



The British International School of Houston is committed to providing quality education to its students. In an effort to achieve this goal, parents/guardians or school staff may refer students for counseling, or students may request counseling sessions or stop by my office during break times. The focus of the program is to help students express their thoughts and feelings, better understand the world they live in, and develop healthy strategies and coping skills. There is no cost for counseling services provided, and my services are not meant to replace external counseling.

## BACKGROUND

My name is Samantha Schlanger, and I am the School Therapist at The British International School of Houston. I have a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy, and I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Texas.

## PROVISIONS OF SERVICES

The bulk of my referrals come from parents, teachers, and Heads of Year. Students sometimes drop by to discuss a small issue that they want to process, and I always encourage students to let their parents know they reached out to me so that parents are aware. I make my office a very comfortable and relaxing atmosphere where students, parents, and faculty can feel at ease. If students come to the office with a group of friends for a casual chat that does not qualify as counseling, then I may use my discretion to decide if parent contact is needed. I will always contact parents if any information is shared that they would need to know. Parents have the right to deny counseling services at any time.

Services include short-term solution-focused individual counseling, crisis intervention, group support, social-emotional support, and referrals as needed. My goal is to educate students on topics related to emotional intelligence and to promote effective coping skills. I assist with concerns such as stress, anxiety, depression, social issues, grief, self esteem, and adjustment to life transitions.

School Therapy services are aimed at effective education and socialization of your child within the school community. These services are not intended as a substitute for psychological counseling, diagnosis, or medication, which are not the responsibility of the school. I may not be able to guarantee regular weekly sessions with your child. I can provide referrals for outside professionals if your child would benefit from counseling outside of school.

## BENEFITS/RISKS

There may be both risks and benefits associated with participation in counseling. Counseling may improve your child's ability to relate with others, provide a clearer understanding of himself/herself, along with values, goals, and an ability to deal with everyday stress. Counseling may also lead to unanticipated feelings and change.

## OBSERVATION/PRESENTATIONS

One of my goals is to demystify and destigmatize my role so that students feel comfortable coming to talk with me. In order to accomplish this, I maintain an active presence on campus so that students know who I am. I regularly observe classes so that I can get to know the students in each Year Group and see the dynamics of the classroom environment. I also conduct presentations across the year groups on a variety of subjects to support our PSHE program.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to build trust with your child, I will keep information confidential with some possible exceptions. I may share information with the child's parents/guardians, the child's teacher, and/or administrators or school personnel who work with the child on a need to know basis, so that we may better assist the child as a team. I am required by law to share information with parents or others in certain circumstances:

- If the child is presenting a danger to himself/herself or another person
- Evidence or disclosure of abuse or neglect.
- Threats to school security
- Illegal activity

I may also disclose bullying behavior and other information to parents and relevant staff members in an effort to provide support to both the student(s) experiencing these behaviors and the student(s) exhibiting the behaviors.

I will make your child aware of these limits of confidentiality and make an effort to inform your child before sharing information with others. If you would like me to share information with a third party, such as an outside counselor, psychiatrist, social services worker, or pediatrician, you will need to sign an additional release of information form for me and also a form for the external provider so that we legally and ethically have the right to collaborate on treatment.

## CONTACT

I encourage you to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

I encourage outside counseling if your child wants or needs regular weekly sessions. I am always willing to help find you a referral for a specific concern. To request an appointment for your child, you can email me directly.