

# National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP)

## March 2017 newsletter for Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) schools

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

### Audience for newsletter

- 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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## Change to Funding and Payments for 2017 and 2018

From 2017, funding payments to service providers will be managed centrally by DECD (previously managed by schools). Payments will be made directly to service providers under contractual arrangements with the aim of making the payment process more efficient while complying with [Treasurer's Instructions](#).

School principals will be asked to confirm the NSCP services provided to their school for the preceding quarter (via a short online form), before payment to their service provider can be made. DECD will advise principals via email when reporting is required and will provide the link to the online form. A guide to the payment schedule is below. In addition to the payment schedule below, a final confirmation from schools for projected NSCP services for the December period will also be required.

Period	Schools to confirm previous quarter's NSCP services
January - March	Late March
April - June	Late June
July - September	Late September
October - November	Late November

## NSCP School News

Welcome to the 42 schools new to the NSCP funded in 2017 and 2018. NSCP services are supplied through centrally contracted service providers and aim to assist with the wellbeing needs of SA government schools.

Recipients new to the program include schools from metropolitan, regional, outer regional, remote and very remote areas such as: Fulham North Primary School, Sandy Creek Primary School, Whyalla Town Primary School, Port Augusta West Primary School, Port Lincoln High and Junior Primary Schools, and Woomera Area School.

A big thank you to schools for completing and contributing to the NSCP 2016 administrative requirements.

Feedback for the program from schools has been positive with approximately 94% of schools satisfied or very satisfied with the program and NSCP services. Some comments received from schools include:

“contribution is highly valued by our school community”

“excellent skill sets”

“great benefit to our students, parents and staff providing an ear to listen to and support whenever needed”

“in high demand by parents and children”

“makes a significant difference to the wellbeing of students at our school”

“multi-faith approach - our pastoral care worker is exemplary in this”

“our pastoral care worker is an integral part of our team”

“without our pastoral care worker a number of our students with needs would not have those needs met in a timely manner”

Should your school have any questions about the program or wish to discuss NSCP services, please contact the DECD Engagement and Wellbeing team via email at [DECD.NSCP@sa.gov.au](mailto:DECD.NSCP@sa.gov.au) or via telephone on (08) 8226 1029.

## NSCP Impact Story

On 26 January 2017, Bordertown Primary School's pastoral care worker Suzanne Flint was awarded the Citizen of the Year award by Tatiara District Council Mayor, Graham Excell. This award recognised Suzanne's services to the school as well as the services she has provided to the wider community in caring and supporting individuals and families.



Tatiara District Council Mayor Graham Excell presents pastoral care worker Suzanne Flint with the Citizen of the Year Award 2017. (Source: Border Chronicle – article available at: <http://www.borderchronicle.com.au/story/4384648/recognition-for-a-local-caring-lady/>)

Suzanne has provided pastoral care services to the Bordertown Primary School for four years under the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) through the school's contracted service provider, Schools Ministry Group.

"She has been instrumental in talking with parents," said reception teacher Zoe Maney. "She has given them strategies to help separate from their children in the morning [and] help their children build their coping strategies and manage their anxiety ... nothing is ever too much trouble."

Parents have similar responses. "Suzanne is easily approachable, very welcoming and has a wisdom that is inspiring". "I think she is just a wonderful asset for the school, who provides important support, encouragement and activities to the students and families."

Pastoral care workers undertake varied wellbeing services under the NSCP to support the emotional needs of the school community and occasionally these services are provided in times of grief and uncertainty.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016, ten-year-old Billy unexpectedly passed away. Suzanne was there to provide support to Billy's family and the school community during this time. Lauren had not met Suzanne prior to her son's passing, but recalled that Billy enjoyed helping Suzanne prepare breakfast club and told his mum that "Suzanne was nice."

"My family's lives had been turned upside down. Suzanne was there from the beginning, [she] sat beside me through the toughest day of my life, while supporting my partner and everyone else at this horrible time. Suzanne looked after everyone around her and took on as many things as she could to help ease the load of others and still continues to do so. I would have been lost without her that day and still now.

"Suzanne arranged for food and drinks to be delivered to my house as well as special memories to be made for me of my son. She has also supported the teachers and staff and the community around her. She is our rock ... my family cannot thank Suzanne enough for her friendship, strength and ongoing support she has given us."

Bordertown Hospital Acting Executive Officer / Director of Nursing, Vicki Guthrie reiterated Lauren's sentiment, sending Suzanne a letter of appreciation from the hospital stating "the staff on duty that day cannot speak more highly of the support and compassion you provided while at the hospital, your presence provided comfort not only to the family but to the staff - a quiet & respectful 'go between' allowing them to be on hand if needed but to also not be too intrusive."

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](mailto:DECD.NSCP@sa.gov.au).

## Update to National School Chaplaincy Program Guidelines

In December 2016, a minor edit to the [National School Chaplaincy for government schools guideline](#) was undertaken to include the new contractual arrangements with service providers and the resulting change to the payment process (managed centrally by DECD from 2017). The guidelines can be accessed through the [DECD NSCP webpage](#).

## Update to Process for Minimum Qualification Transition Arrangements

DECD has recently reviewed its process for considering minimum qualification transition applications, which is available on the [DECD NSCP webpage](#).

The [National School Chaplaincy for government schools guideline](#) requires that service providers ensure their employed pastoral care workers have a minimum level of qualifications and skills to provide NSCP services to SA government schools under the program. A service provider engaging a person to provide pastoral care must ensure that the worker holds, and is able to provide evidence of that person holding, the program's required minimum qualifications:

- Certificate IV in Youth Work; or
- Certificate IV in Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care: or
- an equivalent qualification.

Qualifications must include appropriate competencies in 'mental health' and 'making appropriate referrals', which currently fall within the scope of the following topics, as confirmed by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):

Mental Health:	CHCMHS001 – 'Work with people with mental health issues'
Making appropriate referrals:	CHCCCS016 – 'Respond to client needs'

In exceptional circumstances only, DECD may consider applications submitted by NSCP service providers for a temporary exemption from the minimum qualifications required for a pastoral care worker in a regional, remote or disadvantaged community. An application may be submitted where the proposed pastoral care worker has the relevant experience and is studying towards the required minimum qualifications or equivalent to deliver the NSCP services in a government school, and where the wellbeing needs of the school are documented and the application is supported by the school.

It is preferable for an NSCP funded school to experience a gap in NSCP service rather than place an unqualified person in the role of pastoral care worker at a school.

## Supplementation of NSCP funds

Section 4.5 of the [National School Chaplaincy for government schools guideline](#) advises that the initial purpose of the National School Chaplaincy Program was to provide 'seed' funding/assistance funding to strengthen existing wellbeing services by establishing or enhancing pastoral care services at a school; with funding to be acquitted at the end of each funded calendar year.

Resource entitlement statement monies provided by the Department cannot be used to supplement NSCP services. However, schools may supplement NSCP seed funding through monies received from the local community (including school community), for example through fundraising activities.

Funding that is not provided by DECD or other government avenues (eg from local or school community) is not required to be acquitted to DECD. However, schools must ensure that any local and school community monies raised for delivering NSCP services are conducted such that the purpose and use of monies is clear to all parties.

## Change to DECD NSCP Webpage

The format of the [DECD NSCP webpage](#) has changed in the aim of improving content organisation.

The [National School Chaplaincy for government schools guideline](#) contains information relevant to the program and is included at the top of the page, for quick access.

The [DECD NSCP webpage](#) contains the most up-to-date information available for the program and is updated regularly.

## Contact

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