

Why see a psychologist and what about the confidentiality of what is discussed?

Many pupils still think that seeing a psychologist is for crazy or sick people only. They do not want to be considered as such by their peers and thus prefer to say that they do not need it. Others are afraid because they do not know what an interview with a psychologist might entail. Others simply feel ashamed because they are not able to manage a (stressful) situation and prefer to hide and keep their distress to themselves.

Nevertheless, we are all – whether you are a child, a teenager, a young person, an adult or older – confronted with events that might feel painful, that we cannot accept, that we cannot serenely overcome and for which we need help. Discussing the situation with a third party, and in particular with a psychologist, mostly enables one to view it from another perspective, to find solutions and to overcome what we previously felt as unbearable.

Stress linked to exams but also to any conflict with friends, school mates, parents; grief or separation (parental couple or other), fear of the future, of going to university, of leaving the family environment, of starting a new life project are all situations which might provoke anxiety, anguish or even powerlessness.

Contacting a psychologist might not be so obvious as it is difficult to recognize that we feel lost and helpless in a painful situation and that we need help to overcome it.

There are no such things as « small » or « great » sorrow. Any suffering is real since it is felt. Any suffering can be shared and heard as part of an interview with a psychologist because they guarantee neutrality and confidentiality which, in turn, enable one to express the most painful words in all safety. Neutrality means that there is never any judgement on what is being said; confidentiality ensures that the content of what is discussed will never be shared without the person's approval.

The goal of psychotherapy but also of interviews with school psychologists is to increase one's freedom. This process enables to gradually break free from one's beliefs, fears and judgment from others to finally learn, through life events, to trust oneself and to find, within and with oneself, the freedom to be who we are and do what we enjoy doing.

Why are there psychologists at school and how do their work differ from external psychologists'?

Contrary to the Belgian school system, for example, where schools work in collaboration with a Psycho-medical-social service (PMS) attached to their commune, the European school system chose to hire psychologists for each of their schools (one part-time in the primary cycle, another part-time in the secondary cycle). Our school is an exception as we actually have an additional part-time post for the secondary cycle.

It is therefore a political will to view children and teenagers not only in terms of educational skills and competences but also and mainly as people who have their own personal affective and emotional realities which are not always easy to manage in order to grow serenely.

The aim of having psychologists at school is to take care of these emotional realities so that they do not hinder the healthy evolution of our pupils when confronted to painful or anxiety-provoking events.

If, at school, psychologists never perform therapeutic work, they make sure, through successive interviews, that the painful situation for which they are consulted does calm down. If these interviews are not sufficient and the pupil continues to suffer, the school psychologist will help the pupil to understand that they need to start therapeutic work outside of school in order to find (back) the serenity necessary for the freedom of being and doing. When the pupil is underage, this therapeutic work outside of school is started with the approval and follow-up of the legal representatives.

The role of the school psychologists is therefore to ensure the well-being of the pupils, whether it be educational or personal (psychological, relational or family support) because when someone feels right in their life and in what they do, they do it well, with pleasure and they take pride in it.

Finally, the school is a place to learn (in terms of knowledge but also of relationships). Learning is a non-linear process. There are moments of success and moments of failure. When a child learns to walk, they must fall in order to learn to get up, and it is because they keep the will to get up after each fall that they finally gain the necessary balance, and thus the confidence and the ability to go forward.

The school psychologists are there to accompany the pupils throughout these steps. Everyone is welcome and will be treated with respect and benevolence. According to the reality that is brought to us, we discuss together the possible actions to implement (at school or personally) but we never act without the pupil's consent.

The only exception to this rule is when the psychologists consider that the pupil is in (physical, emotional, relational or psychological) danger, in which case they have the duty to inform both the school management in charge of the safety of the pupils at school, and the parents or legal representatives who are legally in charge of the children's safety until their majority. In this case, the pupils concerned will of course be notified.

Psychologists' qualifications

Psychologists must have a university degree in Psychological and Educational Sciences and must have taken many legally recognized and validated specialization courses before they can practice. Their registration to the Psychologists' Commission, accessible to everyone, guarantees the validity of their qualifications and experience. The school psychologists are no exception to this rule.

Psychologists' accessibility (for whom, how, when, where, ...)

As previously said, every member of the School community and the pupils in particular are welcome to our office. Everyone has the right and thus the legitimacy to feel in pain at a given moment and to ask the psychologists for help.

All appointment requests are met in a timely manner according to the psychologists' and the help seeker's schedule. It is of course possible to come to the appointment once classes have started to ensure full discretion. Please cancel your appointments if you cannot attend so as to enable other pupils waiting for an appointment to benefit from it.

Psychologists for EEB2's secondary cycle:

There are two psychologists for EEB2's secondary cycle.

Anne Delorme is in charge of the French, Italian and Portuguese sections. Her office is located at the end of the corridor where the S3/S4 Education advisers' office is located.

Simina Turcu is in charge of all the other sections, in room 423.

To make an appointment with the psychologists, there are several options:

- Sending an email (anne.delorme@eursc.eu//simina.turcu@eursc.eu)
- Contacting them on Teams by typing their name in the search bar
- Asking the Educational adviser to make an appointment with one of the psychologists according to the pupil's section.
- Through the parents of legal representatives if they wish to make an appointment for their child or for themselves as parents.
- By phone (02 774 22 33 for Anne Delorme//02 774 22 62 for Simina Turcu)

We hope that we have answered the main questions regarding school psychologists and have been able to dispel fears, doubts and worries so you can feel free to come and meet us.

EEB2's secondary psychologists