

## RECORD MANAGEMENT

When Guidance Counsellors receive a referral, a file is made up that contains the referral information. Information is added to the file as they provide services. This may include case notes, reports, email correspondence, recommendations, programs, and plans. The file will be contained within the Confidential Guidance Counsellor System (CGCS) database. For students with a disability or an imputed disability, for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD), records will be stored in the Engage Student Support System. Information in Engage Student Support System is that which relates specifically to learning and formal educational diagnosis. All files are kept in accordance with the record management guidelines of Brisbane Catholic Education.

If the student transfers to another school administered by Brisbane Catholic Education, the Guidance Counsellor in the new school can access this file. Files in the Engage Student Support System are open to relevant school staff and to the auditors of the NCCD as required by Commonwealth Legislation.

If the student transfers to a non-Brisbane Catholic Education school (e.g. independent school or Education Queensland school) information will only be exchanged with the new school with your consent, except as otherwise required by law.

## SCHOOL DATA SECURITY AND PRIVACY IN THE CLOUD

Guidance Counsellors may use, as part of their support of a student, applications that take place in online, cloud-based environments. These applications may process information and store data in the public cloud and may be housed on systems operated by others. This means that BCE may not have physical control over the data and must entrust the service provider with the school's data. You will be informed when this may be the case and you are able to 'opt-out' of the service to be provided.

# SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELLING SERVICE

## INFORMED CONSENT

**information for parents, guardians and students**



If you have any further questions or require further discussion, please contact the Guidance Counsellor in your school.



## What Is Informed Consent?

Informed consent means that you the parent/guardian or you the student, understand what is going to happen and that you give your permission (consent) for the action to go ahead.

## The Consent Process

Informed consent is not just a form or a signature, but a process of information exchange that takes place between you and the Guidance Counsellor (GC) in the school.

The consent process has six main parts:

### 1. Information

You should be provided with enough information to understand what your consent means. It is important that you clearly understand all the parts of your consent, which include:

- **Guidance Counselling Services** – the role of the GC and what type of service/support they are likely to provide, confidentiality and its limits.
- **Exchange of Information** – information that may be shared between the GC and the school or with other agencies providing services. Any information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis so that the student/family gets the most appropriate support. If there is information that you do not want shared with others, tell the GC about this. Your information will be treated with respect and privacy.
- **Record Management** – how files are kept, the kind of information that is recorded in the files and on databases, and who has access to them.

- **Length of consent** – how long your consent is valid. If there has been a long period of time since Guidance Counselling Services were provided, or if a new concern is being addressed, the GC will speak with you to make sure you continue to provide your permission.
- **Closure** – you can withdraw your consent at any time. Formal case closure means that services are no longer requested, and the GC will stop their involvement. This will occur when there is an agreement between you and the GC that services are no longer required at this time. If at some time in the future, Guidance Counselling services are required, you will need to make a new request for service and sign a new consent form.

### 2. Understanding

It is important that you understand all parts of the consent that you are giving and that you are given enough time to review your consent and ask questions about the referral before signing the consent form or giving verbal consent.

### 3. Willingness to give consent

You have the right to **not** provide your consent. The GC should discuss what may happen if you do not give consent so that you understand how you or your student could be affected if Guidance Counselling services are not provided. You also have the right to withdraw your consent at any time.

### 4. Written consent

If you sign the consent form, you give your permission for you or your student to be referred to, or to access guidance and counselling services.

### 5. Verbal Consent

Consent can be also be obtained verbally, however, when this situation occurs, the GC will be responsible for documenting the process.

## 6. Self-Referral of a Student

In some circumstances a student will self-refer to the GC. In these situations, the GC will make an assessment as to whether the student has the capacity to provide informed consent, or whether parental consent is required.

In signing the section on the consent form or giving verbal consent, you are providing permission for Guidance Counselling Services to be provided while the student is enrolled at that BCE school.

## Confidentiality and Exchange of Information

The sharing of information between GCs and school staff, and/or other agencies involved is important to help with a coordinated approach in working in the best interests of the student.

All personal information gathered by the GC during counselling services will remain confidential and secure. There are some specific circumstances where a GC might need to pass on information to other people, including when:

- there are allegations, disclosures or suspicion of abuse or harm
- a person's wellbeing or safety are in danger
- not disclosing the information would place the student or another person at risk
- a subpoena or summons is served by a Court to provide information.

Information may be shared with others when a student or parent/guardian agree to this. The GC may ask to share relevant information with teachers to support learning and wellbeing, to make a referral, provide a verbal or written report or discuss relevant information with other professionals who may be providing a student support e.g. doctor, external counselling service, other key school staff.

All information will be treated with respect for the privacy of all involved and in accordance with BCE Management of Confidential Information Guidelines.