

DECD National School Chaplaincy Program

Instructions and Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

The National School Chaplaincy Program (2015-2018) aims to support schools in promoting the wellbeing of students by providing funds that contribute to the maintenance or establishment of Pastoral Care Worker services in the school.

The decision by a school to engage in this program is voluntary.

The nature of the Pastoral Care Workers work program in schools is a matter which must be decided by the school, following consultation with the school community. Students will not be obliged to participate in the program, and parents and students will be regularly informed by the school about the availability and the voluntary nature of the Pastoral Care Workers service.

National School Chaplaincy Program funded services are designed to form part of the already existing wellbeing services provided within the school community. This initiative does not seek to diminish or replace existing careers advice, counselling services or any other wellbeing service funded by state and territory governments, schools or sector. The program is designed to provide a tailored option, based on the requirements of the school community and their decisions regarding the service to be delivered.

The following general principles apply to the program:

- Participation in the program by school communities is voluntary.
- Participating in the program by parents and students is voluntary.
- Schools must inform students and parents of the voluntary nature of the program.

Schools should ensure that:

- adequate permission arrangements are in place to confirm prior parental/guardian consent;
- all students, parents and school community members are fully advised of the appropriate consent procedures and that these measures are consistent with state government school policy or guidelines, where applicable;
- the religious affiliation/endorsement of the Pastoral Care Worker decision for the school following consultation with the school community and governing body;
- there is consultation with, and ongoing support from, the broader school community about the demand for, and role of, a Pastoral Care Worker; and
- to receive and maintain funding, school communities must engage the services of a Pastoral Care Worker.

Funding under this program can only be used for expenditure that directly relates to the provision of Pastoral Care Workers under the program. Schools cannot use their RES to fund any part of the program

Program funding should not diminish or replace existing funding and /or student wellbeing services.

What is the difference between the National School Chaplaincy Program and the former National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program (NSCSWP) 2012-2014?

There are a number of differences between the new and the previous program.

The first is that the program is now administered by the State, not the Australian Government. The Australian Government invited the State Government to take on this role following the June 2014 ruling by the High Court that direct Australian Government funding to schools for the NSCSWP program was unconstitutional.

The second is that the program only funds the employment of a Pastoral Care Worker. Under this agreement, a person engaged to provide pastoral care must be able to provide the following:

- evidence that they are recognised and supported by their school community
- evidence of ordination, religious qualification or endorsement by an accepted religious organisation
- evidence of academic qualifications that meet the program requirements.

This was a condition of the State receiving Australian Government funds.

Thirdly, the Project Agreement for the 2015-2018 program explicitly states that chaplains may be of any faith; however schools no longer have the option of choosing a worker who is not endorsed by a recognised or accepted religious institution.

Finally, under the new program, the employees in South Australian government schools will be called Pastoral Care Workers (PCW)

What is the role of DECD under the new program?

Under a cross-sector agreement DECD is responsible for assessing applications and distributing NSCP funding to DECD schools.

Who is a Pastoral Care Worker?

For the purpose of the National School Chaplaincy Program, a Pastoral Care Worker is a person who:

- is recognised by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having skills and experience to deliver Pastoral Care Work Services to the school community;
- is recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution; and
- meets the NSCP minimum qualification requirements

What are the academic qualifications required of Pastoral Care Workers?

To be employed in schools, the Pastoral Care Worker must have the following minimum qualifications:

- a current DCSI - Child Related Employment Clearance
- current Responding to Abuse and Neglect Training – Education and Care;
- a Certificate IV in Youth Work; or
- a Certificate IV in Pastoral Care; or
- an equivalent qualification which must include competencies in 'mental health' and 'making appropriate referrals'

The onus will be on the school and/or provider to assess whether qualifications meet the criteria above.

Schools and Service Providers will be required to produce evidence that has led to endorsement of an individual if requested by the Minister or the department.

What is the application process?

On 11 November 2014, the Minister for Education and Child Development, Hon Jennifer Rankine, notified all principals that South Australia had signed the National School Chaplaincy Program Project Agreement. The four year agreement secures Commonwealth funding for the provision of chaplaincy services to schools.

A cross-sector panel has been formed to manage the program across the three sectors of education in South Australia.

All South Australian schools will be invited to apply to participate in this program however due to the changed funding arrangement there will be fewer positions available than in previous years.

How do I apply for funding?

Schools are required to complete the online application which is available at

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/aboutdept/pages/Aboutdept/nscp/>

Applications close 5 December 2014

Please note: Late applications may not be accepted for inclusion in the program.

Once you have submitted the application you will receive a confirmation email from the decd.chaplainfundingapplication@sa.gov.au

Any queries in relation to the application, funding or the program in general please contact Trish Hall on trish.hall@sa.gov.au or 8226 1062

What information is needed when applying for funding?

Before the principal begins to complete the application s/he will need to have considered the elements of the application outlined below. Please note this is not the full information requested in the application form.

Current funding status

New Schools

Is your school planning to appoint under the new program for the first time?

Schools involved in current program

Does your school currently receive Commonwealth funding through the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program?

Do you employ a CPSW or a SWW?

Who is your current Service Provider (organisation employing the chaplain)?

What is the FTE/How many hours per week are currently funded?

Does this person work in more than one site?

Your school context

In this section you will be required to provide a short comment on the following:

- Outline the need for a PCW in your school and community, including details about the specific needs of your students.
- Does your school have community endorsement/agreement through the school Governing Council? Provide details
- How would the PCW work in your school to contribute to the wellbeing of students? What roles will they undertake?
- How would the PCW work with other staff to ensure a whole school approach to pastoral care?

- What outcomes would your school expect to see from this program?

What evidence can be provided which demonstrates school community support for involvement in the program?

Evidence and feedback of consultation with the school community is a mandatory requirement for Program funding. The application must include clear evidence of the results of the school community consultation.

Evidence and feedback can take various forms including:

- the documented results of parent and school surveys, for example a summary of the results and comments
- meeting notes from meetings of the representative parent body or school equivalent which document all discussion and decisions
- letters of support from school parent bodies
- information on the processes used to record details of any consultation including duration and frequency
- evidence of public discussions and resources such as newsletters
- evidence of confirmation of school community discussions and the resultant evidence of support for the Program.

At a minimum, there must be consultation with the school's Governing Council on an annual basis to review and confirm the support of the school community for the Program. Evidence and feedback from the school community consultation will form the basis of progress reports and continued funding. School Principals will use the outcomes of school community consultation to determine the nature of the service required in the school community.

What funding is available?

The funding provided will be up to \$20,000 per year for the duration of the funding round (or up to \$24,000 to each school in a remote/very remote area) .

Pastoral Care Workers must provide services for a minimum of four hundred (400) hours per calendar year, to obtain maximum funding of \$20,000 (excluding GST). The school may determine the most appropriate apportioning of hours of this service.

Examples of minimum service delivery for the different levels of funding that schools are able to apply for under the Program are:

- \$20,000 (plus 20% for remote schools), ex GST
 - a minimum of 400 hours
- \$15,000 (plus 20% for remote schools), ex GST
 - a minimum of 300 hours
- \$10,000 (plus 20% for remote schools), ex GST
 - a minimum of 200 hours
- \$5,000 (plus 20% for remote schools), ex GST
 - a minimum of 100 hours.

Schools and Service Providers can negotiate a level of servicing above the minimum requirement, however funding levels are agreed at the establishment of the Program and additional funding will not be provided if additional hours of service are provided.

For example, if a school has gained funding of \$15,000 for a minimum of 300 hours of service and the school chaplain/student welfare worker provides 400 hours of service over the calendar year, no additional funding is payable.

Duration of Funding

Funding is initially for a one year duration with potential for an extension of one year, dependent on ongoing funding from the Australian Government.

All schools will have the opportunity to apply for each round of funding.

How are schools selected?

A panel will be convened to review applications.

Factors which will be considered in the process include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Previous participation in the National Schools Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program;
- Index of Educational Disadvantage (IoED)
- Geolocation;
- Student numbers;
- Percentage of regular attendees;
- Transiency of students;
- How the PCW will complement existing wellbeing approaches in the school.;
- Community endorsement/agreement for the program; and
- School/community context.

Notification of Funding Decision

Once the selection process has been finalised by the independent panel, schools will be notified. This is expected to be by mid to late December.

Use of funds

National School Chaplaincy Program funding can only be used for the provision of Pastoral Care Worker services to support the emotional wellbeing of students by providing:

- pastoral care services; and
- strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community.

School communities may engage the services of more than one Pastoral Care Worker however the amount of funding available to school communities will not increase if there is more than one Pastoral Care Worker engaged under this program.

Service Providers will be responsible for paying the salary and other employment related costs for all schools chaplains providing services under the program.

Unacceptable use of funds

Activities and the purchase of services and goods which are inconsistent with the purpose of this program will not be funded. This includes:

- the purchase of religious education or religious training packages and the purchase of goods related to these activities;

- the purchase of capital items, assets or resources including, but not limited to; capital works, vehicles, computers and text books;
- provision of services to other unfunded schools; and
- re-allocation of funds between schools, that is, transference of unspent funds from one school to another.

Government schools are also not permitted to use their resource entitlement (RES) funding to employ, or contribute to the salary of, a Pastoral Care Worker.

School closures

If a school or campus entity closes and ceases to operate, then program funding also ceases. In these circumstances the school must ensure that:

- a final financial acquittal report outlining expenditure and service details up to the date of the school closure is obtained from the Service Provider; and
- the Service Provider transfers unused surplus funds back to the DECD

Funding cannot be transferred to existing neighbouring schools that did not apply for, or were unsuccessful in obtaining funding.

If the school closure is part of a broader merger and all displaced students move to a new school entity, the Department may, on a case by case basis, consider arrangements to allow some/all servicing to transfer to the new school.

If a school decides to exit the National School Chaplaincy Program

If a school community determines that they no longer wish to participate in the program and receive funding, they can exit at any time.

In these circumstances, the school must negotiate with the Service Provider to ensure that:

- a final financial acquittal report to the school outlining expenditure and service details up to the date of the school exiting the program is obtained from the Service Provider; and
- the Service Provider transfers unused surplus funds back to the DECD

Can there be a gap in service?

If schools and Service Providers are experiencing servicing complications such as difficulties in engaging an appropriate replacement for a Pastoral Care Worker who has resigned, they may negotiate with the school to seek a suspension of services until the issues are resolved.

If a school has a gap in service within the calendar year due to the resignation of a Pastoral Care Worker and there is a delay in sourcing a replacement, schools can continue to draw on unused service hours during the calendar year. Schools could renegotiate service details with their Service Provider to increase Pastoral Care Worker contact hours and utilise the full calendar year allocation. Excess funds can only be utilised by:

- increasing the Pastoral Care Worker service hours, for example providing full-time services for a designated period, to ensure no underspend for that calendar year and/or;
- employing additional service hours during the calendar year; and /or;
- utilising the services of an existing Pastoral Care Worker in the school, which is not funded under the program, to provide additional service hours that meet the requirements of the program guidelines, by increasing their operational hours in addition to the work they are providing under their current role.

Please note that any unused funds will not roll over to subsequent calendar years. Unspent funds must be returned to the Department of Education and Child Development by mid-November of each school year .

What is the employment process?

DECD schools will not directly employ Pastoral Care Workers. Pastoral Care Workers are employed by the relevant Service Provider.

For the purposes of the National School Chaplaincy Program, a Service Provider is a legal entity (an organisation incorporated under Commonwealth or State legislation) that may enter into a Contract with the Department of Education and Child Development in order to provide Pastoral Care Worker services to public schools.

Service Providers recruit, employ, train, supervise and support Pastoral Care Workers appointed to schools.

Service Providers and Principals work collaboratively to select a Pastoral Care Worker for appointment to a school and to negotiate and document a work plan which details the duties and tasks the Pastoral Care Worker will undertake in the school.

Selection of a Provider

This process will be provided to schools on acceptance into the program.

Pastoral Care Worker - Roles and Responsibilities

Pastoral Care Workers are responsible for supporting the spiritual, social, and emotional wellbeing of their students regardless of faith or beliefs.

A Pastoral Care Worker must be able to provide support for a range of day to day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people. They can become involved in a wide variety of issues including health, social and values education and emotional support.

It is expected that Pastoral Care Worker supports and works with the Principal, the school's student wellbeing staff or equivalent to refer students to appropriate services when required.

To assist in facilitating this, Pastoral Care Worker should have or develop an appropriate and suitable external network of professional groups working with the community.

The Principal is responsible for the welfare of students within his/her school. In interaction with students, Pastoral Care Workers must adhere to existing school operational requirements and report to the Principal or his/her nominated staff member where required.

Pastoral Care Worker must ensure that all services that are delivered are:

- approved by the Principal;
- have the appropriate prior parental/guardian consent, where relevant, as per existing school policy; and
- have the voluntary consent of students who participate.

To facilitate these conditions of delivery, Pastoral Care Worker must also:

- assist the Principal in notifying students/parents about all aspects of the Pastoral Care Worker's role including the voluntary nature of the program and the need for consent forms to be signed prior to participation in services, as appropriate;
- report on services relating to the program and participate in any monitoring and /or evaluation strategies required by the Principal and/or the Service Provider;
- avoid theological terminology and language that assumes that those with whom they speak share their beliefs and ensure that any faith based statements are presented as personal beliefs rather than as factual assertions;

- ensure that they take responsibility for, and obtain prior approval from the Principal for, any external people they invite onto school premises to provide student activities such as musical shows or lectures or to assist in providing pastoral care;
- check any content to be presented by external people to ensure they do not proselytise, distribute biased material or undertake any activities inconsistent with the aims and objectives of this program; and
- 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.

What can't Pastoral Care Workers do?

When delivering services under the National School Chaplaincy Program, Pastoral Care Workers must adhere to these guidelines and the Service provider's Code of Conduct. (see pg 12)

In their work as a Pastoral Care Worker must not:

- coerce students to attend activities that have religious content/focus;
- ask or encourage students to proselytise or evangelise within the school;
- deliver activities/services that promote a particular view or religious belief without prior approval and consent; and
- put students in a position of feeling manipulated or intruded upon by intense persuasive conversation.

Services provided by Pastoral Care Workers must not include:

- providing religious education in their schools;
- attempting to convert students to a religion or set of beliefs through proselytising or evangelising;
- initiating faith discussions with a view to coercing or manipulating students to a particular view or spiritual belief;
- taking advantage of the Pastoral Care Worker's privileged position to proselytise, evangelise or advocate for a particular view or spiritual belief (even though the individual Pastoral Care Worker may respond to questions and in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her own beliefs);
- attempting to undermine students' religious or other beliefs;
- using other methods such as social media-blogs, Facebook, newsletters and/or school websites, to proselytise or evangelise to students within their school, in their role as a program funded Pastoral Care Worker;
- providing professional support services, for example counselling or legal or medical advice, unless appropriately qualified to do so and/or consistent with relevant state policies and procedures;
- providing support to students who have indicated that they do not wish to access the service of a Pastoral Care Worker, or where an appropriate consent process has not been followed;
- performing religious services/rites (such as worship or prayer during school assembly etc), without the appropriate prior consent; and
- expressing views that are discriminatory or biased on the grounds of religious ideology, beliefs or sexuality. Regardless of individual Pastoral Care Workers' personal and/or spiritual views, they must treat all students with dignity and respect.

Pastoral Care Workers 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 the program.

Service Providers - Role and Responsibilities

For the purposes of the National School Chaplaincy Program, a Service Provider is a legal entity (an organisation incorporated under Commonwealth or state legislation) that may enter into a Contract with the Department of Education and Child Development in order to provide Pastoral Care Worker services to public schools.

Service Providers are the employing bodies of Pastoral Care Workers.

Service Providers and Principals work collaboratively to select a Pastoral Care Worker for appointment to a school and to negotiate and document a work plan which details the duties and tasks the Pastoral Care Worker will undertake in the school.

Service Providers are responsible for:

- the financial management of the Pastoral Care Workers in the schools which they employ Pastoral Care Workers;
- recruitment and selection of the Pastoral Care Worker in consultation with the Principal (the Service Provider must seek the Principal's endorsement for the appointment of the Pastoral Care Worker);
- ensuring adequate induction is provided for Pastoral Care Workers prior to commencement within a school, including all role requirements and boundaries as per the National School Chaplaincy Program and the Code of Conduct;
- ensuring that Pastoral Care Workers have minimum qualifications within agreed requirements and keeping evidence of these qualifications;
- ensuring that Pastoral Care Workers and any Service Provider staff who may come into contact with children, have appropriate Working With Children/National Police History checks in place and keeping evidence of these clearances;
- monitoring of the Pastoral Care Worker role in consultation with the Principal, including that an agreed work-plan is in place and that the Pastoral Care Worker is complying with the work-plan;
- maintenance of required insurances; and
- notifying the Department of Education and Child Development of complaints allegations.

The School Principal - Role and Responsibilities

The Principal, in consultation with the parent body and the school's governing body, is responsible for working with the Service Provider to lead, coordinate and manage all aspects of the Pastoral Care Workers services within the school, including complaints management. The Principal may appoint another member of the school's staff to undertake these tasks on his/her behalf.

The Principal or nominated staff member has a lead role in coordinating and managing all aspects of the Pastoral Care Worker services within the school.

The Principal is responsible for:

- undertaking and/or coordinating ongoing consultation with the school community at a minimum on an annual basis, to assess the demand, support for, and nature of Pastoral Care Worker services;
- checking that all Pastoral Care Worker and other Service Provider personnel who may come into contact with students in their school comply with all legislative, policy and other requirements and permissions necessary (eg a current DCSI - Child Related Employment Clearance / and National Police History Checks, up to date Responding to Abuse and Neglect –Education and Care training) to have access to and work on the school premises;
- making every effort to inform all parents and students of the voluntary nature of program participation;
- ensuring the sufficient procedures are in place for students and their families to consent to the voluntary service;
- completing, endorsing and submitting the school's application for funding;
- endorsing the choice of Pastoral Care Worker prior to employment;
- overseeing the delivery of the Pastoral Care Worker service within the school;

- ensuring that effective complaints handling protocols, including the documentation of complaints to notify the Service Provider and /or the Department of Education and Child Development(if appropriate) of complaints or issues that may arise;
- ensuring induction to the school is provided to the Pastoral Care Worker;
- ensuring appropriate facilities and relevant resources are provided as required and as per risk management requirements or as per state or school policy (e.g.; work space, lockable filing cabinet; access to relevant IT and policy documents such as Protective Practices etc);
- approving all Pastoral Care Worker service activities and matters that vary students' school routine and participation or attendance;
- advising the Service Provider of variations in routine such as: absences of the Pastoral Care Worker and long-term gaps in service when there is no service provision and other day to day management issues;
- ensuring that a Pastoral Care Worker does not deliver Pastoral Care Worker services if a child protection check/police check expires and a renewal is not in place;
- ensuring that details of the Pastoral Care Workers program are published and maintained on the school website;

Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct is a document between an employer and employee which outlines the expected behaviour of the employee in the performance of his/her duties. The Pastoral Care Worker will already have a signed Code of Conduct with the Service Provider when appointed to a school.

Do I need to have a code of conduct?

The school may choose to adopt the Service Provider's Code of Conduct and/or the school board/council may choose to develop their own Code of Conduct which reflects their local context.

Should you wish to enter into a separate Code of Conduct with the Pastoral Care Worker an example is below.

Please alter to individualise for your school/community context.

CODE OF CONDUCT EXAMPLE

Pastoral Care Workers are responsible for supporting the spiritual, social, and emotional wellbeing of their students regardless of faith or beliefs. Pastoral Care Workers must be able to provide support for a range of day to day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people. They can become involved in a wide variety of issues including health, social and values education and emotional support.

It is expected that Pastoral Care Workers would support and work with the Principal and the school's student wellbeing staff or equivalent, to refer students to appropriate services where required. To assist in facilitating this, Pastoral Care Workers should have or develop an appropriate and suitable external network of professional groups working within the community.

In providing these services, the Pastoral Care Worker must sign and observe this Code of Conduct at all times.

The Pastoral Care Worker must:

1. Adhere to all relevant state policy and legislation, including that concerning child safety, privacy, and confidentiality.
2. Not conduct themselves in a manner which impacts their delivery of the services under the program. As such, Pastoral Care Workers must adhere to the program guidelines detailed in the Fact Sheets and the Code of Conduct at all times where conduct in a private capacity might impact their delivery of the services under the program.

3. Recognise, respect and affirm the authority of the Principal and/or school governing body, and work in consultation with them.
4. Contribute to a supportive, safe, inclusive and caring learning environment within the school.
5. Respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs that may be different from his or her own, including respecting the rights of parents/guardians to ensure the moral and spiritual education of their children is in line with the family's own convictions.
6. Actively discourage any form of harassment or discrimination on the grounds of religious ideology, beliefs or sexuality.
7. Not perform professional or other services for which they are not qualified and if not qualified, refer on to an appropriate service, in line with school protocols.
8. Refer a student to a service or organisation which is best placed to support the student's particular needs in accordance with the student's own beliefs and values.
9. Provide accurate and impartial information about the support and services available in the broader community, including community groups and religious groups.
10. Not put him or herself, or allow him or herself, to be placed in a compromising situation, recognising that there are circumstances where confidentiality may be sought by the student.
11. Avoid unnecessary physical contact with a student, recognising however that there may be some circumstances where physical contact may be appropriate such as where the student is injured or distraught.
12. While recognising that an individual Pastoral Care Worker may in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her own beliefs, a Pastoral Care Worker must not take advantage of his or her privileged position to proselytise, evangelise or advocate for a particular view or belief.

Acknowledgement by Pastoral Care Worker

I understand and agree to the terms of this Code of Conduct

Signature of Pastoral Care Worker

Name of Pastoral Care Worker

Signature of Witness

Name of Witness

Position of Witness

Date

Can a school change their Pastoral Care Worker?

Schools may change their Pastoral Care Worker at any time during the funding period. Any proposed change of Pastoral Care Worker must be negotiated with the existing Service Provider and must be in line with the outcomes of school community consultation.

Changes to the choice of a Pastoral Care Worker by a school may impact a Service Providers' ability to continue to employ and supply the services of a Pastoral Care Worker. Schools should be aware that a Service Provider who employs Pastoral Care Workers of a specific religious denomination may not be prepared to supply or employ a Pastoral Care Worker of an alternate religious denomination.

Responsibilities of the Principal and the Service Provider

If a school community decides it would like to change its Pastoral Care Worker it should notify the Service Provider immediately and discuss the potential change to the service the school is considering. If the desired change can be accommodated by the current Service Provider, the Principal must negotiate and document all relevant variations to the service provision.

If the Service Provider is unable to accommodate the change required by the school, the school could consider changing their Service Provider

Changing a service provider

Schools can alter their service arrangements and change Service Provider during the funding period. There will be a number of steps that the school will need to ensure they undertake before changing. The steps required will be outlined in this fact sheet once the Department procurement process is finalised

How do I return unspent money?

Please note that any unused funds will not roll over to subsequent calendar years. Unspent funds must be returned to the Department of Education and Child Development by mid-November of each school year.

Schools will be required to acquit funding towards the end of each school year. Any amounts indicated as being unspent will then generate an invoice being raised against the school.

What are the reporting requirements of the program?

As in the previous program there are milestones which need to be reported against.

Reporting responsibilities of schools are still being negotiated. Acquittal of funding will be part of the reporting process. Schools will be notified as soon as details are finalised.

Making a complaint

As with any concerns in relation to a school matter, the school or preschool should always be the first point of contact. In this case the principal should be contacted to discuss any concerns.

If the parent is not satisfied that their complaint has been resolved by the school – or if the principal is the subject of the complaint – they may choose to contact their Education Office for help.

A parent may contact the Education Complaint Unit on 1800 677 435 at any time to discuss their concern or complaint or to seek advice. Staff will follow up at a later stage to check about progress.

Information about the DECD Parent Complaint Process can be located at the following link:

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ParentComplaintsPolicy.pdf>