

1.7.6 Therapy Policy

Related guidance

England

- [Regulation 11: The positive relationships standard](#)
- [Guide to the positive relationships standard](#)

Wales

- Regulation 15: Personal plan
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/15/made>
- Regulation 18: Provider assessment
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/18/made>
- Regulation 33: Access to health and other services
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/33/made>
- National framework for well-being outcomes
<https://gov.wales/topics/health/socialcare/well-being/?lang=en>

Contents

1. Attachment Aware School Model.....	2
2. Definition of Counselling.....	2
3. The Role of the School Counsellor.....	2
3.1 Certificates	3
3.2 Other Professionals.....	3
3.3 Supervision.....	3
3.4 Statement of Good Practice and Confidentiality	3
4. Administration.....	3
5. Referral.....	3
5.1 Consent.....	3
5.2 Initial Assessment.....	4
5.3 Session Allocation.....	4
5.4 Confidentiality.....	4
5.5 Where Counselling will take place.....	4
5.6 Sharing information.....	4
6. Record Keeping.....	4
6.1 Access to records.....	5

6.2 Child protection.....	5
6.3 Evaluation and reporting to link person.....	5
6.4 Board report	5
6.5 Complaints Procedure	5
7. Revision History.....	5

1. Attachment Aware School Model

We offer a highly specialised school to provide an environment that is therapeutic in nature. Bryn Melyn Care offers an integrated therapeutic residential care service in which care, education and clinical services work together to provide such an environment. The principles of the House Model of Parenting developed by Kim Golding and Dan Hughes is applied in all Bryn Melyn Care homes and has been further developed by Louise Bomber and the University of Brighton to suit a school setting, this means we follow the principles of the therapeutic model used in the homes but tailor this to school, thereby allowing the child to receive consistent and reliable caregiving rooted in an attachment and, trauma informed practice and Dyadic Developmental Practice. This model offers positive parenting and key adult relationship experiences to young people with distorted models of attachment defined by early life neglect, abuse or trauma. As an attachment-based model it primarily focuses on providing a secure base, building relationships, and managing behaviour.

At Smallbrook School the model is underpinned by the attachment aware school training and trauma informed practice that provides staff with an understanding of the challenges of caring for and teaching young people with complex needs alongside practical approaches to build connections and support behaviour. The model seeks to promote a therapeutic relationship between carers/ education staff and young people through concepts of playfulness, curiosity, acceptance and empathy. These strategies can offer positive attachment experiences in order to develop self-worth and personal agency, and improve capacity to build positive relationships.

Therapy can support the emotional needs of young people in response to life experiences, such as but not limited to; attachment difficulties, loss, bereavement, anxiety and bullying- amongst other needs.

2. Definition of Therapy

Therapy takes place when a suitably qualified therapist sees a client in a private and confidential setting to explore a range of difficulties, which may include worries and concerns and reflect upon things that are upsetting them. The therapist can begin to perceive the difficulties from the client's point of view and can help them to see things more clearly. Therapy is always at the request of the client and no one can be "sent" for therapy. A young person who is seeing another counsellor/ therapist would not see another therapist as well.

3. Therapy on the School Grounds

At Bryn Melyn Care, there is a dedicated clinical team which works closely with the school. Alongside an 'attachment aware school' model which focuses on building safe relationships with key adults, therapy can also be an effective source of support for these young people. On occasions, therapy may take place on school grounds in a confidential room. This offers them time in a private space with a safe adult to explore a variety of issues and potentially assisted them in regulating distress- which can enable them to function better both in and outside school. Also engaging in therapy may assist them in enhancing their resilience and building a toolbox to cope with any future difficulties. The therapist will provide one to one counselling sessions. Each session can be up to 50 minutes.

3.1 Certificates

Individual clinicians are responsible for providing Bryn Melyn Care with copies of certificates of counselling qualifications, membership of their governing body and any changes to such. All members of the clinical team are subject to the company's safer recruitment policy, which includes DBS checks. All clinicians are covered by the organisations professional indemnity insurance.

3.2 Other Professionals

In order to reduce any potential conflicts of therapeutic effort, any young person who requires direct therapy at Bryn Melyn Care should be referred to the Clinical Team. Once the referral has been received it will be reviewed by the Clinical Lead and if appropriate allocated to a therapist. Before an allocation is made, the Clinical Lead will ensure that no other professionals are providing direct therapy, both internally and externally.

3.3 Supervision

All therapists are required to engage in regular clinical supervision to maintain and monitor standards and to comply with their ethical code. All therapists are required to undertake clinical supervision with an adequately trained and experienced supervisor who has experience and understanding of looked after children and young people and of the school setting.

3.4 Statement of Good Practice and Confidentiality

The therapist must be a member of a governing professional body i.e BACP or HCPC and be familiar with and work to the guidelines of the ethical Framework. Any breaches will be dealt with through the complaints procedures of the members' governing body. Counsellors must notify their line manager if they are the subject of a complaint to their professional body. In the instance of risk to self or other, confidentiality may be broken and the named Designated Safeguarding Leads shall be contacted. This is made clear to the young person at commencement of counselling.

4. Administration

Appointments, cancellations, contracting arrangements and all relevant paperwork will be responsibly held by the therapist in a locked filing cabinet and electronic records will be saved on the shared drives provided, in accordance with the Data Protection Act and Bryn Melyn Care's policies and procedures.

5. Referral

Referral by staff can only come through the Pastoral team and the SLT and made to the clinical team. Any member of staff may approach the pastoral team to request a referral for a young person. Smallbrook students may self-refer by requesting to any member of staff to see a counsellor/therapist. Where this occurs, the relevant pastoral staff will be informed. A referral form will be completed by the pastoral team and be given to the clinical administrator and clinical lead. The therapist will meet the young person and an informal discussion will take place. From this, a meeting with the Clinical team will be required and an individual action plan will be implemented to best support each person.

5.1 Consent

Prior to placement with Bryn Melyn Care a consent form will be completed which enables the young person to attend therapy sessions. For a young person to be eligible to receive therapy, s/he must understand the nature of therapy and be able to make a valid verbal contract, including the ability to understand the principle of confidentiality and the need for this to be overridden where the young person is alleged to be at risk of harm from self or other.

As guidance for Gillick competency, the therapist will follow Bryn Melyn Care policies and procedures. (5.1.5 Consents)

5.2 Initial Assessment

Upon admission to a home, each young person has an admission report completed which will have initial recommendations for their care, further recommendations will be provided and reviewed in the young person's Looked After Child Review. Prior to engaging in therapy sessions, a therapist will meet with the young person to begin developing a relationship and build rapport. It will be at this point that the clinician will give some details about the process of therapy and check if the young person wants to engage in this process. If a young person agrees, a first session will be arranged in an appropriate therapeutic space. A therapist should complete a therapy contract with the young person – which outlines the aims of therapy, when and where they will meet, any other agreements about how the session may be structured for the young person. In this first session confidentiality will also be discussed. A therapy agreement can also be signed by the young person outlining these areas.

5.3 Session Allocation

Appointments are normally made on a weekly basis, on some occasions it may be agreed between the therapy and young person to meet on a fortnightly basis. Each session can be up to 50 minutes, though this can vary depending upon the needs of the young person in that session. Where possible, appointments will be made to suit the timetable of the young person, so it will not have a negative impact on their learning.

5.4 Confidentiality

Respecting the young person's privacy and confidentiality are fundamental requirements for keeping trust and respecting the young person's autonomy.

Disclosure may be authorised by the young person's consent or the law. Any disclosures of a young person's confidences should be undertaken in ways that best protect the young person's trust and respect their autonomy. Client consent is the ethically preferred way of resolving any dilemmas over confidentiality, but there are specific circumstances under which counsellors may need to break confidentiality and share information without consent for example, if the young person is hurting themselves or others.

Confidential information about clients may be shared within relevant professionals:

1. Where the client has consented or knowingly accepted a service on this basis.
2. The disclosure enhances the quality of service available to clients or improves service delivery.

Confidential records are kept separate from other information held by homes and school on the young people. They will be saved electronically on the shared drives provided.

5.5 Where counselling will take place.

Counselling will take place in a suitable therapeutic and safe environment for the young person. If a young person is engaging in therapy on the school site. The clinician will mark the young person present when in attendance and also let the administrators/ pastoral team know.

5.6 Sharing Information

The clinical team will work in a multi-disciplinary way and communicate with school staff, care homes, other clinicians and specialised services where appropriate, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality. Therapists may find it necessary to liaise with, share information or refer the young

person to another clinician for further help. This should only happen with the young person's permission.

6. Record Keeping

Bryn Melyn Care adopts a Data Protection policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and it is updated as necessary to reflect best practice in data management. Each young person's records are filed using the electronic record keeping system provided by BMC. Statistical data will be collated and no young person's name will be identified within the data collected.

6.1 Access to Records

The young person has a general right of access to educational records, as a 'data subject' set out by the DPA 1998, and this includes confidential counselling material. A parent/carer however does not have this right, and in accordance with Bryn Melyn Care 'Access to records' policy, any disclosure or processing of such material 'is unwarranted in any particular case by reason of prejudice to the rights and freedoms or legitimate interests of the data subject' (i.e. the child concerned). The counselling service would consider any request against the child's wishes, to be undermining the child's own right to privacy and confidentiality. Counselling records, including session notes, may be requested by the courts during hearings about the welfare of children. If the School Counsellor is given a court order to appear in court or produce their process notes, they may obtain legal advice so that they can make representations to the court in the appropriate manner, to limit disclosure of non-relevant sensitive client information.

6.2 Child Protection

If a clinician has potential child protection concerns, this could lead to a breach of confidentiality in the interests of the young person's safety. Therefore as part of the initial assessment, the counsellor will explain the procedures and possible consequences of involvement by other agencies, and seek the young person's views and consent. Records kept will acknowledge if a young person is on the Child

Protection Register and, therefore, any further disclosures of this nature will be reported on to the Designated Safeguarding Leads within the school.

6.3 Evaluation and reporting to link person

The Link Person and the School Counsellor will meet regularly to review the service and address any weaknesses in the system. An appropriate psychometric measure for the young person will be selected at the start of the therapeutic process and repeated when required over time to provide outcomes for the young person.

6.4 Board report

All clinical input that a young person receives is captured and inputting into the board report.

6.5 Complaints

All complaints should be raised following BMC's complaints procedure. If necessary, complaints alleging a breach of professional standards will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures outlined by the BACP (British Association of Counselling Professionals).

Revision History

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

Date of release: December 2018

End