

Dear parents and carers,

We are PARCS – Preventative and Restorative Counselling Services, a Black-led, trauma-informed organisation offering free talking therapy to children and young people from the Global Majority. Our aim is to provide culturally appropriate, non-statutory support for young people experiencing difficulties at school, at home, or within the wider community.

Based in the heart of St Pauls, Bristol, we deliver 1:1 and small-group talking therapy in schools, youth hubs and community spaces. Your child has been referred to our service, which is wonderful. To help you understand what to expect, we have created this FAQ sheet.

## **How many sessions will my child have?**

Your child will initially receive six free sessions, arranged through the pastoral team at FHS. If they engage well and benefit from continued support, we can explore extending their sessions, provided they attend consistently.

Many young people take time to build trust before opening up. We will never stop sessions abruptly, especially if a child is in crisis, needs more time, or requests to continue. Your child's safety and wellbeing come first.

## **Where will sessions take place?**

Sessions take place during school hours, in a familiar space on site. We aim to provide a consistent environment that feels safe and comfortable. If your child is unwell or prefers an outdoor space, we can be flexible.

## **Who is the counsellor?**

PARCS is a small community-rooted organisation. Our lead therapist has over 20 years' experience working with diverse communities and specialises in supporting Global Majority children and young people. She is trained in multiple therapeutic modalities and adapts her approach to each child's individual needs.

With trauma-informed, culturally sensitive practice, she supports young people to explore concerns related to school, home life, identity, mental health and trauma.

## **What is culturally appropriate counselling?**

Culturally appropriate counselling means your child is supported by someone who understands:

- The impact of racism
- Cultural and religious identity
- Diaspora experiences
- Family structures and community dynamics

Mainstream services often overlook these factors. At PARCS, your child does not need to explain or justify their lived experience. We create space to explore race, culture and identity safely, which can improve wellbeing, confidence and emotional understanding.

### **What are the benefits of counselling?**

Counselling helps young people:

- Understand and express their emotions
- Explore worries about school, home or community
- Improve relationships
- Develop language and tools for self-regulation
- Feel validated and heard
- Move forward from difficult experiences

Having a consistent, trusted adult can significantly improve overall wellbeing.

### **How can I support my child during their therapeutic process?**

It's natural to want to ask your child about their sessions. Some young people share openly; others prefer privacy. Both are normal.

Offer patience, space and gentle encouragement. Over time, many parents notice improved communication and connection.

If you would like guidance, you can contact our team to arrange a conversation with the counsellor. Please note: we cannot share session content unless a safeguarding concern arises, as we must protect your child's confidentiality.

If you notice changes in your child's mood or behaviour, please contact their Head of Year, who will pass this on to us.

### **Should I talk to my child about their sessions?**

If they choose to share, listen with care. It is common for children to want to please their parents, we recommend avoiding pressure or demands, as this can affect their therapeutic process.

### **Can they continue sessions outside of school?**

Yes. If your child is benefiting and their school-based sessions are ending, you can refer them for community-based support by emailing: [info@parcservices.org.uk](mailto:info@parcservices.org.uk)

### **How does this impact their school day?**

Your child will have one 50-minute session per week. The pastoral team selects a lesson that is flexible and avoids core subjects such as Maths, English or Science.

**What happens if they do not attend?**

If your child misses a session, we notify the school and attempt to rebook if there is a valid reason (illness, timetable confusion, etc.).

If non-attendance becomes a pattern, we may reallocate the space to another young person on the waiting list. If your child later wishes to reengage, they will be added to the bottom of the list. In crisis situations, we will review capacity and respond appropriately.

**Information and safeguarding**

All information shared in sessions is private and confidential. We only share information if a safeguarding concern arises. We store basic progress notes securely and in line with our GDPR policy.

We hope this FAQ sheet supports you in understanding our service and how best to support your child. If you would like to discuss any aspect of our work or refer another young person, please contact us.

Warm regards,

Team PARCS