



*Where young  
people are*  
**known,  
valued &  
treasured**

# Lead Counsellor Application Pack

Co-educational Independent Catholic Day School for ages 4-18 in St Albans







## Welcome to St Columba's College

St Columba's College is located 25 miles from Central London in the cathedral city of St Albans in Hertfordshire. The College is a thriving 4-18 independent co-educational day school, comprising a Prep School of approximately 200 pupils and a Senior School of 600 students, of whom 160 are in the Sixth Form.

St Columba's is an academic and aspirational school devoted to academic excellence and the holistic development of each individual child. The College underwent an ISI inspection in 2022 and was judged as excellent in every respect, with no areas identified for improvement. It was established in 1955 by the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and is a Roman Catholic foundation based on the educational philosophy developed by its founder, Father André Coindre: to ensure a provision of education rooted in religious values, structured through friendly discipline, nurtured by personal attention, and committed to academic excellence. We are an integral part of a dynamic group of 12 schools located primarily across the United States.

### Pupils' Physical and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

At St Columba's College, we believe that pastoral care is at the heart of our community, inspired by the compassionate ethos of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. Our pupils' happiness and wellbeing are our top priorities. We take a holistic approach that blends personal attention, friendly discipline, faith-based values, and academic excellence. This helps us see the best in every student and ensures we're always available to support their needs. Our goal is to educate both the head and the heart, nurturing confident leaders, socially responsible citizens, and all round nice human.

### Mental Health and Emotional Support

- Personalised Support in the Prep School: Form Tutors build strong relationships with their pupils, guiding their development through a PSHE programme.
- Bespoke Pastoral Programme in the Senior School: Delivered twice weekly by dedicated House Tutors, this programme covers key themes like mental health, social media use, relationships, and financial literacy.
- Extensive Support Network: Our team includes a qualified College Counsellor offering confidential support, we also have trained Sixth Form mentors who go through a rigorous training programme to upskill them. Another layer of support is our staff listener programme aimed at providing lower level pastoral support for all those who need it. They work alongside our in house Wellbeing Hub to provide resources and a safe space for pupils. We also collaborate with external organisations like 'STEP' to enhance our mental health provision.

**Job Title:** Lead School Counsellor 4-18

**Responsible to:** Assistant Head – Student & Staff Wellbeing / Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Responsible for:** School Counsellor

**Frequent Working Contact with:**

College Leadership Team, academic and pastoral staff, College Nurses, students 4-18 years, parents/carers, outside agencies

**Overall Aims of the Post:**

- To provide a high-quality counselling service to students experiencing a wide range of issues;
- To provide support, guidance and advice to parents, carers and the College;
- To attend meetings or discussion sessions with parents/carers if asked and as appropriate within agreed confidentiality guidelines;
- To observe confidentiality and to support the College's endeavour to provide excellent teaching and learning for all students;
- To contribute to the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare and personal care of children and young people
- To support the Catholic ethos of the College and the charism of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart

**Key responsibilities:**

**Students**

- To offer a confidential counselling service for students through individual sessions, responding appropriately to their concerns
- To promote a caring and supportive environment where concerns can be explored
- To develop and use a range of solution focused interventions to support the students, with focus on resilience
- To attend and present information at meetings regarding students
- To work closely with the Pastoral Teams to ensure the wellbeing of students, acting in a consultancy capacity to offer guidance and support to members of staff in regards to students
- To ensure good communication with the DSL, DDSL and Heads of Houses in relation to students at risk
- To make referrals to, where appropriate and with the school consent, and attend meetings with social care, mental health services and other agencies as required
- To train and supervise staff listeners

**Administration**

- To keep clear and concise records of all sessions
- To provide reports as appropriate to support student meetings
- To provide audit information such as numbers, age range and types of problems to the CLT
- To write reports and maintain confidential files in accordance with legal requirements and best professional practice
- To communicate with the Pastoral leaders regarding students in counselling including start and end dates of sessions

## General

- To work within the codes of practice and ethics recommended by the BACP, UKCP or equivalent professional organisation
- To be aware of, and comply with, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection, health and safety, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to the appropriate person via CPOMS
- To attend and participate in relevant meetings as required
- To participate in training and performance development as required
- To provide information on the counselling service and the role of the counsellor to students, staff and parents
- To contribute to the PSHE programme, as required
- To develop strategies for promotion of emotional resilience within the student body
- To have a thorough knowledge of the Mental Health provision locally and nationally
- To contribute in any other reasonable fashion to promote the safety and wellbeing of the pupils



## Safeguarding Children

The appointee's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom s/he comes into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Policy at all times and to attend relevant safeguarding update training including off job and online courses. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the appointee becomes aware of any actual or potential risk to the safety or welfare of children in the School s/he must report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

It should be noted that a job description is not an exhaustive list of activities, and employees may be asked to carry out other duties commensurate with the responsibility and seniority of the post. The job description may also be amended to take account of changed circumstances, and employees will be consulted if this is necessary.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Knowledge / Qualifications

#### Essential

- Educated to degree level
- Recognised qualification in counselling with BACP or UKCP registration/accreditation
- Understanding of child adolescent development and youth mental health interventions
- Up-to-date research and thinking in child mental health
- Knowledge of Data Protection requirements / codes of practice to ensure safeguarding of confidential information

#### Desirable

- CBT qualified
- Grief counselling training
- Mental Health First Aider

### Experience

#### Essential

- Experience of working with children of school age (4-18), ideally in a school setting
- Dealing with mental health issues in children and young people
- Maintaining accurate data and producing reports as necessary

#### Desirable

- **Collaborative working with external organisations**
- **Leading and offering direction and support to members of school staff**

### Personal Qualities

#### Essential

- Ability to communicate with and relate to children, young people and adults in a clear, concise, timely and appropriate manner
- Ability to maintain a professional, confidential and compassionate approach when dealing with students aged 4-18
- Emotional resilience
- Excellent time management, planning and organisational skills
- Ability to work alone and as part of a team
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students
- Excellent reliability, punctuality and professional conduct
- Commitment to continuing professional development
- Willingness and availability to work outside normal working hours on occasions as required
- Able to show a strong commitment to the ethos and values of the College



## The Role

- Full-time, Monday to Friday, term time only, plus 5 INSET Days, Open Day and the annual Columban Fayre
- Core working hours are 35 per week, 8.15 am to 4.15 pm Monday to Friday, inclusive of an one-hour unpaid lunch break. Due to the nature of this role, flexibility will be required to meet student needs.
- Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience
- Fee remission of 33.3% for the children of permanent staff members educated at the College (pro rata for term time working)
- Free lunches and refreshments
- Contributory Pension Scheme to which the College contributes 6%
- Free car parking on site although spaces are limited
- Use of the College Fitness Suite outside of school hours
- Access to confidential 24-hour counselling helpline
- Cycle to Work and Tech Schemes
- Eye Care Vouchers
- Free annual flu vaccination
- Support with continuing professional development
- All staff have use of a Microsoft Surface Pro for school use

## Work with us

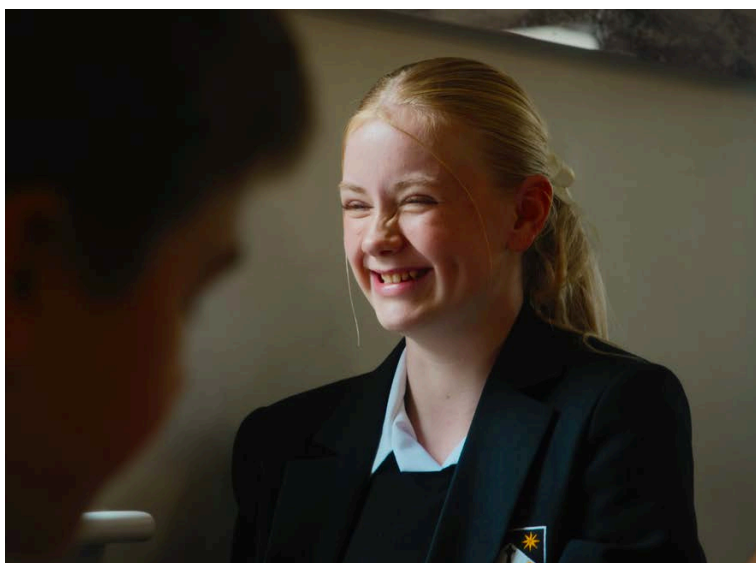
St Columba's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including reference checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

If you wish to discuss this vacancy further, please contact Jackie Metcalfe, HR Manager, at [metcalfe.j@stcolumbascollege.org](mailto:metcalfe.j@stcolumbascollege.org) or on 01727 892095. To apply for this position, visit our website [stcolumbascollege.org](http://stcolumbascollege.org)

## Application Process

Closing date: 10am on Monday, 15th September 2025

Interviews will be conducted shortly afterwards. Early applications are encouraged as we reserve the right to call suitable candidates to interview and to appoint prior to the closing date.







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St Columba's College is a Catholic Foundation of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart (US Province)