**Job Description: School Counsellor**

**(Ark Blake Academy)**

**Reporting to: Assistant Principal, Access & Inclusion**

**Location: Ark Blake Academy**

**The Role**

We are seeking to appoint a suitably qualified School Counsellor to work alongside the Safeguarding and Pastoral Team at Ark Blake Academy.  This key role will involve counselling students (short term and long term) from Years 7–11 and may also involve providing similar services for staff members.

The role will primarily provide one to one counselling to students, although the post holder will also be expected to be proactive in supporting the school’s Mental Health Lead through, for example, running weekly wellbeing clubs, delivering assemblies, co-ordinating in school support from specialist mental health services; delivering group sessions or workshops and supporting with other related whole school initiatives. The Counselling role will include making including initial assessments and communicating with parents/carers; maintaining appropriate records and liaising regularly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SLT, Heads of Year and with other professionals as necessary.

The ideal candidate will have gained a post-graduate Diploma or Masters level in Counselling or Psychotherapy, preferably this would specialise in working with children and adolescents. Accreditation with the BACP, UKCP, BPC or an equivalent recognised awarding body is essential.

The successful candidate will have excellent communication, organisational and time-management skills and be competent in using ICT.   You will be a true team player and be able to work with the flexibility this post requires.

The successful candidate will have the opportunity to grow with the Academy. We will provide one-to-one support, coaching and access to extensive network training to support career development and leadership opportunities.

In addition to professional support all employees are eligible for Ark Rewards, a scheme that offers discounts at many retailers and other benefits such as Cycle to Work and the Employee Assistance Programme.

**Key Responsibilities**

* To provide an inclusive, accessible, confidential and effective counselling service to students and staff at Ark Blake Academy, through individual and group sessions, responding to their personal, social, emotional or educational concerns
* To promote a caring and supportive environment where such concerns may be explored, thereby promoting the mental and emotional health of students and staff
* To maintain confidentiality (except in those circumstances, in line with professional ethical practice, where this should be breached)
* To uphold good practice as described by the BACP (or equivalent professional body) ethical guidelines
* To manage all aspects of the provision including the initial assessment following

referral; communicating entry and exit arrangements with relevant school staff and with students and their parents/carers; gaining consent from students and their parents/carers gaining feedback on the service and measuring impact

* To be responsible for their own Professional Development and updating knowledge and awareness through Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
* To make referrals, where appropriate and with the students’ parents or carers consent, to other agencies
* To liaise, where appropriate and with the student’s consent, with members of staff
* In liaison with Line Manager to develop a structured system of data collection, recording and reporting that ensures that the scope, nature and quality of the services provided can be properly understood and evaluated
* To maintain appropriate records in line with the above and to keep these up to date and secure
* To liaise with school staff and other professionals as appropriate to ensure the effective operation of the service
* To be alert to trends and patterns of problems and to identify causes and recommend action
* To play an active role in safeguarding children and adhere with guidance from the school policies
* To maintain a high level of knowledge and awareness of changes and developments in the fields of counselling and education and their impact on the delivery of counselling
* To ensure that as a Counsellor they are properly and regularly supervised, as required by the BACP (or other equivalent professional body), the name and address of the supervisor to be supplied on request
* To build a directory of local mental health resources for students, staff and parents to access beyond the boundaries of short term counselling

**Safeguarding**

* To fulfil the school’s responsibility to investigate and respond to potential safeguarding and Child Protection issues whether disclosed by a student, identified as a possible cause for concern by a member of staff or other member of the school community or other individual or agency. This work will include: to be fully aware of and understand the duties and responsibilities arising from the Children’s Act 2004, Education Act 2011, Equality Act 2010, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
* To be fully aware of the principles of safeguarding as they apply to children and young people in relation to the postholder’s role in school
* To ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Officer is kept fully informed of any concerns which the postholder may have in relation to safeguarding and/or child protection

**Additional Duties**

* To attend the weekly safeguarding meetings
* To provide a termly report for governors on the use of the service including impact and types of issues being presented
* To attend meetings with parents/cares and/or professionals if requested as appropriate
* To be part of the response in the rare case of a critical incident

**Other**

* Actively promote the safety and welfare of our children and young people
* Ensure compliance with Ark’s Data Protection rules and procedures
* Liaise with colleagues and external contacts at all levels of seniority with confidence, tact and diplomacy

This job description is not an exhaustive list, and you will be expected to carry out any other reasonable tasks as directed by your Line Manager.

**Person Specification: Learning Support Assistant**

**Qualification Criteria**

* Right to work in the UK
  + GCSE at grade C or above (or equivalent) in English and Maths
  + Post-graduate Diploma pr Masters level in Counselling or Psychotherapy, preferably specializing in working with children and adolescents.
  + BACP, UKCP, BPC or an equivalent recognised awarding body (essential)

**Knowledge, Skills and Experience**

* An understanding of the developmental, emotional, social and educational issues of children and young people
* An understanding of how inequality impacts mental health and counselling
* Knowledge of mental health and CAMHS Services
* Knowledge of legislation and government policies pertaining to children in education, mental health and confidentiality.
* Minimum of 2 years’ post qualification experience
* Experience of working with children and young people, preferably as a Counsellor
* Experience of working as part of a multi-disciplinary team
* Experience of running groups
* A commitment to safeguarding children and young people
* Ability to work with differences and the impact of inequality in counselling and a commitment to anti-oppressive practice
* Good written and verbal communication skills
* Good listening and communication skills
* Good interpersonal skills
* Maintain confidentiality where appropriate and keep confidential records securely in the knowledge of Data Protection Act 2018.
* To be able to work flexibly and as part of a team
* Ability to work independently, manage own caseload and use initiative
* Ability to work under pressure
* Excellent organisational and time-management skills
* Computer literacy
* An interest and commitment to ongoing professional development

**Behaviours**

* Genuine passion for and a belief in the potential of every student
* A robust awareness of keeping children safe, noticing safeguarding and welfare concerns, and understanding how and when to take appropriate action
* Belief that every student should have access to an excellent education regardless of background
* Professional outlook, detailed orientated and able to multitask and meet deadlines
* A team player who can work collaboratively as well as using their own initiative
* Calm and professional under pressure
* Understanding of the importance of confidentiality and discretion
* Flexible attitude towards work and demonstrates sound judgement

**Other**

* Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students
* Willingness to undertake training
* Work with Ark Central and other academies in the Ark network, to establish good practice throughout the network, offering support where required

• Ensure compliance with Ark’s data protection rules and procedures

• To carry out other reasonable tasks as directed by the Senior Leadership Team

* This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

For more information about our school, please visit: [www.arkblake.org](http://www.arkblake.org). If you have any further questions please contact: [v.rouse@arkblake.org](mailto:v.rouse@arkblake.org)

*Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. To meet this responsibility, its academies follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants. We require all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred. To read more about Ark’s safer recruitment process, please click this* [*link*](https://arkschools.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/ArkNetCentral/hr/EcXQDSjo9UpCpgk8lDWMN0sBVG6GBUTVWVXp9c5KkW-tog?e=bfdlES)*.*

*We aim to build a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone – staff and students – can do their best work and achieve their full potential. We want to reflect and represent diverse perspectives across our organisation because we know that doing so will make us stronger and more effective. To know more about Ark’s diversity and inclusion commitments, please click this* [*link*](https://arkonline.org/our-approach/diversity-and-inclusion)

*This post is covered by Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) and therefore the ability to speak fluent English is an essential requirement for the role.*