

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING POLICY

The guidance and counselling philosophy of Carmel Convent School has its foundation on the belief that every individual is created in the image and likeness of God. Every child is full of innate goodness and unique capabilities. As God created individuals, they are gifted with an ultimate gift to choose and continue to become the person they wish to be. Counselling is an integral part of the school as it supports the emotional, social and overall development of the students. The students are motivated, sustained and given the required help to succeed at school and in the world. This policy works towards transforming students into strong individuals with high self-esteem. A protective model that believes in being proactive, ensuring learning skills and techniques to thrive as individuals along with preventative methods through various means such as individual, group sessions and classroom instructions are in its place. This program is designed in such a way that it meets the needs of our students at each stage.

Aims of Counselling Policy:

Guided by the counselling philosophy and the overall school Vision i.e., “Belief in God and the power of God amazing love for all Enhances the Lives of the Carmelites to Enthuse, Empower and Excel”

Hence the counselling policy:-

- Assist students to go through personal and social, educational and vocational aspects of school and learning healthily.
- Give support to teachers in dealing with issues arising in the classroom.
- Assist parents and carers in providing a nurturing and caring atmosphere at home.
- Ensure that the stakeholders are aware of the services available through the counselling centre.
- Support students in dealing with unhealthy competitiveness, bullying, social exclusion, crisis, scholastic under-achievement, abuse, peer pressure and racism as they go through the different stages of educational development.

- Identify children with special educational needs as early as possible, assess and monitor their progress continuously.

Counselling Procedures:-

Building a good rapport with the students is of prime importance in a school. We try to provide a healthy relationship with the students by monitoring their academic performance and co-curricular activities, checking on their eating habits and offering suggestions for improvement wherever required for holistic growth. Moral value classes also help in building a rapport with the students.

- Individual Counselling is given to the children regularly. The students may take an appointment with the Counsellor or vis-a-vis.
- Group counselling is provided to the children in a normal classroom scenario. Inculcating common beliefs, discussing common behavioural issues and adjustment problems of children of the same age group are the prime reasons for conducting the sessions.
- Career Counselling is also provided to the High secondary students by conducting career sessions for them.

Special Educational Needs:-

Carmel Convent School believes that children with special educational needs must have their needs addressed as early as possible. These children have access to a broad, balanced, inclusive education and are taught alongside their peers. The Emotional, Behavioural and Psychological needs of the students are taken care of regularly. Carmel recognizes the needs of children who are gifted and talented within the provisions of the school. Below-average and slow learners are provided extra help through remedial classes during and after school hours. Students with special educational needs also have strengths that could be nurtured and supported to improve the weakness.

Guidelines for the Department

The school counsellor:

- Practices within the boundaries of individual professional competence
- Maintains professional competence through education, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness
- Informs students, teachers and parents of the purposes, processes and goals of counselling.
- Maintains 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 (including the Principal and non-teaching staff) support the counselling program in numerous ways including implementing and upholding policies and procedures. Together with the school counsellor, they develop partnerships with resources in the community that contribute to the counselling process.

Teachers are a valuable resource as they spend most time with students and provide information and feedback, which forms the counselling process. Teachers work closely with the counsellor to assess and monitor students' progress and well-being. Various opportunities are provided through which students can benefit from the school counseling program.

Parents/guardians work in partnership with school counsellors to help their wards to be successful in school. The school counselling program ensures that parents are given the tools to help their wards with their developmental, emotional and social needs. Parent/guardian support is vital to the success of all counselling endeavours.

Confidentiality:-

All the students are entitled to confidentiality. The information they share in the session is kept in confidence between themselves and the counsellor. Information is not shared unless the young child agrees to it. However, the counsellor briefs the child before divulging the matter to the parents or school authorities. She needs to break confidentiality to help the child to grow and seek further support. Counsellors are aware of the Child Protection procedures and adhere to these at all times

Referral Process:-

The purpose of the referral process is to provide timely support to initiate an appropriate plan of action for students at various levels of need. Throughout the referral process, the school counsellor 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 analysing information systematically and objectively to plan for the student's social, academic and career development.

Record Keeping:-

Record of counselling sessions is kept to a minimum. The counsellor makes notes for the future references without recording the details of the problems.

The confidential folder includes an information sheet with the following:-

1. Name
2. Class
3. Class Teacher
4. Age

5. Contact numbers
6. School Counsellor's notes
7. Records of parent interview (depending on the nature of need)
8. Meeting notes between teachers/parents.
9. Special education need of a child

Preventive Measures:-

Class time brings together the children and adults in a positive, encouraging and non-judgmental way. The school rules are reflected in detail in the school diary and regularly discussed with the students. They are also referred to in class, in assembly and consistently throughout the year. Behaviours such as name-calling, bullying, physical aggression or disruptive behaviour are dealt seriously. Parents are asked to contact the school if they have a concern. They are allowed to meet the counsellor during the parent-teacher meetings. These are held five times a year. In addition, the counsellor is available for appointments with parents as and when required.