



## Information sheet for parent/carer agreement

### Place2Be group counselling

#### *Frequently asked questions by parents and carers*

**1. Why do we ask for parent/carer agreement?**

We believe it is important to work in partnership with parents and carers to achieve the best outcomes for children and their families. We also have an ethical responsibility to ask for your agreement to provide counselling support for children.

**2. Why do we ask for information about your child?**

Information from parents, carers and teachers is essential in helping us to understand your child better. It enables us to gain a good picture of your child's needs.

**3. What is Place2Be Group counselling support?**

Group sessions are held on particular issues such as transition, bereavement, friendship or self-esteem, which has a positive impact on children's behaviour, attendance and general wellbeing.

Group counselling runs from six to eight weeks and consists optimally of six to eight children. Each session lasts for 45-60 minutes. In the case of groups run with young children in reception classes, group size and length of sessions may be less than for older children.

**4. Who conducts Place2Be Group counselling sessions?**

Group counselling sessions are conducted by the Place2Be School Project Manager, together with an assistant facilitator.

School Project Managers are qualified counsellors, employed by Place2Be to manage Place2Be projects in schools. They are committed to the highest standards of personal, professional and ethical practice. This means they have to keep their skills up to date. All of our staff are offered a thorough programme of Continuous Professional Development training and support through Place2Be as part of their employment.

**5. Who will the School Project Manager talk to about the sessions?**

Parents and carers will have the opportunity to meet with the School Project Manager before counselling starts and make an appointment to meet with them to discuss their child's progress at any time. The School Project Manager may give teachers some feedback on how their pupil is

using the sessions and any general themes arising from them. Place2Be also has a responsibility to keep children safe and follow safeguarding procedures as and when required.

The School Project Manager may share information and consult with educational psychologists at Place2Be to inform a personalised approach for your child.

## 6. **Are the sessions recorded?**

Sometimes, the counsellor working with your child may need to present a report of the counselling they have been doing as part of their training or professional development. This written or taped report will be **completely anonymous** and it will not be possible to identify your child or your family. The report will remain confidential to the training college and will only be seen by a tutor and examiner.

## Place2Be's evaluation

### 7. **What is Place2Be's evaluation and why is it important?**

Place2Be's evaluation provides an **overall picture of children we support – your child cannot be identified in any report.**

**Place2Be collects information to evaluate our effectiveness and learn about how to give the best possible service to children and families. For Place2Be to work well, we need to find out how the service we provide helps children's emotional wellbeing and their learning and academic progress and so we can learn and develop our service.**

**Every year Place2Be reports on the numbers of children supported through its services, the needs of the children who come to Place2Be and the impact the service has made on children's wellbeing and learning. These reports are published on our website:**

<http://www.place2be.org.uk/impact-evidence/our-impact/>

### 8. **What information about your child is included in Place2Be's evaluation of Group counselling?**

**Place2Be collects information about your child from the school including their gender, age and ethnicity. You can see full details of the sort of information we collect on the GDPR section of our website. [www.place2be.org.uk](http://www.place2be.org.uk).**

We keep the information for 6 years and it is then destroyed.

### 9. **Is your child's information confidential?**

Yes. Your child's name will *not* be in our research data. Your child's information will be stored securely.

### 10. **What is the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (DPA)?**

The new DPA 2018 gives people the right to privacy with their personal information (data) and requires organisations who have people's personal information to act in a lawful and transparent way. It brings the GDPR into UK law, in order to enhance people's control over their personal data. Place2Be works within the DPA 2018 and the GDPR to ensure that personal details, for example,

name or date of birth, are lawfully collected, kept securely and not passed to other people or agencies.

### **11. Will your child's information be shared with anyone?**

To understand how Place2Be compares to other services and to learn how we can improve, Place2Be sometimes shares data with research partners, including universities and their students. It will never be possible to identify you or your child in the data we share or in any reports that are written.

### **12. How do we safeguard your child's information?**

We care about protecting your child's information. Our policies and systems make sure that the information cannot be accessed by anyone who should not see it. They also protect against loss or misuse of the information.

We are committed to taking all appropriate steps to protect the personal information that we hold. We do this by having in place a range of measures, including the information being held in a secure, password protected database that can only be accessed by those who need to see the information to deliver the service for your child.

### **13. Why haven't we asked for consent to collect information about your child?**

We aim to have a service that any child in the school can access when they are referred. Any child whose parent/carer has agreed that their child can come to group counselling can attend. In those circumstances, parental consent is not required to record or store or assess a child's information, because other legal safeguards kick in to ensure the minimal information is collected and used in a way that respects and protects the children who use the service.

### **14. Is this legal?**

Yes. Under the DPA 2018 and the GDPR, parental consent for using children's personal information is not needed in the context of counselling services offered direct to a child (see our website for more details). The GDPR imposes strict safeguards on the use of children's information. We can record, store and assess information about your child if they come to counselling sessions for two reasons:

- we are protecting the interests of your child in accessing counselling support and only necessary information is collected (this is called the "legitimate interests" legal basis for processing personal information); and
- recording the information means your child can access a service for their Health and Social Care (this is a further lawful basis for any sensitive or "special category" personal information).

This is in line with the guidance from the Information Commissioner, the UK's information and privacy watchdog. It is also in line with guidance from the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Place2Be is an organisational member of the BACP. This means our SPMs work in line with its Ethical Framework and Ethical Guidelines, so they will make sure your child's information is confidential. In addition we are also able to use some of your child's information for research and statistical purposes, as we use coded information and remove your child's name and we use some of the information for equality of opportunity and monitoring their counselling.

## **15. How can you withdraw your agreement for your child to attend Place2Be Group counselling sessions?**

You can withdraw your consent at any time by speaking to the Place2Be School Project Manager at your school, or by sending an email to [privacy@place2be.org.uk](mailto:privacy@place2be.org.uk).

Once we receive your email, we will cease to carry out counselling support.

## **16. Can you request for the information held about your child?**

You may ask us to confirm what information we hold about your child at any time, and request us to modify, update or delete such information. This is known as a Subject Access Request.

It is important to note that even if a child is too young to understand the implications of subject access rights, data about them is still their personal data and does not belong to anyone else, such as a parent or guardian. In the case of young children these rights are likely to be exercised by those with parental responsibility for them. If you request your child's data, proof of parental responsibility will be required.

We will consider whether the child is mature enough to understand their rights. If they are considered to be competent we will respond to or consult the child or seek the child's consent for disclosure to you (with parental responsibility).

You can make a Subject Access Request by speaking with the Place2Be School Project Manager who will ask you to complete a form or by sending an email to [Privacy@place2be.org.uk](mailto:Privacy@place2be.org.uk)

## **17. What can you do if you are unhappy with our service?**

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, you can make a complaint in writing addressed to the Data Protection Officer at [Enquiries@Place2be.org.uk](mailto:Enquiries@Place2be.org.uk).

If you are unhappy with how your child's data is handled, you may complain to the Information Commissioner. Office of the Information Commissioner Wycliffe House Water Lane WILMSLOW SK9 5AF Phone: 0303 123 1113