropriate actions to best meet the student's needs.

Session Allocation and Location

Counselling sessions will be scheduled in a manner that ensures the best possible outcome for the student. The frequency of sessions will depend on the individual needs of the student, with most sessions being held on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The maximum number of sessions is generally set at 12, but exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

The counselling sessions will take place in the counselling office, in the Integra department, on the first floor.

Confidentiality

Counsellors are trained in child protection procedures and always follow them. It is best practice to have a clear contract with students that explains the limits of confidentiality in the school counselling service. This helps students trust the counsellor, feel comfortable sharing their feelings, and encourages others to seek counselling.

All students have a right to confidentiality. This means that the information shared during sessions will be kept private between the student and relevant personnel mentioned below. All counselling sessions will be documented and accessible by members of the Safeguarding and Counselling team on CPOMS.

When a student is deemed to be at risk of harm to themselves, to others or from others, or is presenting with additional needs or vulnerabilities, further action may be necessary. This will be decided by the Principal – Well-being and Development, with the involvement of external agencies such as KHDA/CDA where necessary. Information will be shared with the parent or caregiver where appropriate.



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6. Roles and responsibilities

With regard to implementation of this policy roles and responsibilities are clearly stated below:

Role of Principal – Responsible for Well-being and Development

- Meet regularly with the school counsellor to discuss key students and necessary interventions
- Plan and co-ordinate workshops and sessions with external providers where required
- Work closely with the school counsellor to establish connections with outside organisations and resources that can aid in the counselling process.

Role of the Counsellor

- Facilitate individual and group counselling, as well as crisis counselling to provide emotional support and guidance. These sessions may focus on a wide range of issues, such as self-image, addiction, confidence, stress, anxiety, depression, relationship problems, family issues, and academic concerns. To help students understand their feelings, develop coping strategies, and navigate difficult situations. During these sessions, counsellors use a variety of techniques, such as active listening, reflection, and guidance to help students understand their feelings and develop coping strategies.
- Work alongside the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure all vulnerable students are supported and have access to counselling support.
- In addition to regular counselling sessions, school counsellors may also provide crisis counselling to students in urgent situations. This may include situations such as a sudden loss of a loved one, a traumatic event, or a mental health emergency. In these situations, counsellors provide immediate emotional support and guidance to help students cope with the crisis and make appropriate referrals for further support if necessary.
- Help build students' social-emotional development. Give presentations to students on topics such as effective communication, conflict resolution, addiction and stress management. These presentations can help students develop important skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.
- Provide psychoeducation to students, teachers, and parents. This may include providing information on mental health disorders, addiction, difficulties, and other issues that may affect students' well-being. School counsellors can also provide guidance on how to identify and address these issues, and make appropriate referrals to outside resources if necessary.
- Work with parents to support their children's well-being. They may involve holding workshops and presentations for parents to teach them strategies on how to best deal with their children's needs and wellbeing.
- Work closely with members of the school leadership team (SLT) to develop individual and grade-based plans to address the specific needs of students.
- Support staff wellbeing and help staff to support students with wellbeing concerns.
- Support the delivery of the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) pathway.



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Role of the teachers:

- Collaborate with the counsellor to assess and track student progress and well-being. This enables the school to offer a comprehensive approach to student support and development as they can provide valuable insights into their academic and personal development.

Role of the parents:

- By working closely with counsellors, parents are provided with the resources and knowledge necessary to support their child's emotional, social, and developmental growth. The program encourages parent participation through various means, such as workshops and opportunities for consultation, to ensure the successful outcome of counselling efforts.
- Maintain clear communication with the school, particularly by raising concerns and keeping the school informed about their child's mental health and wellbeing at home.

Role of the community:

- The school may refer students to external specialists for specialised therapy as necessary. If a student is facing ongoing mental health issues or family problems, they may be referred to outside professionals or clinics for comprehensive assessment and assistance. While the school can suggest preferred providers, the final decision of which agency or practitioner to use is left to the discretion of the individuals or their parents seeking assistance. Any additional costs for specialised support will be the responsibility of the parents.
- Common specialists that may be involved in supporting students include healthcare agencies (such as GP's, psychiatrists, and mental health specialists), therapy services (such as child psychology, occupational therapy, and speech therapy), and educational psychologists (for assessments and diagnosis).

7. Associated documentation

When implementing a policy consideration must be given to how it aligns and supports other policies. To ensure consistency this policy is fully aligned with the following key policies:

- Safeguarding
- Student Well-being policy

8. Training implications

This policy will be shared with all BWA academic and administrative staff in the staff handbook. Staff will be trained and /or refreshed at the start of each academic year – during the annual BWA induction week. For new joiners they will be walked through the policy by the Principal during their induction period.



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9. Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children as the safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to everyone in this school. We work hard to create a culture of vigilance and at all times we will ensure what is best in the interests of all children.

We believe that all children have the right to be safe in our society. We recognise that we have a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by creating a positive school atmosphere through our teaching and learning, pastoral support and care for both students and school personnel, training for school personnel and with working with parents. We teach all our children about safeguarding.

We work hard to ensure that everyone keeps careful watch throughout the school and in everything we do for possible dangers or difficulties. We want all children to feel safe at all times. We want to hear their views of how we can improve all aspects of safeguarding and from the evidence gained we put into place all necessary improvements.

Online Safety and Digital Well-being: As part of our safeguarding responsibilities, the school counselling program incorporates guidance on digital well-being, helping students navigate online environments safely and responsibly. Counsellors provide education on topics such as cyberbullying, digital footprint, and privacy settings to empower students in their digital interactions.

10. Equity Impact Assessment

We have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of staff or student and it helps to promote equality at this school.