

## Service accreditation scheme

### Guideline for working with children and young people (CYP)

We expect that all practitioners who work with children and young people (CYP), qualified or trainee, should have some training or experience in working with this age group. In addition, those working with CYP, must receive robust and appropriate supervision from supervisors who have undertaken training and be experienced in working with CYP themselves.

Service policies and procedures need to be relevant to all clients groups the service is working with. Thus, when working with any particular client group, the onus is on the practitioner and the service they are working for, to take responsibility for their own ethical stance. If counsellors are in training, this ethical stance must also be taken by the supervisor and in collaboration with the training provider.

Please also refer to our [CYP competencies and curricula](#) webpage for information on practice and training standards for working with this cohort. It includes several resources, including information on student placements, schools-based work and the free Counselling MindEd e-learning programme. Also, don't forget the [Good Practice resources](#) available from the BACP website for CYP practice.

While there are currently no specific criteria on working with CYP in the service accreditation scheme, we would expect you to pay particular reference to the following nine criteria within an application for accreditation.

If you have an existing accredited service and wish to include your CYP counselling service within that award, please see the note at the end of this guideline.

Any questions about this guideline or service accreditation in general are best emailed to [accred.service@bacp.co.uk](mailto:accred.service@bacp.co.uk)

### Criterion 3

**Include at least three qualified practitioners who undertake counselling or psychotherapy.**

The service will need to:

- confirm the age range of clients, practitioners are working with
- if counsellors are working with clients under the age of 16 years, provide information as to what training has prepared them to work with this age group
- confirm if student placements are available.
- If student placements are available, specify the age range of the clients that the trainee counsellors are working with.

The law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland defines children as all those who are under the age of 18. However, it is accepted that those aged 16-17 years fall between the young people and adult fields, dependent on mental capacity. In Scotland, the definition of a young person varies according to legal circumstances, but in general, at age 18 a person has reached 'majority'. See GPIA resources on [legal aspects of working with CYP](#) on the website.

All practitioners, whether qualified or trainee, are required to have completed some formal additional training to prepare them for working with CYP, especially if they have qualified from, or are undertaking, a training course that is preparing them for work with adults.

Students on adult client-oriented training courses may work with CYP on placement provided that, either the training provider and/or the placement service provider ensure that the student is assessed as having the basic competences to practice safely and ethically with CYP. Further information at [CYP competencies and curricula](#)

## **Criterion 4.1 Aims and objectives**

**A statement of aims and objectives, available to all staff and service users, must set out clearly: the purpose of the services provided; the type of counselling or psychotherapy offered; the ethical framework adhered to; the limits of confidentiality; the context and contracting of the work (this includes payment for services, relationships with the host organisation, if relevant, and times of service availability)**

The service will need to pay particular attention to the clarity of information provided in relation to CYP with specific reference to the type of counselling and psychotherapy offered and the limits of confidentiality appropriate to the age range of clients staff are working with.

### **Criterion 4.3.1**

**A specified person must hold clinical responsibility for the service. They should be a member of an appropriate professional body, subject to its complaints procedure and accredited, or equivalent, with it.**

The service will need to show that the clinical lead for the CYP counselling service has undertaken appropriate training in this specialist field.

### **Criterion 4.3.2**

**A training and development policy should exist for all staff.**

The policy needs to show that this includes the appropriate training and development for those working with CYP.

### **Criterion 4.3.3**

**A clear selection procedure for counsellors and psychotherapists should exist.**

The service will need to demonstrate that within the selection procedure for staff recruited to work with CYP, there is a stipulation such staff have undertaken training or continuing professional development (CPD), appropriate to working with CYP.

## **Criterion 5.2 Community liaison**

**Links with referral resources and specialist services in the community should exist.**

The service will need to demonstrate there is a resource list of local and national agencies pertinent to CYP work that is available to staff and service users for referral or consultation.

### Criterion 5.3.1

**The service must comply with the current Health and Safety at Work Act and other relevant legislation.**

The service needs to ensure all policies and procedures are relevant to CYP. Particular attention needs to be paid to those policies and procedures referring to risk assessment, confidentiality, supervision, complaints, child protection and safeguarding.

### Criterion 6.2.3

**Counsellors/psychotherapists should monitor and develop their professional work through regular supervision and consultation and CPD.**

The service will need to provide evidence that all staff working with CYP receive robust and appropriate supervision from supervisors who have undertaken training and/or be experienced in working with CYP themselves. In addition, further ongoing development, needs to be relevant to the client groups staff are working with.

### Criterion 6.2.1

**The service must be run in accordance with BACP's *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions*.**

We would expect that services will demonstrate throughout all criteria that they work within the BACP *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions* and therefore, this is assessed under this criterion. While all aspects of the *Ethical Framework* apply, your attention is directed in particular to the following sections:

#### **Working to professional standards**

13. We must be competent to deliver the services being offered to at least fundamental professional standards or better.

#### **Respect**

28. Careful consideration will be given to working with children and young people that:

- a. takes account of their capacity to give informed consent, whether it is appropriate to seek the consent of others who have parental responsibility for the young person, and their best interests
- b. demonstrates knowledge and skills about ways of working that are appropriate to the young person's maturity and understanding

The following core ethical principles of counselling and psychotherapy are also of particular relevance to working with CYP:

**Beneficence:** a commitment to promoting the client's wellbeing.

**Non-maleficence:** a commitment to avoiding harm to the client.

**Justice:** the fair and impartial treatment of all clients and the provision of adequate services.

### Existing accredited services

If an organisation already accredited counselling services for those aged 18+ and wish to apply for the accreditation to include their CYP counselling service, you first need to determine whether the CYP service is a distinct service with its own policies and

procedures, funding routes and governance, or if it's a specialist area extension to the existing adult counselling service.

- If a distinct service under the main organisational umbrella - a full new application for assessment will need to be submitted and the CYP service would be awarded its own accreditation term award. Guidance for new applications can be found on the BACP Service Accreditation webpages, by clicking the hyperlink [How to Apply for Service Accreditation](#)
- If the service is an additional specialist area to existing services provided - then evidence for a specific set of criteria needs to be submitted for assessment to enable the existing accreditation to encompass the CYP counselling service. It is expected the CYP counselling service will share some of the general organisational and adult counselling clinical policies and procedures, but also to have some of its own very specific documents for working with the CYP cohort.

You will need to specify where new and existing policies and procedures are in place with regard to the CYP service. These could simply be listed (with review dates) in the first instance but please be aware the assessor may wish to see these. Please complete the CYP template application form available on request from [accred.service@bacp.co.uk](mailto:accred.service@bacp.co.uk)

Assessment is currently free of charge.

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