



## 1. Consent

- Parents/guardians are not asked to give consent for counselling at any stage;
- All parents/guardians will receive information informing them that the Counselling Service exists and all students are welcome to access it;
- Parents/guardians may advise the service, in writing, should they not want their son / daughter under 16 years of age to have access to this service;
- If the safety of any student is of concern at any time during his/her enrolment at Nazareth College, the College Counsellor has a duty of care to assist all students regardless of any requests parents have made in writing to not access the Counselling Service.

## 2. Accessing the Counselling Service

- Teachers may refer students to the Counselling Service;
- Referrals from staff must be made on the Student Counselling Referral Form (available from the Counsellor or Google drive);
- The matter **must** first be discussed with the student's Head of House - **(Urgent matters should be brought to the College Counsellor directly)**;
- Parents may contact the Service directly;
- Students may approach the Counselling Service directly to request an appointment;
- The College Counsellor will assess all incoming referrals to determine the level of urgency of each student. Appropriate appointment times will then be established. Students involved in 'critical incidents' will receive priority of service;
- Most counselling appointments take place during class time. Efforts are made to ensure that students who access the service regularly do not miss the same class for each appointment;
- It is the responsibility of the student to arrange suitable appointment times that do not conflict with their subject commitments (eg tests, SACs etc). The student is also responsible for catching up on any work missed during the counselling appointment. Teachers will assist with this as well;
- Students attending a counselling appointment will receive an appointment slip to be signed by the teacher of the class being missed. This will be recorded in SIMON;
- While parents and teachers can strongly advise a student to seek counselling - attendance is voluntary.

## 3. Counselling Files

- In accordance with the Health Records Act 2001 (HRA), information collected whilst an individual is a child (under eighteen [18]) must be kept until the individual turns twenty-five (25);
- For Counselling Services provided by the Nazareth College Counsellor, the counselling files remain the property of Nazareth College;
- Counselling files are generally accessed only by the practising Counsellor but can be accessed by the Principal if required (special conditions explained under 'Confidentiality' are excepted).



#### **4. Confidentiality**

Nazareth College requires the College Counsellor to practise in accordance with the Australian Psychological Society (APS) Code confidentiality guidelines, outlined as follows:

- Psychologists must respect the confidentiality of information obtained from clients in the course of their work as Psychologists. In accordance with the framework provided by the Code, this includes working with minors;
- Information obtained during counselling sessions can only be disclosed with the consent of the person. However, if the Counsellor believes that the student's, or another person's, safety is at acute risk, the Counsellor may disclose minimal information necessary to avert risk;
- The conditions of confidentiality are explained to students during, or prior to, their first counselling appointment.

#### **5. Feedback from the Counselling Service**

Feedback from the Counselling Service will occur as follows:

- The relevant Head of House may be informed that the student is attending counselling;
- The Assistant Principals (Learning and Faith & Wellbeing), and the Principal will be informed if the student is believed to be at acute risk;
- Feedback to parents and teachers will be within the boundaries of the guidelines pertaining to confidentiality;
- Parental involvement is encouraged. Parents will be informed if there is reason to believe that their child is at risk. The Counselling Service is mindful of the need to work towards involving the parents, where appropriate, in supporting their child.

#### **6. Outside Referral**

- The Counselling Service will recommend that the student attends an outside agency (general health / mental health) if the student requires support beyond the means of the Nazareth College Counselling Service;
- Where appropriate, referral will be discussed with parent/s and the student prior to the referral being made;
- Whilst parental involvement is strongly encouraged with all students, students aged 16 years and older reserve the legal right to attend an outside agency without parental permission.