

National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP)

June 2017 Update for Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) schools

The NSCP quarterly updates provide information about the program including key facts, program updates, relevant due dates and good news stories.

Audience for update

- Participating DECD schools and school communities
- NSCP service providers
- Pastoral care workers
- DECD staff

NSCP facts

- The Australian Government funded program aims to support the wellbeing of school communities through the provision of pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community.
- 342 DECD schools will receive funding for a Pastoral Care Worker (PCW) in 2017, with 42 schools new to NSCP participation.
- School and student participation is voluntary.
- There are five (5) service providers employing PCWs and delivering NSCP services to DECD sites in 2017 - [Centacare Adelaide](#), [Centacare Country SA](#), [Re-Engage Youth Services](#), [Schools Ministry Group](#), and [Uniting Care Wesley Country SA](#).
- The school determines the wellbeing needs of the school community and the services to be delivered as the 'best fit' for the school.
- Schools may choose to discontinue services or change service providers and/or pastoral care workers at any time during the year, in line with contractual arrangements.

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School NSCP Reporting (Quarter 1, 2017)

A big **THANK YOU** to all NSCP schools for completing the online confirmation report for the first quarter, 2017. Your comments and declarations for services provided and/or allocated, allows DECD to manage contractual obligations and payments with service providers and discuss any queries raised with schools.

Feedback about the program for the first quarter was positive, with comments including:

“valued by our school community”

“this is the first time our school has been involved with this program. It is so beneficial to our school and students”

“a fantastic program supporting those in need”

“the pastoral care worker has supported a number of identified vulnerable students and has commenced building positive relationships with the students”

“contributions to our school community are essential and so beneficial”

“highly respected PCW and is highly effective in her role”

“we are extremely happy with the service provided”

A few schools have advised of recruitment difficulties in engaging pastoral care workers in the first quarter. Under the NSCP, the total minimum number of hours allocated to a school must be delivered during the school year, in consultation and agreement with the site leader. As such, a school that received a gap in service in the first quarter should receive the full complement of hours delivered during the school year once their service is operational.

Schools should work with their service provider to engage a pastoral care worker, however please contact the [DECD NSCP Team](#) if additional support is required.

School NSCP Reporting (Quarter 2, 2017)

Recently, site leaders were sent an email requesting confirmation of their second quarter’s NSCP services for 2017. Confirmations, which allow DECD to pay service providers to ensure service continuity, are due by cob Friday, 16 June 2017.

Varied Work of Pastoral Care Workers

NSCP pastoral care workers provide services to assist in meeting the wellbeing needs of the school, as determined in consultation with the site leader and formalised in a PCW work plan. As these needs differ within each school community, the work of pastoral care workers is varied. Some services delivered by NSCP pastoral care workers include:

- run breakfast and homework clubs
- implement family and individual programs to develop student and community social and relationship skills (eg resilience and self-esteem, cyber safety)
- organise recess and lunch activities that focus on student engagement and wellbeing
- provide pastoral care support to students who request and for whom parental/guardian consent is obtained
- assist in promoting community involvement in government endorsed initiatives (eg ‘Bullying. No Way!’, ‘RU OK? Day’, ‘White Ribbon Day’)
- model positive behaviours such as relationship building and maintenance
- volunteer to assist with school programs (eg parent programs, sports days)
- connect families with local community resources (food, programs, services and agencies)
- refer students and staff to appropriate school support services (eg school counsellors, social workers); and work with school wellbeing staff to deliver services that meet school wellbeing needs

The breadth of services provided by pastoral care workers makes it essential that workers hold appropriate minimum qualifications. Minimum qualification requirements can be found in section 4.8 of the [National School Chaplaincy Program for government schools guideline](#).

NSCP and School Wellbeing Services

In early 2017, DECD released its internal reference document entitled [Roles, Responsibilities and Referral Pathways](#), to assist primary school-based counsellors in identifying the connections between key roles within the DECD wellbeing system.

This document aims to improve support for primary school-based counsellors and related school wellbeing systems and practices, and includes information on how NSCP pastoral care workers fit within the wellbeing structure.

The document outlines the role, responsibilities and referral pathways of pastoral care workers. Below are extracts from this document that relate to pastoral care workers:

Role	<p>“Supporting the emotional wellbeing of children and young people by providing pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community.</p> <p>Provide support for a range of day to day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people across a wide variety of issues, including health, social and values education, and emotional support.</p>
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral service delivery as approved by principal, and with consent of parent or carer and children and young people • Working as part of the school’s wellbeing team to support the wellbeing of the school community • Work with the principal, and the school’s wellbeing staff or equivalent to refer children and young people to appropriate services when required • Deliver services in a way that respects the range of views and beliefs, regardless of race, religion, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression • Supporting the development of children and young people’s resilience and wellbeing • Providing children and young people, families, and staff with support to manage personal difficulties, making referrals as appropriate • Supporting children and young people wanting to explore their spirituality • Developing supportive relationships with staff, children and young people, parents and carers • Organising one-to-one or small group wellbeing focused sessions and activities with children and young people, parents, staff, community members, e.g. running breakfast clubs; delivering peer leadership and support programs.
Referral Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-referral by children and young people or staff member • Parental or carer referral, or Principal or teacher referral, or referral by another member of the school wellbeing team, or Pastoral Carer Worker referral self-initiated <p>Referring on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the principal and the school’s wellbeing staff to refer children and young people and other members of the school community to appropriate services when required eg. to access local health centres and agencies”

The document identifies how pastoral care workers assist schools to:

Build capacity in community culture and practice through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Engagement with school wellbeing team to help identify wellbeing needs and pathways; and reflecting on current practice and cycle of continuous improvement. • School-based wellbeing team support role • Awareness raising: spiritual wellbeing domain • Flexible, accessible support role
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Build partnerships with communities and engage families through

- Facilitating informal links between the school and local community, and working with wellbeing staff to connect families with local resources.
- Identifying, maintaining and utilising community networks
- Engaging and connecting with parents and carers and facilitating links with appropriate services and agencies

Assist in engaging children in wellbeing practices through

- Resilience and inclusion-focused activities to encourage active school involvement, and encouraging children and young people to take an active role in making positive changes.
- Targeting specific services and activities to an identified wellbeing need (e.g. breakfast clubs)
- Early identification of support needs facilitated by approachability of the role

Adhere to ethical, evidence based and integrated practices through

- Consent arrangements, child protection safeguards, Information Sharing Guidelines and referral signposting
- Complementing wellbeing / pastoral care offered by other helping disciplines
- Professional standards related to training or area of underlying specialism
- Code of Conduct.”

Schools are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this [pathways document](#), the roles, responsibilities and referral pathways for pastoral care workers.

NSCP Impact Story

Meeting the identified wellbeing needs of school communities can be challenging and requires a unique breadth and depth of knowledge and experience. This can be particularly true for pastoral care workers working across multiple sites and in regional areas, where the wellbeing needs of schools can vary.



Lindy Lou Badger becomes part of multiple schools' wellbeing teams.

In January 2016, Lindy Lou Badger relocated to the State's South East to be close to her family. With a human services background in supporting young people experiencing mental health and/or drug/alcohol concerns and qualifications including Bachelors in special education and psychology and a Masters of social science, Lindy Lou was uniquely skilled to deliver pastoral care services in the Limestone Coast.

Employed by Centacare Catholic Family Services, Lindy Lou is providing pastoral care services to Millicent North Primary School, Penola Primary School and Mil-Lel Primary School and is working within the wellbeing teams of these sites to assist the schools in meeting the wellbeing needs of their school communities. Some of the wellbeing needs identified for students include: understanding the need for social connection and acceptance, building and sustaining healthy peer relationships, understanding and managing emotional responses, and overcoming transport challenges associated with geographical isolation.

Using her knowledge and experience, Lindy Lou is able to work within the schools' wellbeing frameworks to provide one-on-one and group support and to see the world through the lenses of the children she is supporting. "She balances this with a genuine care and commitment to the wellbeing of the child", said Lynne Thorpe, Centacare Manager – Family Outreach and Relationship Services. "The combination of these qualitative and quantitative attributes, results in the delivery of high quality and responsive service."

DECD welcomes articles from school communities and service providers highlighting the contributions of pastoral care workers providing NSCP services in meeting the wellbeing needs of SA government schools. If you have a NSCP impact story to share, please contact DECD Engagement and Wellbeing at DECD.NSCP@sa.gov.au.

Contact: DECD Engagement and Wellbeing | (08) 8226 1029 | DECD.NSCP@sa.gov.au | [DECD NSCP Webpage](#)