



# CREDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

## SCHOOL COUNSELING POLICY



**COUNSELORS ARE THE ARCHITECTS  
OF INNER HEALING**



# CREDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

## SCHOOL COUNSELING POLICY

FUNCTION	To help build a solid foundation of students
STATUS	Implemented
REVIEW SCHEDULE	Annual
REVIEWED BY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School Principal Ms. Deepika Thapar Singh</li><li>• School Counsellor Ms. Subhadra</li></ul>
LAST REVIEWED ON	March 2025

## **OUR VISION**

To be an institution that nurtures free and happy minds thereby empowering students to excel and contribute to the society in the field of their choice.

## **OUR MISSION**

**T**ailor an inclusive and supportive campus that offers a sense of belonging, happiness, physical safety and intellectual freedom to all of our students.

**H**arvest the innate talent of each child to build a school community of individual achievement and collective excellence.

**I**nstill an acute sense of values and ethics in each of our students so they may be always known for their personal integrity and probity.

**N**urture an international cross-section of students so they may learn to live in a globalized world and contribute in building a united, tolerant, caring society.

**K**indle and keep alive the spark of curiosity in our students through the provision of ICT facilities and resources that support a research-oriented, independent and enquiry-based learning.

## **1. Introduction**

Credence High School's counseling program is designed to assist students in making the most of their educational experience. This comprehensive program refers to a sequential, development program designed to benefit all the students in the preparation of their futures. Such a program is organized around areas essential for a students' growth and development from Pre-KG up to Grade 12 in key areas: Academic Development, Behavioural Development, Emotional Development, Social Development and Career Development.

In the school counseling program, students are motivated, supported, and given the tools to not only succeed at school but to go on to contribute to the local and international communities. This policy works towards building stronger students than repairing adults. A protective model that believes in being proactive, ensuring that students are learning key skills and techniques to thrive as individuals. Preventative education is delivered through various means such as individual and group counseling sessions and classroom wellness sessions. This program is designed to meet the needs of our students at each stage of their growth and development.

## **2. Counseling Mission Statement**

Credence High School's Counseling Program perfectly blends with the Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 issued by H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, concerning the rights and protection of people of determination. Therefore, we at Credence ensure that all the students are encouraged and motivated to reach their full potential by providing a comprehensive school counseling program that values the individuality and respects differences of each student and nurtures them to enhance their academic, behavioural, emotional, social and career needs.

## **3. Aims of the School Counseling Policy**

The aim of Credence's school counseling policy is to provide a framework of procedures and well-being of the students. It will ensure that the students have access to appropriate support and are treated with respect and dignity. Learning in a positive environment enables students to:

- Make informed decisions to improve their emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- Experience challenge & enjoyment
- Experience the positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves
- Establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life and which will help promote the Health and Wellbeing of the next generation of students.
- Be empowered, and encouraged to grow in an environment of compassion and equality

## **4. Guidelines for the department**

### **The School Counsellor(s):**

- Practices within the boundaries of individual professional competence
- Adheres to ethical standards of the profession and relevant statutes established by the UAE government and regulatory organizations (KHDA)
- Maintains professional competence through educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness
- Informs students, teachers and parents of the purposes, processes and goals of counseling at or before the time when the counseling relationship is entered
- 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, Vice-Principal, supervisors and non-teaching staff)

support the counseling program in numerous ways, including implementing and upholding policies and procedures. Together with the school counselor(s), they develop partnerships with resources in the community that contribute to the counseling process.

**Teachers** are a valuable resource as they spend the most time with students and are able to provide key information and feedback, which informs the counseling process. As such, teachers work closely with counselors to assess and monitor students' progress and well-being. Various opportunities are provided through which students can benefit from the school counseling program such as group counseling and workshops, in addition to self-referrals.

**Parents/guardians** work in partnership with school counselors to help their students be successful in school. The school counseling program ensures that parents are given the tool to help their student with his/her developmental, emotional and social needs. Parent/guardian support is vital to the success of all counseling endeavours.

**Community members** such as psychologists, other medical and university/educational professionals' partner with the school in a variety of ways, providing workshops, assessments and consultations that contribute to students' development.

## 5. Confidentiality

All the students are entitled to confidentiality. This means that the information they bring to the session will be held in confidence between themselves and the counselor. Information will not be shared unless the young person has agreed to it. The counselor will, however, state that they may need to break confidentiality should they deem the young person at significant risk of harm to themselves or others. At this point, information may need to be shared with another party, either within the school e.g. Safeguarding Officer or with an appropriate referral to an outside agency. Counselors are aware of the Child Protection procedures and adhere to those at all times.

### Parental consent/ access to counseling records

Parents and guardians of students will be notified if the counselor is to provide individual/group counseling for their child. Counseling is voluntary and parents/guardians reserve the right to consent to or decline counseling services for their child. Parents will not be granted access to counseling records, which are considered the property of the counselor/school.

Parents/guardians of all students will be notified immediately if there is any concern regarding the safety of their child and will receive an end of term feedback report.

If a student exhibits socio-emotional concerns or behavioral issues that require immediate intervention, the school reserves the right to refer the student to in-house counseling without obtaining parental consent.

## **6. Services provided**

The counseling program targets three main areas of development: Academic, Emotional & Social, and Career Development.

### **Academic Development:**

- Apply skills needed for educational achievement
- Apply skills of transitioning between educational levels
- Understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community

### **Emotional/Social Development:**

- Understand self as an individual and as a member of diverse local & global communities
- Interact with others in ways that respect individual & group differences
- Apply personal safety skills & coping strategies

### **Career Development:**

- Apply career exploration & planning skills in the achievement of life career goals
- Know where & how to obtain information about the world of work & post-secondary training/education
- Acquire skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self as it relates to culture and family values, and make informed career decisions
- Employ strategies to achieve future career goals and satisfaction
- Foster an understanding of the relationship between emotional qualities, education, training and the world of work.

The above areas of development are enhanced and developed using the following approach:

### **Individual Sessions**

The school counselor(s) use many different mediums to work with students during sessions. In individual sessions, students may draw, write, sing, play, or just talk. Sometimes we work on learning a specific skill such as deep breathing for anxiety. Other times we work on role-playing situations, such as a problem with a friend or having a difficult conversation.

### **Group counseling**

Such sessions are held with multiple students experiencing similar problems or issues, it can be helpful for them to be in a counseling group together. Group counseling helps students build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experiences.

## **Workshops**

The school counseling program addresses key issues faced by students of various age groups by designing and implementing workshops that provide students with key skills and techniques to navigate the world around them.

## **Training**

The counseling program offers teachers and administrators various opportunities to expand their scope of practice to include counseling. Staff are aware of counseling policies and practices, how to identify indicators for student concern and how best to serve the counseling needs of our students.

## **7. Referral process and feedback**

The purpose of the referral process is to provide timely and effective support to initiate an appropriate plan of action for students at various levels of need. The student counselor recognizes the contribution of all members of the school community in the identification of early warning signs. Throughout the referral process, the student counselor 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 analyzing information systematically and objectively to plan for the students' social, academic, and career development. In order to maintain a relationship with the individuals involved in the referral process, it is recommended that the student counselor follows up with the referring individual, stating that the situation has been addressed.

A referral is made to the school counselor(s) when a concern for a student arises. Possible sources of referrals may include self-referral by students experiencing a problem, concerned peers, parent(s)/ guardian(s), teachers, administrators, and/or other school personnel. Emergency interventions are required in those situations that need immediate attention (i.e. peer concern about the emotional safety of another student, death of a pet or family member and abuse). The school counselor may determine that other resources would be appropriate, including referral to other individuals within the school, such as the school nurse. An outside referral may be necessary when a concern presented is beyond the scope, training, and/or expertise of the school counselor. In the case of suspected abuse or neglect, the referrer is required to inform the School Safeguarding Team.

## **8. Guide for teachers on handling and reporting behaviour issues of students**

As educators, managing student behavior is a critical aspect of fostering a positive learning environment. Effective classroom management is essential for creating a conducive learning environment. By addressing minor behavior issues promptly and consistently, and knowing when

and how to report major issues, you can help maintain a positive and safe classroom atmosphere.

This guide aims to equip you for handling minor behavior issues in the classroom and the procedures for reporting major issues to your supervisors.

### **Handling Minor Behaviour Issues**

Minor behavior issues are common in classrooms and can often be resolved with simple, effective strategies.

- At the beginning of the school year or term, *set clear behavioral expectations*.
- Apply rules consistently. Ensure that students understand the rules and the consequences of breaking them. Students should know that the *consequences for breaking rules* are predictable and fair.
- *Address minor behavioural issues with students privately* to avoid embarrassing them in front of their peers. This can help maintain their dignity and your authority.

### **Handling Major Behaviour Issues**

While many issues can be managed through classroom strategies and interventions, some situations require a higher level of attention and action. Major behavior issues, such as threats, violence, bullying or consistent defiance, require formal reporting to the phase supervisor and intervention.

#### When to report major issues to the Phase Supervisor

- Any instance where a student engages in physical aggression, such as hitting, kicking, or fighting.
- Persistent and targeted bullying, whether physical, verbal, or cyber, verbal or written threats against others.
- Continuous and extreme defiance or disrespect towards teachers or staff, especially if it disrupts the learning environment significantly.
- Possession of any sharp or harmful objects.
- Deliberate destruction or defacement of school property.
- Any form of unwelcome sexual advances, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

### **9. Counseling Referral Procedure**

- The teacher should address the behavioural issues with students privately to avoid embarrassing them in front of their peers.
- The teacher should get the student to reflect on his/ her behaviour, using the Behaviour Reflection Sheet.



- On the behaviour reflection sheet, the teacher should document the date, time, description of the behavior and any actions taken by the teacher.
- The teacher should then handover the behaviour think sheet and the case to the Phase Supervisor.
- The Phase Supervisor will resolve the matter and suggest corrective measures for better behaviour management.
- If the case warrants, the Phase Supervisor will refer the case to the School Counselor.

#### **10. Criteria for students to access the school counseling services:**

The counseling services help to increase the students' learning potential inside the classroom. Teachers and parents are the key people in the recognition of counseling services for each child. Only through this combined team effort can the school's teaching goals be pursued.

The following should be considered emergency referrals and referred immediately:

- Situations where a student exhibits signs of severe emotional distress, self-harm, persistent sadness, anxiety, or depression or expresses suicidal thoughts.
- Suspected evidence of child abuse, physical or mental.
- A child who cries or gets sick daily.
- A child who becomes unable to function in a normal way.
- Any behaviour changes in a child that is sudden or unusual.
- A child undergoing a traumatic family experience.
- Indications of mounting hostility between a child and a teacher or his or her peer group.

#### **A Staff member or Parent may refer:**

- Any child who requests to see a counselor.
- Students who need individual help beyond the time permitted in the classroom.
- Students with learning difficulties.
- Students having difficulty with special relationships.
- Students demonstrating observable changes in behavior that cannot be accounted for by the teacher.
- Students whose parents request counseling.
- Students who are antisocial.
- Students who are constantly late for school or with their work.
- Students with frequent complaints of hurts or aches.
- Students who are fearful or nervous.
- Students who seem to seek only negative attention.
- Students unable to follow rules.
- The "class clown."
- Students who are often absent from school.

**A Staff member, Parent should refer:**

- Students who have experienced a death in the family or of a close friend.
- Students experiencing a divorce or separation in the family.
- Students moving to a new community.
- Students entering a new class.
- Students who exhibit excessive aggressive behavior.
- A group of students who are unable to resolve a conflict.
- Students living in a broken home.
- Students of migratory families.
- Students who seem to be involved in bullying situations, either as a victim or perpetrator.
- Behaviors or statements indicating possible mental health issues that need professional evaluation and support, concerns raised by the student about their mental health or well-being.

**10. Counseling Support Design**

Tier 1- Universal Support

- COMPREHENSIVE (open access to well-being support and resources for staff and students)
- DEVELOPMENTAL (Mental Health Awareness for all staff, students and parents through Seminars and Coffee mornings)
- PREVENTIVE (share well-being resources with staff, parents and students on regular basis)

Tier 2- Targeted Support

- Progress monitoring
- Regular and on-request consultations with teachers and parents
- Collaboration with teachers for class recommendations

Tier 3- Intensive Support

- Dedicated counseling sessions with the School Counselors
- Regular meetings and progress related consultations with the Teachers and Parents

Tier 4- External Support

- Referral to external agencies for extensive support after exploring the intervention made available within school.

## Appendix A

### **CREDENCE HIGH SCHOOL, DUBAI**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND WELLBEING**

#### **TEACHER REFERRAL FORM**

**To be filled in by the teacher referring and forwarded to the Phase Supervisor**

Name of the student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Sec: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher referring the student for counseling: \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Concern:

#### Personal/Social Development

☐ Peer Relationships ☐ Family Relationships ☐ Emotional Issues Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Academic Development

☐ Grades ☐ Attendance ☐ Educational Planning Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Career Development

☐ Decision-making ☐ Exploration/Planning ☐ Post-secondary Options

☐ Post Secondary Applications Other \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for referral: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Strengths/Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Any relevant background information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Contacted: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of referral: \_\_\_\_\_

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**For Counselor's use only:**

Student meeting scheduled on: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up meetings:

**Appendix B**

**CREDENCE HIGH SCHOOL, DUBAI**

**DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND WELLBEING**

**STUDENT SELF REFERRAL FORM (MIDDLE AND SECONDARY PHASE)**

Name of the student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Sec: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Best hour(s) to contact me:

\_\_\_\_\_

**I need to talk with you about (Please tick all that apply):**

- URGENT! Something private right away!
- The death of a person or a pet I love
- A friend I am worried about
- My angry feelings
- How to get along better with friends/peers
- How to get along better with adults (parents/teachers)
- How to get along better with brothers and sisters
- How other are treating me
- Feeling better about myself
- Saying 'NO!' and 'STOP IT!' when people want me to do things I don't want to do.
- My grades and schoolwork
- Planning now for the future (e.g., Career choices, post-secondary subject options)
- Something else - *I will tell you when I meet you*

Other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C****CREDENCE HIGH SCHOOL, DUBAI****DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND WELLBEING****PARENT / GUARDIAN REFERRAL FORM**

Name of the student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Sec: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Best hours to contact me: \_\_\_\_\_

My child's strengths include: \_\_\_\_\_

**My primary concern(s) (Check all that apply):**

- Something's wrong but I don't know what
- A loss (e.g. death of a person or pet, loss of a friendship, parent's divorce/separation)
- Anger
- Perfectionism
- Relationship with friends/peers
- Relationship with adults (parents/teachers)
- Relationship with brothers/sisters
- How my child is treated by others
- Feelings of negativity, discouragement, self-doubt
- Unhealthy or unsafe choices
- Study skills, grades and schoolwork
- Post-secondary options/Planning now for future

Other concern(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information regarding the concern(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### **CREDESCENCE HIGH SCHOOL, DUBAI**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND WELLBEING**

#### **PARENT CONSENT FORM**

Dear Parent,

Your ward \_\_\_\_\_ studying in Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ was referred by you (parent/guardian) / academic team for his / her behavioural / socio-emotional concerns. I have had one to one session with your child over a period of \_\_\_\_\_ days.

It is recommended that your ward uses the support provided by the Counseling and Wellbeing Department of Credence High School, Dubai to overcome the challenges.

I seek your consent to continue working with your ward to provide counseling services.

I request you to communicate regularly with me regarding your child's wellbeing.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: School Counselor / Primary School Counselor

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **To be filled by Parent**

##### **Information Regarding Counseling in School**

- Students may be referred to the School Counselor for individual and/or small group counseling by their parents or guardians, teachers, a concerned friend, or they may refer themselves. Once a referral is made, the SC sets up a meeting with the referred student.
- School Counseling focuses on the academic development, behavior development, social/emotional development, and career development of students.
- During the sessions, your child and a School Counselor will work together to understand the problem, the present and future consequences, develop goals for change and a plan of action for change.
- Credence High School emphasizes the importance of confidentiality between school

counselors and students at the same time recognizing the rights of parents. What is shared with the counselor will stay with the counselor unless the student gives permission to share information or if the counselor suspects the child is in danger of being hurt by others, hurting self, or hurting others.

- Once a referral form has been filled, all counseling records henceforth will be recorded. A record may indicate that a student was seen by the School Counselor; nevertheless, the topics discussed are not included unless required by the Safeguarding Committee. The Counselor may talk with the classroom teacher about how he or she can help your child in the classroom; however, specific information will not be shared.
- Through counseling, your child may be taught strategies to help him or her make more effective and healthier decisions, increase the ability to set and reach goals, build better relationships with others, and be more successful in school. Counseling will be successful when students, school counselors, teachers, and family members work together.
- There is no cost involved in any of the counseling services your child will receive as a part of Credence High School's School Counseling Program.

I have read and understand the information provided by the School Counselor and have had an opportunity to ask questions about school counseling.

☐ I consent for my child to be supported by the Counseling and Wellbeing Department of the Credence High School, Dubai. I agree to extend my full support to the department as expected.

☐ I do not consent for my child to be supported by the Counseling and Wellbeing Department of the Credence High School, Dubai.

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix E

