

Job Description for School Counsellor

Primary Task

The School Counsellor:

- Is called to serve in their office under the Lordship of Christ, faithfully executing the responsibilities detailed in this description.
- Should understand the direction of the School (as articulated by the Board) and serve within the authority of the Wellbeing team to assist in the realisation of this direction.

Job Details

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Responsible to | Secondary Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principals |
| Time Fraction | Part Time (FTE 0.4) |
| Holidays | School holidays, including a pro-rata amount of four weeks paid annual leave taken during non-term time. Leave without pay during school holidays. |
| Conditions | Dependent on experience and qualifications of the applicant. |

Our Vision

Seeking the Kingdom of God in Education

Our Mission

We provide Parent-governed, Christ-centered schooling with learning experiences that challenge each student to actively live for God in His world, while partnering with Christian parents in the nurture of their children at a price affordable to those who are committed.

Preamble

1. Mount Evelyn Christian School's (MECS or "the School") educational objectives are encapsulated in the School's Mission and Vision and more specifically in the Educational Creed (which seeks to describe a biblical world-view underlying Christian teaching and living). The School is a member of the umbrella organisation Christian Education National (www.cen.edu.au).
2. The heart of employment arrangements is to establish a dynamic, Christ-centred and mutually supportive framework between the School Counsellor and the School (through its appropriate leadership personnel) to assist in the ongoing establishment and furtherance of its mission and vision.
3. The relationship between the School and the School Counsellor shall be characterised by love, humility and service as taught in the Scriptures. Both share a common mission and a confidence that each will act in the best interests of the other in order that God's Kingdom may be advanced.
4. Employment arrangements between the School and the School Counsellor presuppose a biblical view of all offices which allows every person, by virtue of being a representative of God, to hold one or more offices to serve the lord, and for which special competence has been given by the Lord. All such offices acknowledge an appropriate God given authority, which is also recognised, respected and upheld by the school community. These arrangements also presuppose that such arrangements between Christians shall reflect the commitment to one another's welfare, sense of justice and desire to encourage what is taught in the Scriptures. These arrangements are between brothers and sisters in Christ, who recognize the gifts and roles of one another, and who desire that these gifts and roles can be exercised confidently and effectively for the benefit of the whole community.

General Work Description

The School Counsellor has an important role, with a focus on supporting the wellbeing of students through providing short-term individual counselling. Counselling will include a specific reason for referral or goal which may be further identified during the first counselling session. Some common presentations include anxiety, low mood/depression, self-harm/suicidality, social challenges.

School Counsellors help to bring awareness of mental health and wellbeing to all students, through wellbeing events and other educational activities. The duties are performed through direction and support from the Secondary Wellbeing Coordinator.

| Job Description | |
|-----------------|--|
| Tasks | <p>Support for Students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in a discussion around the purpose of counselling and gain informed consent from students. 2. Provide effective and appropriate counselling to students within their areas of competency. 3. As directed by the Secondary Wellbeing Coordinator, initiate and participate in programs to foster student resilience and wellbeing. 4. Be willing to attend and participate in school camps, as directed by the leadership team. <p>Support for Parents/Caregivers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Develop and maintain effective communication with parents/caregivers regarding their child's wellbeing. This may include recommending ongoing mental health support that may be helpful for their child, such as external professionals. 6. School Counsellors are required to seek informed consent from parents/caregivers for students in Prep-Year 7 prior to commencing counselling. <p>Collaboration with Teachers/All Staff:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Develop effective working relationships with staff and the wider community to ensure best practice in supporting students' wellbeing. 8. Proactively collaborate with Year Level and Wellbeing Coordinators to identify solutions to student challenges. 9. Maintain effective communication with staff to provide appropriate feedback and recommendations about students. 10. Collaborate with Learning Diversity in providing wellbeing recommendations to overarching learning support plans. <p>Administration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Keep thorough records of all counselling sessions ensuring official legal retrieval of records is accessible if necessary. 12. Assume duties as a member of the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT). 13. Develop a working knowledge of current, relevant legislation and legal requirements. 14. Attend relevant meetings. |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| | <p>Risk Management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Conduct risk assessments for students deemed at-risk due to self-harm or suicidal ideation. Complete and share student safety plans where applicable. 16. Report directly to the Child Safety Officers on any matters relating to Child Safety. 17. Ensure Mandatory Reporting requirements are followed. <p>Wellbeing Team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. School Counsellors are expected to engage in regular School Counsellor meetings. The meetings will include discussing referrals, processes, case management, and high level/at-risk students. 19. Liaise with the Primary Wellbeing Coordinator around relevant processes and appropriate referrals within the primary school. School Counsellors may be asked to assist with wellbeing programs. 20. School Counsellors are expected to engage in regular conversations with Secondary Wellbeing Officers (WBO) where there is overlapping support provided for specific students. This may include providing guidance to WBOs regarding implementation of any strategies discussed during counselling sessions. 21. School Counsellors are expected to actively participate in Wellbeing Team Meetings. 22. School Counsellors are expected to support and initiate wellbeing-based events. |
| Skills / Experience | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tertiary qualifications in counselling, psychology, social work or related discipline, and registration with appropriate professional body. 2. Expertise in assessing referrals, case formulation and counselling. 3. Have a demonstrated understanding of child and adolescent development. 4. Competence in trauma-informed approaches. 5. The ability to utilise a range of evidence-based therapies as appropriate to the situation, for example, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and play therapy. 6. The ability to develop positive, professional relationships with staff, parents/caregivers and the overarching MECS community. 7. The ability to work independently and as part of a team. 8. Excellent organisational, written, verbal and electronic communication skills. 9. Demonstrate initiative, flexibility, and confidentiality. 10. A Current Working with Children Check. 11. Willingness to support the Vision and Ethos of MECS, understanding the role of parents/caregivers as partners in their child's education and development. |
| Personal Growth and Review | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek out suitable professional development and training. |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Participate in an annual Professional Learning Conversation to discuss their role, goals, achievements, and growth areas. This will occur with the Secondary Wellbeing Coordinator. 3. Nurture all aspects of personal wellbeing. 4. Engage in external professional supervision. |
| Conditions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The School Counsellor will be provided with a laptop. 2. Workbreak – The School Counsellor is expected to complete their normal hours during Workbreak, although the actual times and days may differ. They will be required on-site during specified times and may complete professional development online and participate in various meetings, as directed by the Secondary Wellbeing Coordinator. 3. The School Counsellor is expected to attend the school Open Day. 4. During camps (if required), <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. School Counsellors staying overnight will be paid 12 hours per day. b. School Counsellors attending during the day will be paid for hours of attendance. 5. The School Counsellor is required to complete mandatory compliance modules, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Child Safe Practices b. OH & S c. Mandatory Reporting d. First Aid/Mental Health First Aid e. Anaphylaxis and Asthma f. Disability Act in Education training <p>The hours taken to complete these requirements will be considered time in lieu and offset against Workbreak hours, with approval by the Assistant Principal, Secondary.</p> 6. When the School Counsellor is requested to attend school events outside of regular hours, the additional hours will be considered time in lieu or additional pay, in negotiation with the Assistant Principal, Secondary. 7. School Counsellors are eligible to attend professional development during their school hours, with the cost of the program covered by the school. Applications should be made with approval of the Secondary Wellbeing Coordinator and applied through EMS360. 8. The School Counsellor is invited to attend social events, such as staff socials, farewell afternoon teas, school section social events, Christmas festivities etc, in their own time if this not their workday. 9. The School Counsellor is required to attend morning briefings, including attending and participating in devotions. |