

National School Chaplaincy Program 2019

These guidelines reflect the draft Agreement between the Commonwealth and the States for the National School Chaplaincy Program 2019 – 2022. They are not complete, and are subject to change as the Agreement is finalised. They are provided as indicative of the requirements and scope of the Agreement to inform schools.

The purpose of the funds allocated under the NSCP are to enable schools to engage the provision of chaplaincy services in Australian schools to support the wellbeing of students through:

- (a) pastoral care services (being defined 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”); and
- (b) strategies that support the wellbeing of the broader school community, such as, but not limited to, coordinating volunteering activities and support, breakfast clubs, lunch time activities, excursions, school incursions, and parent/carer workshops.

Participating schools are to put in place appropriate processes to ensure that:

- i. participation by schools and students is voluntary;
- ii. chaplains may be of any faith;
- iii. chaplains must:
 - a) not proselytise;
 - b) respect, accept and be sensitive to other people’s views, values and beliefs;
 - c) comply with State and Territory laws and policies in relation to child protection matters;
 - d) have regard to the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children, and the relevant state and territory responses to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse (Volume 6 – Making institutions child safe, Volume 10 – Children with harmful sexual behaviours and Volume 13 – Schools);
 - e) have relevant state and territory valid Working With Children Checks and a National Police Check;
 - f) meet the NSCP’s minimum qualification requirements; and
 - g) undertake training on bullying and cyberbullying provided by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner when this becomes available.

Free, on-line training on bullying and cyberbullying is currently under development by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner. Advice as to when this training will be available is expected early in 2019. It is anticipated that Chaplains will have up to eighteen months to complete the training once it is released.

AISWA will publish the names of AISWA Member Schools in receipt of NSCP funding. Schools are required to publish on their website:

- i. contact information for their chaplain/s (and/or chaplaincy service provider if appropriate), and,
- ii. the process for complaints handling.

Schools are to provide to AISWA:

- (a) each term the number and nature of any complains associated with the Chaplain / NSCP; and,
- (b) annually, confirmation that the requirements set out in the NSCP Agreement were met during that school year including details of how the NSCP has supported the wellbeing of a school community.

This information will form part of the State's reporting requirements as part of the Agreement with the Commonwealth.

For the purposes of this Agreement:

- (a) A chaplain is an individual who:
 - i. is recognised 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
 - ii. is recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution; and
 - iii. meets the NSCP's minimum qualification requirements.
- (b) NSCP's minimum qualification requirements are either:
 - i. a Certificate IV in Youth Work; or
 - ii. a Certificate IV in Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care; or
 - iii. an equivalent qualification (as determined by the States); and this Certificate or equivalent qualification must include competencies in 'mental health' and 'making appropriate referrals'.
- (c) Chaplains must also undertake anti bullying and cyberbullying training with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner once this is developed. All Chaplains must have completed this free training within 18 months from the time this training is first available to Chaplains.
- (d) It is also strongly recommended that all Chaplains complete Gatekeeper or ASIST Suicide Intervention training, and, Youth Mental Health First Aid training. This training is regularly provided by the AISWA School Psychology Service.