In July 2019 Scottish Government confirmed the provision of £12 million funding to local authorities for this financial year 2019/20 to support the access of a school counselling service, in line with the commitment set out in the Programme for Government published in September 2018.  It confirmed that this initial funding would be supported by funding of £16 million in future years to support the ongoing delivery of the access to counselling in schools service.

The Scottish Government requires delivery of the counselling service to be a joint approach between national and local government which will enable children and young people to be supported more efficiently and effectively with issues affecting their mental health and wellbeing. The provision of counselling will help school staff to engage children and young people with appropriate support services within their local communities and at an early stage.   A document outlining Scottish Government requirements is attached.

To support the development of the Fife counselling Schools model, Fife Educational Psychology Service have developed evidence-based guidance - *Counselling in Schools:  An approach to Support Effective Implementation (attached).*

Fife’s approach to this model sits within the key principles of its framework for supporting young people’s emotional wellbeing: Our Minds Matter, which are as follows:

* Recognition that children and young people need support from the broad pastoral care around them, through solution focused approaches, and a means of identifying and providing additional help if they experience difficulties.
* Emotional health does not sit separately to general health and wellbeing and must be seen in the context of wider needs. It is recognised widely that young people face many challenges growing up and so some caution should be exercised in labelling young people with ‘mental illness’ diagnoses or medicalising the normal growing up process.
* Responsibility for children and young people’s health lies with the wide range of supporters around them – families, friends and professionals.
* Through Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), staged intervention approaches provide a common language and structure to understanding how support can be planned and joined across services

