

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness Trial of Humanistic Counselling in Schools: Individual RCT (ETHOS)

Briefing paper

Background

Around one in ten young people in the UK experience significant problems with their emotions or behaviour and the problem seems to be getting worse. Schools are a particularly good place to tackle this, because they are one of the few places that nearly all young people go to. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that young people are as much as ten times more likely to attend a school-based intervention than a non-school-based one.

In the UK, one of the most common interventions in schools is counselling. This provides young people with a space to talk through their problems, get things off their chest, and work out for themselves what they want to do in a supportive, confidential and understanding relationship. Initial evidence suggests that counselling is very popular with young people and their teachers, and there is some scientific evidence that a standardised form of this intervention -- school-based humanistic counselling -- can lead to improved wellbeing. However, better evidence is needed to test whether it really is of help.

Aim

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of counselling by conducting the first fully-powered randomised controlled trial of this intervention. The project also aims to understand more about the processes in counselling that are helpful, and unhelpful, for young people, through qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Method

We aim to conduct the study by establishing a counselling service in 18 English secondary schools that do not currently have an established counselling provision. We will be aiming to recruit approximately 325 young people across these schools, aged 13-16, who are assessed as experiencing symptoms of emotional distress. We will provide some of these young people with up to 10 weeks of school-based person-centred/ humanistic counselling, while others will receive their school's usual pastoral care services. Decisions about who gets what treatment will be made on a random basis, as this gives us the best chance of working out if the treatment really works.

After six weeks, three and six months, we will look at whether those young people who received counselling are experiencing less psychological distress than those who did not. We will also look at whether the benefits of providing a counselling service justify the costs.

The safety of the young people involved will be a major concern throughout the trial. We will not include any young person who is at risk of harm to self or other, but refer them to specialist support. We will assess young people in the study and arrange for appropriate support for them if we become concerned about them. We will also ensure the highest levels of anonymity and confidentiality for participants.

Participating Schools

We are looking to recruit 18 English secondary schools that do not currently have an established counselling provision to participate in the study. Eligible schools will receive a high quality professional, counselling service at no cost to the school for two years. Counselling sessions will be recorded for audit purposes and this material will be anonymized and held securely, in line with information governance good practice.

Research Team

The project is being led by Prof. Mick Cooper at the University of Roehampton. Co-investigators are Prof. Michael Barkham (University of Sheffield), Prof. Peter Bower (University of Manchester), Ms Karen Cromarty (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. BACP), Prof. Jenni Beecham (London School of Economics), Dr Andy Fugard (University College London), Ms Charlie Jackson (BACP), Mr Peter Pearce (Metanoia Institute), Dr Cathy Street (National Children's Bureau), and the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre Trials Co-ordination Unit.

Contact

- Project Leader, Mick Cooper: mick.cooper@roehampton.ac.uk
- School Recruitment, Peter Pearce: peter.pearce@metanoia.ac.uk
- Counsellor Recruitment, Toyin Allen: toyin.allen@metanoia.ac.uk

The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

SCHOOL COUNSELLOR: THE ETHOS STUDY

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of Role:	ETHOS study – Secondary School Counsellor
Part time:	Minimum 1 day per week offering 5 sessions/day (term time only) for 2 years
Place of Work:	One of the London schools participating in the ETHOS Study
Reporting to:	Peter Pearce (School & Counsellor Recruitment Lead, Metanoia Institute) and Megan Stafford (ETHOS Project Manager, University of Roehampton)

JOB PURPOSE

To provide Person-Centred/ Humanistic school-based counselling in one of the schools participating in the ETHOS study, liaising with the ETHOS research team, the school pastoral care team, and students involved in the research study, to organise a working day of 5 counselling sessions timetabled in accordance with the school day.

To participate fully in the protocols required for the research project (supporting the young people to complete the outcome measures and keep all of this information securely and confidentially when transferring it to the Project Manager).

To be an active member of the research counselling team, participate in the research orientation, undertaking training and supervision, and adherence assessment.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Counselling Practice

- To provide school-based Person-Centred/ Humanistic counselling one day per week during school time
- To undertake ongoing assessment, both of your individual competence to work with the young people involved and of their risk of harm to self or others, in collaboration with the research supervisor, school pastoral care team and any other relevant individuals, and raise any concerns early so that appropriate additional or alternative support for the young person can be arranged
- To participate fully in the protocols required for the research project (supporting the young people to complete the required outcome measures etc).

Management and Administration

- To ensure that completed outcome measures are anonymised according to the project protocols and kept securely and confidentially when transferring them to the Project Manager
- To be an active member of the research counselling team, participate in the research orientation, training, supervision and adherence assessment
- Undertake personal administrative work (e.g. filing, word processing).

Miscellaneous

- To be an active representative of the ETHOS Study
- To work in accordance with Metanoia Institute's and the University of Roehampton's respective Equal Opportunities Policies, Codes of Ethics and Professional Practice, Complaints Procedures and Health and Safety Policies
- To work in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy
- To participate actively in the ETHOS supervision offered to the school based counselling team

SCHOOL COUNSELLOR: THE ETHOS STUDY

PERSON SPECIFICATION

E = Essential
D = Desirable

Title of Role: ETHOS Study School Counsellor

Academic/ professional qualifications:

1.	A minimum of Diploma level training in Person-Centred, Humanistic, or Integrative-Humanistic Counselling or Psychotherapy	E
2.	Professional registration with either the BACP or the UKCP	E
3.	BACP Accreditation	D

Experience:

1.	To have accumulated a minimum of 450 hours of counselling/psychotherapy practice covered by at least 1.5 hours of supervision per month	E
2.	Experience of counselling children and young people aged 13 upwards	E
3.	Familiarity with the BACP 11-18 Humanistic Counsellor Competencies framework	E
4.	Experience using routine outcome measures within counselling work	D
5.	Experience of research within counselling and psychotherapy and/or interested and committed to engaging with empirical research studies	D
6.	Experience of working within a secondary school	D

Knowledge/ Skills/Abilities:

1.	Excellent interpersonal skills	E
2.	Excellent written and oral communication skills	E
3.	An ability and willingness to liaise with other professionals and within multidisciplinary teams	E
4.	Ability to work effectively on one's own initiative	E
5.	Computer literate	E
6.	Knowledge of research within counselling and/or psychotherapy	D

Other

1.	The ability to work in accordance with the University of Roehampton's Equal Opportunities Policy, Codes of Ethics and professional Practice, Complaints Procedures and Health and Safety Policy	E
2.	Flexibility regarding travel within the London area	E
3.	Able to commit to a total of 5 days training (Summer 2016), and 2 years in the role	E
4.	Fully insured to practice to the amount of £1M	E

CONFIDENTIAL Please complete all parts of this form in black ink or type

APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF: _____		
PERSONAL DETAILS		
Family Name:		
First Name(s):		
Address:		
Telephone Numbers: Home: _____ Work: _____ Mobile: _____		
E-mail address: _____		
QUALIFICATIONS ACHIEVED		
Date:	Qualification:	From – School, College, etc:

OTHER TRAINING/QUALIFICATIONS IN PROGRESS	
Date:	Details
PRESENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT	
Name and address of employer:	
Date of appointment:	Post held:
Salary/grade:	Period of notice required:
Date of leaving:	Reason for leaving:
Brief description of duties: (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):	

Why do you wish to apply for this position?

(continue on an additional sheet if necessary)

Please explain how you meet the requirements of the person specification with reference to your experienced gained in an employment, voluntary work or personal setting.

(continue on an additional sheet if necessary)

Please add any additional information about yourself which supports your application.

(continue on an additional sheet if necessary)

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Metanoia Institute is committed to the safeguarding of vulnerable people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Metanoia Institute meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. You are therefore required to disclose all previous criminal convictions and cautions. If your application is successful, depending on the role for which you have applied, you may be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

REFEREES

Please supply details of two referees, one of whom should be your present/most recent employer. In what capacity does each referee know you?

Name:

1. _____ 2. _____

Address:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Tel: _____

Relationship: _____

May we contact prior to interview?

Yes No

Yes No

DECLARATION

I confirm that the information given on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge. Furthermore if inaccuracies or irregularities are highlighted at a later stage, Metanoia reserves the right to withdraw any offer of employment or to terminate the contract of employment

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Your application details will be held for a maximum period of six months. Submission of your application confirms your assent to hold data about you within the terms of the Data Protection Act.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING INFORMATION

CONFIDENTIAL Please complete all parts of this form in black ink or type

APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF:

In accordance with Metanoia's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, Metanoia will select new employees on job-related criteria only, that is on the ability to meet the criteria of the job as outlined in the person specification.

The questions below will help Metanoia to monitor the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy. The information which you supply will be used for monitoring purposes, is voluntary and will not be used in the selection process.

Name:

Gender: : Female Male Age:

- | A. WHITE | B. MIXED | C. ASIAN
OR ASIAN
BRITISH | D. BLACK
OR BLACK
BRITISH | E. OTHER
ETHNIC
GROUPS |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> British | <input type="checkbox"/> White and
Black
Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> White and
Black
African | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other
ethnic group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other
White
Background | <input type="checkbox"/> White and
Asian
<input type="checkbox"/> Any other
mixed
background | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi
<input type="checkbox"/> Any other
Asian
background
within (C) | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other
Black
background
within (d) | |

Do you consider yourself to be disabled? Yes No

Are you registered disabled? Yes No

If Yes, please advise whether you will need any assistance to attend interview.

How did you hear about this post? _____