

# **International School of Paris School Counselling Services Standards and Guidelines**

Document Manager: School Counsellor

Reviewing Committee: Wellbeing Team

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## Vision Statement







Educating for Complexity

## Mission Statement

As the leading International Baccalaureate World School in France, we prepare students to engage with and succeed in a complex world.

## Guiding Statements

Our Guiding Statements further articulate our Vision and Mission. They provide a set of commitments that make explicit why and how we will educate for complexity.

	<b>1. Learning For Complexity (LC)</b> We prepare students for the opportunities and challenges of living in a dynamic, interconnected, rapidly evolving world.
	<b>2. Embracing Diversity (ED)</b> We explore and celebrate differences and similarities to create an inclusive culture that can engage globally.
	<b>3. Inquiry, Innovation And Learning (IIL)</b> We develop the values, skills and strategies to face complex issues in new and different ways.
	<b>4. Learning To Be Well (LTBW)</b> We understand the importance of balance in personal development and in building and maintaining safe, positive relationships.
	<b>5. Global Citizenship (GC)</b> We share a responsibility to act individually and collectively to create a fair and sustainable world.
	<b>6. Language Learning (LL)</b> We promote effective communication, the development of identity and the appreciation of other cultures through the learning of languages.
	<b>7. Experiential and Service Learning (ESL)</b> We provide authentic and relevant learning experiences that shape our lives and impact the lives of others.

## High Quality Learning Definition

High quality learning is a social and experiential practice. It sparks students' curiosity and stimulates their natural creativity. It inspires them to strive for excellence and to take ownership of their own inquiry and research. It shapes the learner and the learning community, nurturing growth and new understandings.



## Introduction

At ISP, wellbeing means connecting and caring.

Together we aspire towards wellbeing in the following ways:

- Emotional: cultivating an environment in which we know we can be ourselves
- Physical: encouraging a balanced, safe, and healthy way of living
- Relational: connecting, communicating, and maintaining support networks
- Belonging: feeling part of our diverse and inclusive community
- Responsibility: ensuring those who come after us can also be well

School Counselling at ISP is an integral part of the school's approach to Wellbeing. It is an educational service provided for all students.

## Aim of counselling at ISP

Our mission in school counselling is to foster an inclusive and thriving educational environment that values cultural humility and diversity. We empower students through compassionate support, helping them navigate personal challenges while promoting emotional and academic wellbeing. As members of the Wellbeing Team (WBT), and by collaborating with educators, and families, the school counsellors create an ethical and safe space where every student is respected and encouraged to thrive as they prepare for success in an interconnected and complex world.

## The role of the school counsellors

There are two school counsellors at ISP, serving both secondary campuses. Each counsellor is a member of the Secondary School Wellbeing Team and the safeguarding/child protection team and works with the WBT to achieve the aims listed above, in accordance with the school's mission.

The school counsellors:

- Provides individual and group counselling to promote and support emotional, social, and academic wellbeing.
- Demonstrates cultural humility by understanding and respecting the diverse backgrounds of all students and families.

- As a member of the WBT, guides teachers, university counsellors, nurses, and families to develop effective support strategies for students, including student transition to and from ISP.
- Liaises with the Learning Support team and the MYP and DP coordinators regarding students' accommodations due to their socio-emotional and psychological needs.
- Responds promptly to student crises and facilitates appropriate interventions, including referrals to external agencies when necessary.
- Contributes to the development of counselling policies and protocols that align with the school's mission and educational standards.
- Maintains confidentiality regarding student information, sharing only as required by law or school policy.
- Signposts resources and delivers workshops and discussions for parents and staff on topics of wellbeing, such as basic counselling skills, parenting or teenage anxiety.
- Works with the Admissions team, reviews new students' admission files, and meets parents as necessary when wellbeing or socio-emotional needs are identified by the Admissions team.
- Supports and contributes to decision-making when a safeguarding risk is identified.
- Trains and supports the student wellbeing ambassadors.
- Seeks regular professional development and supervision, particularly when ethical and/or other professional concerns arise within the school setting.

## Counselling provision

### *Support for students*

#### 1:1 and groups

- One-on-one sessions are offered during school hours in response to emerging concerns or as part of a proactive approach to wellbeing,
- Lunch drop-ins are available for students seeking support without a prior booking. These sessions are scheduled, advertised, and monitored. If a student attends repeatedly, the counsellor may propose a scheduled individual session. Drop-ins are limited to lunchtime and should not extend into lesson time.
- Talking circles provide a safe and structured space for open dialogue, reflection and peer support
- Mediation, conflict resolution and group counselling are available to support relationship-building, address peer conflict, and strengthen group dynamics
- Crisis support is provided during and after incidents, whether related to individual behavioural issues or wider school events. In major incidents, the school counsellor contributes to the broader crisis management and response.
- New student check-ins are conducted individually or in small groups to support their transition during their first few weeks at ISP.

In exceptional circumstances, the school counsellor may be required to support the Primary School Wellbeing Team.

### **Boundaries and ethical considerations**

- Lunchtime drop-ins are the only scheduled time for unbooked student access. These sessions are advertised in advance and monitored. Break times are protected and reserved for informal presence or roaming support by the school counsellor; they are not to be used for structured or private sessions.
- Unscheduled referrals by staff: Teachers and staff must not bring students to the counselling room for unscheduled drop-ins. Where a concern arises, appropriate safeguarding or referral protocols should be followed.
- Safeguarding in group settings: In group drop-ins, if a student shares a serious concern or makes a safeguarding disclosure, the session should be discreetly brought to a close. These matters must not be discussed in front of other students. The counsellor should follow up in a confidential, one-on-one setting.
- Counsellors do not work simultaneously with the same student. Once a student starts with one counsellor, they will remain with that counsellor for the duration of their work together. A student may later transition to the other counsellor following a break in support and liaison between counsellors, except in emergencies or in the absence of the usual counsellor.

### **Coordination with external therapy**

- Single point of therapeutic contact: As a general rule, students should not receive regular counselling support from both an external therapist and the school counsellor simultaneously. This is to maintain clarity, continuity, and ethical integrity in the therapeutic process. Details of the student's external counsellor will be logged on CPOMS.
- In rare and exceptional circumstances—such as a crisis at school—dual support may be considered. In such cases, clear communication should be established between the school counsellor and the external therapist, with appropriate consent from parents or guardians and, where appropriate, the student.

### **Referral and scope of support**

School counselling is not a substitute for long-term psychotherapy. While students do not engage in clinical “therapy” at school, the school counsellor may draw on therapeutic tools and approaches to support students’ social, emotional, and personal development.

As necessary, the school counsellor may recommend external therapy to parents or guardians, occasionally in consultation with the Wellbeing Team. If a student is already receiving external therapy, the school counsellor will usually not offer concurrent school-based counselling, except in emergencies or school-specific crises, in order to respect therapeutic boundaries.

### **Peer Support**

The school counsellor leads and coordinates a High School peer support programme, promoting mental health awareness, empowering students and fostering a sense of community.

Following a selection process, wellbeing ambassadors receive training in key mental health topics and basic counselling skills - such as active listening, safeguarding, confidentiality and ethical considerations - to enable them to provide emotional and social support to fellow students. They offer a listening ear and share tips and resources with peers, including those referred by the WBT. Wellbeing ambassadors respect confidentiality unless there is a risk of harm, in which case they are expected to share relevant information with the school counsellor.

The school counsellor oversees the programme, providing ongoing training and support. They meet regularly with the wellbeing ambassadors and facilitate group discussions to ensure the programme remains effective, ambassadors feel supported, and any challenges or successes can be shared and addressed.

### *Staff support*

As a school, we are committed to fostering a culture of wellbeing for all members of our communication, including staff. The school counselling service in school is available for staff in emergency situations (whether work-related or personal) and also functions as a signposting resource for further support. Staff are encouraged to speak with the Principal or the HR Director if they need support.

In addition, the school counsellor is available to support staff in their efforts to assist students. This may include answering questions about the counselling process, offering guidance on how to approach a student in need, or advising on when and how to refer a student for additional support.

## **Referrals**

### *Student Self-referral*

Students may self-refer by using the booking system on Google Calendar, which is shared via Managebac and when a new student joins the school. Appointments can be booked up to two weeks in advance. Bookings should avoid lessons with scheduled assessments. Once an appointment is made, the school counsellor will inform the relevant teacher of the student's absence from class - no further information will be disclosed. Grade 11 and Grade 12 students are encouraged to book during their study periods whenever possible.

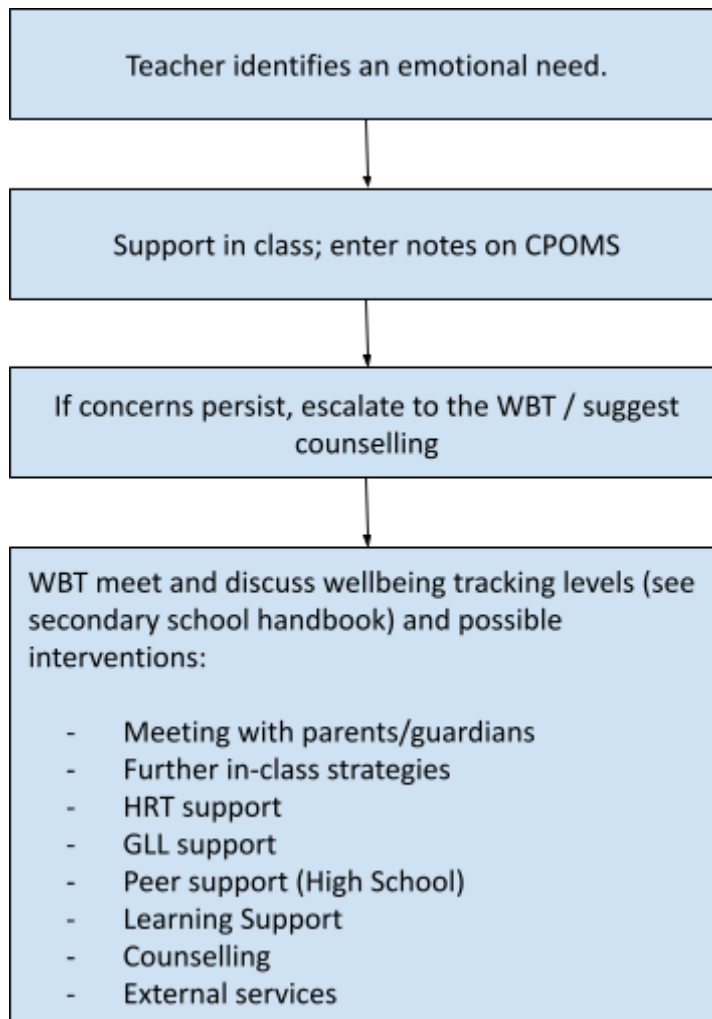
In addition to scheduled appointments, break and lunch drop-in sessions are available for students seeking support without a prior booking.

### *Staff referral*

Teachers and staff log concerns on the school's wellbeing management system (CPOMS) and may indicate that a student could benefit from counselling by selecting the category 'Counsellor Referral'. The Wellbeing Team reviews CPOMS entries collaboratively to tailor appropriate support for each student, which may include counselling. Additional data, such as surveys, may inform decisions.

At ISP, teachers receive training in safeguarding and student wellbeing. Resources and practical strategies are available on the staff intranet to help manage low-level concerns or incidents. Unplanned visits by students to the counselling room are not considered part of this everyday toolkit, except in cases where there is an immediate risk of harm. In such instances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed without delay.

**Flow chart: Wellbeing Support and Counselling Provision**



All staff must log concerns on CPOMS irrespective of their role. Staff who do not have full access to, or who are not comfortable with using CPOMS should report their concerns to a member of the Wellbeing Team, or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if the concern is of a safeguarding nature.

*Parental requests*

Parents may request counselling support for their child. The school counsellor, after discussion with the Wellbeing Team and if the schedule allows it, will offer an appointment. However, the student is not required to attend. If the concern is of a safeguarding nature, this will be reported to the DSL.

The school counsellor may meet with parents, either individually or alongside other members of the WBT, to discuss concerns they may have about their child.

## **Length of counselling support**

The school counsellor assessed student needs during the initial session, throughout any long-term counselling, and at the conclusion of the support period. Counselling is an educational service, and its duration and frequency vary based on individual circumstances. Typically, students are offered 6 to 8 sessions. Extensions or follow-up check-ins may be arranged based on ongoing review.

Risk levels are monitored weekly in collaboration with the relevant Vice Principal/DSL. Students identified as vulnerable may receive proactive check-ins during high-pressure periods. Additionally, the counsellor may recommend further support or external assessments when appropriate.

## **Confidentiality**

### *With parents*

The school counsellor recognises that their primary ethical obligation to confidentiality is towards the students, while also respecting parents' and guardians' legal and inherent rights as the guiding voice in their children's lives. The school counsellor carefully balances students' ethical rights to make choices and their capacity to give consent or assent, alongside parental or familial legal responsibilities to make decisions on their child's behalf.

Ethically, the school counsellor adheres to professional confidentiality standards (such as ASCA Code of Ethics, Gillick competency guidelines). However, under French Law, the counsellor is a mandated reporter and may be required to breach confidentiality in the following circumstances (Art.226-14, Code pénal):

- When a student poses a danger either to self or to others.
- When there is a suspicion that the student is at risk from others (e.g., suspected abuse, neglect, or bullying).
- When ordered by a legal court.

In certain situations, the school counsellor may intervene without prior parental consent, for instance, to resolve conflicts between students (individually, in groups or classes) or to support students experiencing significant difficulties.

If students prefer their parents not to be involved, the school counsellor will explore whether the student consents to the school counsellor contacting parents to gain their perspective. Parental input can often be valuable in understanding and addressing the student's challenges.

When the school counsellor is concerned about a student's wellbeing, they will inform the WBT and the student's parents or guardians. The school counsellor will sensitively and ethically discuss this with the student, encouraging them to share relevant information with their parents. Where appropriate, the student will be informed about what information will be shared and with whom.

### *With colleagues*

Information may be shared with:

- Members of the Wellbeing Team
- The DSL, for safeguarding matters
- The Reception team, for attendance-related issues
- Teachers, but only with the student's consent

The school counsellors share the names of the students using the counselling services but do not disclose the content of the sessions.

Anonymised data is shared regularly with the Head of School, the Principals and the Vice Principals to identify trends and guide future actions, including Personal, Social and Emotional (PSE) education and the wider socio-emotional curriculum. Safety protocols and updates concerning at-risk students are logged on CPOMS.

### *Additional disclosures*

The school counsellors may also disclose information:

- To external agencies
- Between counsellors as part of professional practice
- To clinical supervisors for oversight and guidance.

## **Counselling records**

The school counsellors strictly abide by all applicable legal statutes, including those enforced by CNIL (the French data protection authority). Case notes are securely stored and updated within 48 hours of each session. These records are confidential and are only shared when legally required.

The school counsellors comply fully with GDPR regulations and French legal standards regarding document retention and conservation, following the guidelines of *Tri et Conservation des Archives Concernant l'Éducation Nationale*.

## **Counselling, Technology and Artificial Intelligence**

ISP supports ethical use of technology and Artificial Intelligence to enhance learning and wellbeing.. The school counsellors may use AI tools and apps (e.g. Mizou, Wysa, Calm, Respirelax) with students presenting low-level concerns, and to support workload and workflow. Technology does not replace human interaction, particularly in relational challenges. All usual safeguarding protocols apply.

## Child Protection / Safeguarding

School counsellors conduct risk assessments through behavioural observations and structured tools such as student surveys. Annual surveys also contribute to evaluating overall school climate and culture. When a student is deemed at risk, the counsellors must take immediate action and report concerns to the DSL.

The School Counsellors contribute to the development of safety plans for students, in collaboration with the DSL and the wider Wellbeing Team.

In cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, French law requires the school to report concerns directly to the *Cellule de Recueil des Informations Préoccupantes* (CRIP)—the departmental agency responsible for evaluating potential danger to minors—without prior notification to the child’s parents. This obligation is outlined in Article L226-2-1 of the *Code de l’action sociale et des familles* and supported by Article 226-14 of the *Code pénal*, which allows professionals to breach confidentiality in such cases.

## Feedback and outcome measurement

The school counsellors regularly seek feedback, both informally and through formal methods, to understand students’ experiences of the counselling process and to inform ongoing improvement of the service.