

ATTACHMENT A (THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL CHAPLAIN)

School Chaplain

A school chaplain is an individual who is recognised:

- a) by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having the skills and experience to deliver school chaplaincy to the school community; and
- b) through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution.

A school chaplain's role is to support the emotional wellbeing of students by providing pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community regardless of faith or beliefs.

Pastoral care is defined in the Commonwealth Chaplaincy Programme Agreement as:

'the practice of looking after the personal needs of students, not just their academic needs, through the provision of general spiritual and personal advice.'

Chaplain minimum requirements

(general requirements)

School chaplains may be from any faith. School chaplains appointed under this agreement must meet the following conditions:

- c) accept that participation by schools and students is voluntary;
- d) Chaplains must:
 - i. not proselytise;
 - ii. respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs;
 - iii. comply with State and Territory laws and policies in relation to child protection matters; and
 - iv. meet the minimum qualification requirements detailed below.

(Minimum qualification requirements)

The minimum qualification requirements are either a certificate IV in Youth Work or Pastoral Care, or an equivalent qualification. The qualification must include competencies in 'mental health' and 'making appropriate referrals'.

In addition to meeting these minimum qualification requirements, a chaplain must be an individual who is recognised:

- (a) by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having the skills and experience to deliver school chaplaincy to the school community; and
- (b) through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution.

A title other than chaplain may be used, if the title is appropriate to the religious affiliation of the individual.

Conduct of school chaplains

Chaplains must comply with all relevant legal and policy requirements when operating in NSW schools. This includes meeting child protection and reporting obligations, as well as complying with sector and school policies, such as code of conduct, privacy, complaints and information management.

The school principal is ultimately responsible for the welfare of students within their school. In interactions with students, school chaplains must adhere to existing school operational requirements and report to the school principal or delegate.

School chaplains must ensure that all services that are delivered, are approved by the school principal, and have the appropriate prior parental/caregivers consent and voluntary consent from students who participate.

School chaplains should ensure that they take responsibility for, and obtain prior approval from the school principal for any external people the school chaplain invites onto school premises to provide student activities such as musical shows or lectures or to assist in providing chaplaincy. School chaplains must review any content and ensure that these external people do not proselytise, distribute biased material and their conduct is consistent with this agreement

School chaplains should avoid theological terminology and language that assumes that those with whom they speak share their beliefs. School chaplains should ensure that any faith based statements are presented as personal beliefs rather than as factual assertions. Chaplains should deliver services in a way that respects the range of spiritual views and cultural traditions in the school community and also respects the stated views of parents/guardians to ensure the spiritual and moral education of their children.

School chaplains must inform the school principal of any complaints received and participate in any monitoring and/or evaluation procedures by DoE.

What do school chaplains do?

While the key tasks of a school chaplain will vary depending on the needs of individual school communities, they could include:

- working closely with, and/or as part of the school wellbeing committee or team to plan for and deliver student resilience and wellbeing services.
- providing students, their families and staff with support and or appropriate referrals, in difficult situations such as during times of grief or when students are facing personal or emotional challenges.
- developing relationships with, and referring students/parents/carers to specialist services within the school as appropriate or externally, under the direction of the school principal.
- organising one-on-one or group sessions with students, parents, staff and other members of the school community as requested and required by the school community.
- attending Parents & Citizens' or equivalent parent body meetings to provide details of the programme and the services that are available.
- mentoring/coaching.
- providing support and/or appropriate referral in times of grief and other critical events.
- facilitating community partnership programmes between the school and the wider community, under the direction of the school principal.

What don't school chaplains do?

When delivering services in connection with this agreement, school chaplains must adhere to the NSW DoE Code of Conduct and the terms of this agreement.

Services provided during funded hours must not include:

- providing religious education in their schools. The decision on whether non-Programme funded religious education is delivered by the same person who is engaged using the Funds is to be determined by schools and the Provider. However, to avoid potential role confusion, best practice recommends that these roles be conducted by different persons. Where this is not a school preference or not possible, the Provider and school(s) need to ensure they take all necessary steps to delineate the roles.
- attempting to convert students to a religion or set of beliefs through proselytising/evangelising. School chaplains must not
 - coerce students to attend activities that have religious content/focus
 - ask or encourage students to proselytise/evangelise within the school
 - deliver activities/services that promote a particular view or religious belief without prior approval and consent
 - put students in a position of feeling manipulated or intruded upon by intense persuasive conversation.
- initiating faith discussions with a view to coercing or manipulating students to a particular view or spiritual belief. While recognising that an individual school chaplain may respond to questions and in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her own beliefs, a school

chaplain must not take advantage of his or her privileged position to proselytise, evangelise or advocate for a particular view or spiritual belief.

- attempting to undermine students' religious or other beliefs.
- using other methods such as social media (e.g. blogs, Facebook), or newsletters and school websites, to proselytise/evangelise to students within their school, in their role as a Programme funded school chaplain.
- providing professional support services, for example, counselling or legal or medical advice, unless:
 - appropriately qualified to do so
 - doing so is consistent with relevant DoE policies and procedures.
- providing support to students who have indicated that they do not wish to access the services of a school chaplain, or where an appropriate consent process has not been followed.
- performing religious services/rites (such as worship or prayer during school assembly), without the appropriate prior consent.
- expressing views that are discriminatory or biased on the grounds of religious ideology, beliefs or sexuality. Regardless of individual school chaplain personal/spiritual views, they must treat all students with dignity and respect.

School chaplains must not participate in any activity in a private capacity that might impact or be perceived to impact on their delivery of the services under this agreement. For example, a school chaplain should not make public comments which could be perceived as compromising their capacity to fulfil their duties. This could include using methods such as social media (e.g. blogs, Facebook) in a private capacity to proselytise/evangelise, targeting students from the funded school.

**ATTACHMENT B
(DoE POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS)**

1. Laws, regulations and policies

The Provider must comply with all laws, regulations and any DoE policies and guidelines (that DoE makes it aware of) in connection with the Programme including, but not limited to, these policies and guidelines listed in this Attachment B.

(links)

- [Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Working with Children Check Policy](#)
- [Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Allegations against Employees in the Area of Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Responding to Allegations against Employees in the Area of Child Protection](#)
- [Anaphylaxis Procedures for Schools](#)
- [Complaints Handling Guidelines](#)

2. Training

School chaplains must complete the following training. Evidence of this training must be provided to the school principal prior to commencing service delivery at a school. This training is additional to any training provided to school chaplains by the Provider.

(links)

- [DoE's Child Protection Awareness Training online](#)
- [ASCIA Schools and Childcare Anaphylaxis e-training](#)