

Role of the chaplain and student wellbeing officer

The role of a state school chaplain and student wellbeing officer is to provide optional pastoral care to support the general wellbeing of students and the school community. The role will reflect the specific needs of the students attending the school. Activities provided by the chaplain or student wellbeing officer are at the discretion of the school principal, with the support of the school community.

Chaplains and student wellbeing officers must be able to provide support for a range of day-to-day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with diverse groups of people. While chaplains and student wellbeing officers may personally model their own positions or beliefs, they must avoid any claims or implications that any one religion, denomination or worldview is advantageous or superior to any other religion, denomination or worldview.

While recognising that an individual worker may respond to questions and, in good faith, express views and articulate values consistent with their own beliefs, the chaplain or student wellbeing officer must not take advantage of their position to proselytise, evangelise, advocate for or denigrate a particular faith or worldview.

Delivery of services

Chaplains and student wellbeing officers are bound by the provisions of relevant Queensland legislation, including the [Public Records Act 2002](#), [Information Privacy Act 2009](#) and the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#).

Chaplains and student wellbeing officers must also adhere to the [Chaplaincy and student wellbeing officer services policy statement and supporting documents](#), and other relevant departmental policies and procedures.

Chaplains and student wellbeing officers may be involved in any of the following:

- **Social and/or emotional support** — assisting students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills that support learning, positive behaviour and constructive social relationships (e.g. through breakfast club or lunchtime group meetings).
- **General wellbeing** — supporting students and staff by promoting their physical, emotional, social and intellectual wellbeing (e.g. Yoga or mindfulness activities).
- **Mentoring** — acting as a role model for students and assisting in the development of supportive relationships for, with, and among students (e.g. one-on-one meetings or goal planning workshops).
- **Community development** — working with school-based support staff and community-based youth organisations and networks to support students for example:
 - contributing to school newsletters
 - providing updates to school community organisations (e.g. P&Cs) on service provision
 - attending P&C meetings to provide details of the services and/or activities that are available
 - arranging guest speakers or presenters (with school principal approval).
- **Educational support** — assisting with classroom activities, under the direction of a teacher, where involvement by the worker provides further support for those students who may be at risk of disengagement.
- **Extra-curricular activities** — participating in general school activities e.g. camps, excursions, sports days or coaching team sports.

Chaplains and student wellbeing officers must not be involved in any of the following:

- providing professional counselling
- providing specialist services to school students such as professional mental health and psychological services or other allied health services
- attempting to convert students to a religion by proselytising/evangelising through activities such as:
 - urging students to attend activities that have a religious/spiritual component
 - initiating faith discussions with a view to manipulating students to a particular view of belief
 - using other methods such as social media, for example, blogs and Facebook, or newsletters and school websites, to proselytise/evangelise to students within their school
- attempting to undermine the religious, or other, beliefs of students

- providing support to students who have indicated that they do not wish to access the services of a chaplain or student wellbeing officer, or where appropriate informed consent definitions have not been provided
- referring a student to an outside agency or specialist support without the explicit approval of the school principal, deputy principal or guidance officer
- taking on roles which are the domain of other staff members, for example, case management of an individual student
- expressing views that are discriminatory or biased on the grounds of religious ideology, beliefs or sexuality — regardless of an individual's personal/spiritual views, they must treat all students with dignity and respect
- performing religious services/rites (such as worship or prayer) during school assembly, unless approved by the school principal
- providing religious counselling or [religious instruction](#) as it is not part of a chaplain or student wellbeing officer's role. However, a person who is a chaplain or student wellbeing officer may also be a religious instructor, provided that the religious instruction is delivered outside of their normal chaplain/student wellbeing officer work hours.