

## **School counselling at BISP**

### **Overall Function of BISP Counselling:**

The school has a holistic view in regards of its counselling services, supporting students, parents and staff.

The Counselling Department forms part of the whole school support service and educational curriculum at BISP.

The Counselling Department is involved in all aspects of supporting student, parent and staff's wellbeing. The Counselling Department works in conjunction with the school's overall PHSE and pastoral support programme.

The Counselling Department works within professional ethical and legal guidelines and laws.

### **BISP School counselling of students:**

School counselling is a regular educational service provided by BISP, therefore, the School Counsellor is permitted to work with students without parent/guardian consent, unless the parent/guardian has specifically forbidden this contact. Students are regarded as 'the client', and their needs are considered uppermost, whilst taking into consideration the needs of parents/guardians.

Where the Counselling Department is obliged to reveal confidential information, it will only divulge such information that is essential to the situation.

## **Confidentiality Guidelines:**

Confidentiality is important and is guaranteed, except in the following circumstances as required by law and/or ethical standards of the counselling profession:

### **1. Harm to self or others**

This may include things like any intent to self-harm, eating disorders, addictions, acts of physical violence and/or illegal activities.

### **2. Abuse or neglect**

If a client reports any form of abuse, including physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual, the Counselling Department is legally obliged to report this to the school's Child Protection Officer. This includes abuse that is already being addressed by the courts or police.

### **3. Court or other legal proceedings**

By law, if the Counselling Department is subpoenaed (required by law to attend a hearing or other court proceeding), it cannot guarantee confidentiality. Whilst the Counselling Department will endeavour to maintain confidentiality, it must cooperate fully with any authority required by law. Where this confidentiality is revealed, the client will be informed in advance of this.

If a parent/guardian decides not to permit their child to see the BISP School Counsellor, this must be notified in writing to [mmcintyre@bisphuket.ac.th](mailto:mmcintyre@bisphuket.ac.th). Unless this is communicated, counselling services will be provided in accordance with that stated above.

## Further Considerations:

Parents and guardians work hard to establish open communicative relationships with their children. Despite this, it remains the case that young people may not want to share sensitive information with their parent/guardian. There are many reasons for this, including:

- Children do not want to disappoint their parents/guardians
- Children prefer to solve issues independently
- Children may be afraid of how their parents/guardians will respond
- Children may take the view that their parent/guardian will not understand them, or are embarrassed to discuss the issue
- Children may be afraid of bringing shame to themselves, their parents/guardians and/or others
- Children may be afraid they will be unfairly judged

When children are reluctant to bring problems to their parents/guardians, they may seek the advice of a peer. At other times children may wish to seek the advice of another adult, someone at an emotional distance to the child's problem who is perceived by the child as non-judgmental. It is here in particular that the school's Counselling Department can play an important role. The Counselling Department is in place to meet the varied social and emotional needs of members of the BISP community, and particularly the children and young people who attend the school. Attending counselling should attract no social stigma. It is better that people seek help with their concerns and worries, and aim to resolve these. It is entirely normal that children may wish to share problems with a counsellor rather than their parent/guardian. What is crucial is that the issue is addressed, and that children are provided appropriate support.

The Counselling Department is here to help and looks forward to supporting any member of the community who seeks help and advice.

The Counselling Department can be contacted by email: [mmcintyre@bisphuket.ac.th](mailto:mmcintyre@bisphuket.ac.th) Alternatively, the Counselling Department may be approached directly and can be found in the main school building, diagonally opposite Bake.