

What is the best support?

It can sometimes be hard to establish what the right support is for a young person. Below is an overview of the difference between CBT and counselling to help you identify the best route for pupils. If you are ever unsure please speak with your MHST, they will always help signpost you to the best service.

CBT

CBT focuses on how your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and actions are all connected. It looks at how negative thoughts and feelings can trap you in a negative cycle.

The aim of CBT is to help you deal with problems that feel overwhelming in a positive way by breaking the problem down into smaller chunks. You work with the therapist to learn and put into practice strategies that will help break the negative thought cycle.

CBT differs from counselling because it deals with current problems rather than focusing on past issues.

CBT works well for pupils that are experiencing anxiety, low mood, anger, stress, poor sleep.

The Mental Health Support Team in your school offer support based upon the principles of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT). The aim is to challenge and change unhelpful thinking and behaviours through evidenced-based interventions. There are 4-8 sessions, lasting an hour, usually at the same time each week.

Counselling

Counselling is less structured than CBT. The pupil would spend time talking to a therapist working through negative feelings, or experiences. It allows young people to gain insight into their past and help them make more positive choices. Counselling is effective in helping with problems such as bereavement, trauma, and family relationships.



Examples

Jack has stopped going to football training after school and playing for his local team. School staff have noticed that Jack is less chatty with his friends and seems distant. Jack told his form tutor that he is having problems sleeping and is just feeling low at the moment.

Counselling

CBT

Sarah has been very emotional at school. Sarah has started to fall out with friends and has been self-harming at home. Sarah has told pastoral that there has been a family breakdown and all the arguments are making her feel cross and sad. Sarah also shared that she is currently not having contact with her dad, which is also causing her to feel angry.

Counselling

CBT

