



مدرسة كامبردج انترناشيونال
Cambridge International School, Dubai

COUNSELOR'S POLICY

NAME OF POLICY	COUNSELOR'S POLICY
APPROVED BY	Principal
LAST REVIEW DATE	February 2025
NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2027
RELATED POLICIES	



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COUNSELOR'S POLICY

1. Introduction:

The counseling program at Cambridge International School (CIS), Dubai is designed to assist your child in making the most of his or her educational experience. This comprehensive program refers to a sequential, developmental program designated to benefit all the students in the preparations of their future. Such a program includes a curriculum organised around three areas essential for a students' growth and development from the Foundation Stage up to the Sixth Form. These three key areas are Academic Development, Emotional-social development and Career/Personal Development.

In the school counseling 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 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, group sessions and /or classroom instructions. The program is designed to meet the needs of our students at each stage of their growth.

Vision: GEMS Cambridge International School, Dubai is an inspiring and inclusive community hub leading global citizens.

Mission: Happy, safe and exceeding our potential.

2. Counseling Mission Statement:

Cambridge International School, Dubai's Counseling 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, CIS ensures that all the students are encouraged and motivated to reach their full and true potential by providing a comprehensive school counseling program that values the individuality and respects differences of each student and nurtures them to enhance their educational, academic, career, emotional and social needs.

3. Aim of the School Counseling Policy:

The aim of CIS's counseling policy is to provide a framework of procedures for the 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 and 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 and Wellbeing of the next generation of students.
- Be empowered and encouraged to grow in an environment of compassion and equality.



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4. Guidelines for the department

The school counselor(s):

- Practice 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.
- Inform students, teachers and parents of the purposes, processes and goals of counseling at or before the time when the counseling relationship is entered.
- Maintain 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.

Partners:

Administrators: (include the Principal, Vice-principal and non-teaching staff) support the counseling program in numerous ways, including implementing and upholding policies and procedures. Together with the school counselor(s), they develop partnership with resources in the community that contribute to the counseling process.

Teachers are valuable resources as they spend most of the time with the students and are to provide key information and feedback, which informs the counseling process. As such, teachers work closely with counselors to assess and monitor students' progress and well-being. Various opportunities are provided through which students can benefit from the school counseling program such as group counseling and workshop, in addition to self-referrals.

Parents / guardians work in partnership with school counselors to help their students be successful in school. The school counseling program ensures that parents are given the tool to help their student with his/her developmental, emotional and social needs. Parent / guardian support is vital to the success of all counseling endeavors.

Community members such as psychologists, psychiatrists, other medical and university / educational professionals' partner with the school in a variety of ways, providing workshops, assessments and consultations that contribute to students' development.

5. Confidentiality

All the students are entitled to confidentiality. This means that the information they bring to the session will be held in confidence between themselves and the counselor. Information will not be shared unless the young person has agreed to it. The counselor will, however, state that they may need to break confidentiality should they deem the young person at significant risk of harm to themselves or others. At this point, information may need to be shared with another party, either within the school e.g. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or within an appropriate referral to an outside agency. Counselors are aware of the Child Protection procedures and always adhere to those.



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Information about Counseling - Parental consent & feedback Appendix D

Parents and guardians of students will be notified if the counselor is to provide individual / group counseling for their child. Counseling is voluntary and parents – guardians reserve the right to consent to or decline the counseling services for their child. Parents will not be granted access to counseling records, which are considered the property of the counselor / school. Parents / guardians of all students will be notified immediately if there is any concern regarding the safety of their child and will receive end of term feedback during the PTC sessions. In case of Safeguard issue, the DSL may suggest to parents a few sessions of counseling for the student's social, emotional, behavioral and/or academic growth. In such cases, it is best assumed that parents will agree to this service for the benefit of their child.

In summary - We may contact you regarding your children for, but not limited to the following:

- Assistance needed in specific areas to help child achieve success in school
- Concern regarding your child's emotional well-being or behavioral issue
- Schedule conference at the request of the teacher
- Excessive absences

6. Services provided

The counseling program targets three main areas of development: Academic, Social & Emotional and Career Development.

Academic Development

- 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.

Emotional Development

- Understand self as an individual and as a member of diverse local & global communities.
- Interact with others in ways that respect individual and group differences
- Apply Personal and safety skills and coping strategies.

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

Individual Sessions:

The school counselor(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 deeper breathing for anxiety. Other times, we work on role-playing situations, such as a problem with a friend or having a difficult conversation. Sessions may be for a period of 4 to 6 weeks, in special cases for a longer period of time.

At times, the Lead counselor may require to be in touch with the external specialists to whom they are referred to and this with the parental consent.





Group Counseling:

Such sessions are held with multiple students experiencing similar problems or issues. It can

be helpful for them to be in a counseling group together. Group counseling helps students build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experience. Sessions may be for a period of 4 to 6 weeks, in special cases for a longer period of time.

Workshops:

The school counseling program (with the help of the Mental Health First Aid ambassadors) 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 counseling program offers teachers and administrators various opportunities to expand their scope of practice to include counseling. Staff are aware of counseling policies and practices, how to identify indicators for student concern and how best to serve the counseling needs of our students.

In summary -

The following specific activities are offered by the counseling program at CIS:

- Periodic classroom presentations related to positive, personal growth and development.
- Individual and group counseling
- Facilitation of Parent/Teacher/Student conferences
- Provide appropriate and current information on education planning and careers
- Consultation services concerning the growth and development of students.

7. Referral process and feedback (for Staff) Appendix A

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 counselor recognizes the contribution of all members of the school community in the identification of early warning signs. Throughout the referral process, the student counselor consults and collaborates with teachers, parents, administrators, other school staff, and / or outside agencies on behalf of the student. A formal referral system facilitates gathering and analyzing information systematically and objectively to plan for the students' social/emotional, academic and career development. To maintain a relationship with the individuals involved in the referral process, it is recommended that the student counselor lead follows up with the referring individual, stating that the situation had been addressed.

A referral is made to the Lead school counselor 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 – through the online referral process.

Emergency interventions are required in those situations that need immediate attention (i.e. peer concern about the emotional safety or another student, death of a family member or a pet and abuse or neglect family member and abuse). The student counselor may determine that other resources would be appropriate, including referral to other individuals within the



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school, such as the school nurse or the student mentors (assuring pastoral care). An outside referral may be necessary when a concern presented is beyond the scope, training, and/or expertise of the student counselor(s). In the case of suspected abuse or neglect, the referrer is required to report on Guard and inform the Designated Safeguard Lead.

8. Counseling Referral Procedure Flowchart – Appendix E

9. Criteria for students to access the school counseling services

The counseling services help to increase the student's learning potential inside the classroom. Teachers and parents are the key people in the recognition of counseling services for each child. Only through this combined team effort can the school's teaching goals be pursued.

The following should be considered “emergency referrals” and referred immediately:

- Suspected evidence of child abuse, physical and / or mental
- A child who cries 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: Appendix A & C

- Any child who requests to see a counselor
- Students who need individual help beyond the time permitted in the classroom
- Students with Learning Difficulties
- Students having difficulty with special relationships
- Students demonstrating observable changes in behavior that cannot be accounted for by the teacher.
- Students whose parents request counseling
- Students who are antisocial
- Students who are constantly late for school or with their work
- Students which frequent complaints of hurts 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

A staff member, parent should refer: Appendix A & C

- 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 country
- Students entering a new class / school
- Students who exhibit excessive aggressive behavior
- A group of students who are unable to resolve a conflict
- Students living in broken home
- Students of migratory families
- Students who seem to be involved in bullying situations



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A student may wish to self-refer: Appendix B

- Student may have experienced bullying
- Student may have family issues
- Students may have friendship issues
- Student may have experienced death of a person or a pet
- Student may be worried of a peer / friend
- Student may experience difficulties to connect with adults, siblings or peers
- Student being mistreated
- Student having difficulties to say “No”
- Student may experience poor grades
- Student may be worried for his/her future
- Student may be worries about something else

10. Counseling Support Design Appendix E

Tier 1 – Universal support

- **Comprehensive** (open access to well-being support and resources for all staff and students)
- **Developmental** (Mental Health Awareness for all staff, students & parents through coffee mornings, Friday Family Facts newsletter and Counselor’s Corner Newsletter)
- **Preventive** (Share well-being resources with staff for students to work on regular basis, CPD done or worksheets shared by our MHFA ambassadors)
- **Proactive** (on request 2-3 group support sessions for students with similar concerns; after teachers have secured consent from parents for the same with specific reasons stated as per their observations)

Tier 2 – Targeted Support

- Progress monitoring
- Regular and on-request consultations with teachers and parents
- Collaboration with teachers for class recommendations
- Referrals to in-school support systems (HOYs, Pastoral Team, Student Mentors and MHFA ambassadors)

Tier 3 - Intensive Support

- 1:1 dedicated counseling session with the School Counselors (max of 6-8 sessions)
- Regular meetings and progress related consultations with Teachers and Parents.

Tier 4 – External Support

- Referral to external agencies for extensive support after exploring the intervention made available within school or for high-risk cases. (Lead Counselor to be in touch with these external agencies to monitor adequate support, monitor progress, any changes of medication, etc... with the parents’ approval).

11. Links to other policies

- * Safeguard / child protection policy
- * Health and Safety Policy
- * Inclusion Policy





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- * Health and wellbeing Policy
- * Anti-bullying policy
- * Behavior Policy
- * Online safety Policy

12. Monitoring arrangements

The school's arrangements for managing access to education and training providers for students are monitored by Mr Padmanabhan- School Operation Manager & Ms Suzie Hachez – Lead Counselor.

This policy will be reviewed by Ms Suzie Hachez – Lead Counselor with the help of Ms Jattley-School Counselor - Primary.

At every review, the policy will be approved by Ms Steve Becken – Principal & CEO



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Appendix A

Counseling Referral FORM - STAFF

STUDENT INFORMATION	
Name of Student:	Home Language:
Class:	Referral Date:
Form Tutor:	Date of Birth:

CONTACT DETAILS OF PARENTS	
Name of Parent:	Name of Parent:
Email ID:	Email ID:
Telephone Number:	Telephone Number:

Has the parent been informed about the student being referred to the Counseling Department – Yes/No

Please tick appropriate areas of concern

Behaviour	Social	Emotional	Any other, Please specify

The problem appears to be:

- Achieving in school
- Financial / money
- Health
- Peer pressure
- Safeguarding
- Conflict resolution
- Making an educational choice
- Friendship
- Physical abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Mental abuse
- Other: _____

Detailed reason for referral: *(Elaborate giving all possible details)*



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Strategies put in place for 2-3 weeks (*Explain what worked well and what did not*)

Classroom behavior observed: All the students seem to be working well with each other.

Name of Referee:

Signature of Referee:

HOY/ HOS observations:

Signature of HOY/ HOS:

Date:

DATA

CAT4		
	SAS	Stanine
Verbal		
Quantitative		
Spatial		
Nonverbal		



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PASS								
Feelings about school	Perceived Learning Capability	Self - regard as a learner	Preparedness for learning	Attitude to teachers	General work ethic	Confidence in learning	Attitudes in attendance	Response to curriculum demands

Kindly fill in all the details and send this document via **email on**
suzie.h_cis@gemsedu.com



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Appendix – B

STUDENT SELF-REFERRAL FORM

Dear School Counsellor,

My name is: _____ & I am in **Year/Section:** _____

My teacher is: _____ **My classroom no 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 for the future Something else
- Something else (I will tell you when I see you)

Other comments: _____

Signed _____

Date: _____

Return this form to the **Lead Counselling Room No 125** (2nd floor) to **Ms Suzie** or to your Head of YEAR. I will contact you as soon as possible. If you have indicated this is URGENT!! Check your mail or your Upstrive chat box.



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Appendix C

PARENT/GUARDIAN REFERRAL FORM

School Counsellor is available for students, parents, faculty and staff by appointment. Please call 04 282 4646, or email suzie.h_cis@gemsedu.com to schedule an appointment.

I am requesting that the School Counsellor talk with my child:

Urgent—today! As soon as possible During break or lunch time

Student's Name; _____ **Year /Section:** _____

Class teacher / Learning Manager: _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Phone _____ **Best times to call:** _____ AM / _____ PM

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
- Options Concerns / Planning for future
- Other Concern(s) Additional information regarding concern(s)

Return this form through admin to Counselling Office room 125. I will contact you as soon as possible.



Appendix D

Information About Counseling Support:

Letter to parents for informed Consent

Dear Parents,

If your child is referred to the school counselor, the very word “Counseling” may make it sound like a mysterious process, but it is not. Counseling 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 counseling. The following information describes the overall process of counseling.

How does a student receive counseling at school?

Students may be referred to the school counselor (SC) for individual and/or small group counseling by their parents/guardians, school faculty, school staff, DSL, 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 counseling at school?

Counseling is provided by a certified school counselor (SC) who has a degree with an emphasis in School Counseling. School counseling focuses on the academic, social / emotional and carrier development of students.

Is Counseling required?

It is your choice to give consent to your child to receive counseling services or not. In the case of Safeguard or referral by DSL or SLT, this consent can be revoked. What will counseling for your child involve? Counseling may include small group or individual sessions. During these sessions, your child and a 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 counseling. GEMS CIS emphasises on the importance of confidentiality between school counselors and students at the same time recognizing the rights of parents. As parents / guardian, you must trust that the SC will “take good care of” your child. He/she must know and trust what is shared with the counselor will stay with the counselor unless he or she gives permission to share information or if the counselor suspects the child is in danger of being hurt by others, hurting himself or hurting others.

Confidentiality:

Trust and confidentiality work together. Counseling records do not become a part of the permanent record of the student except as required in certain cases by law. All records prior to the safeguard incident will be kept confidential. However, once a Cause for Concern form





has been filled in, all counseling records will be kept with the School Counselor Lead. A record may indicate that a student was seen by the school counselor; nevertheless, the topic discussed is not included unless required by a court case. The counselor may talk with the classroom teacher about how he/she can help your child in the classroom, however, specific information will not be shared.

Possible Outcomes:

Through counseling, your child may be taught strategies to help him / 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 / her problem did not develop overnight, nor will it disappear overnight. Counseling will be successful when students, school counselors, teachers and family members as well as external agents work together.

Cost:

There is no cost to you for any of the counseling your child receives as part of GEMS CIS Comprehensive School Counseling Program.

I have read and understood the information provided by the school counselor and have had an opportunity to ask questions about counseling services.

Frequency of the sessions:

A student may be required to see the counselor for 6-8 sessions. If there is no or minor progress, the student may be referred to an external expert. There are exceptional cases where students may see the counselor for a longer period of time.

Parental Consent

I give permission for (child's name)

in Class & section to consult with the school counsellor & I

acknowledge that I have received information about the counselling service that it is valid only for this academic year.

Parent / guardian's Name :

Parent / Guardian's signature:

Date :

If you would like further information, please email or contact School Counsellor:

Suzie Hachez: suzie.h_cis@gemsedu.com





Appendix E

Counselling Referral Procedure Flowchart

