



Linden Park Primary School

Pastoral Care Worker Program Information 2020

Fast Facts

- The Australian Federal Government provides a variety of information and resources to schools, parents, and students to support the resilience and wellbeing of students. This includes the [National Safe Schools Framework](#), the [Student Wellbeing Hub](#), [Cyber Bullying](#) resources, [Bullying. No Way!](#) Resources, [The Child Protection Curriculum](#) and the [National Schools Chaplaincy Program](#) (NSCP).
- Within SA government schools, NSCP funded workers are called Pastoral Care Workers (PCW). It is voluntary for schools to apply for NSCP funding. [Pastoral Care](#) Workers are trained to provide referral advice and to support individuals to connect with or develop their sense of self, resilience and capacity to cope.
- The Department for Education does not employ Pastoral Care Workers. Rather they are employed by third party service providers. There are currently 3 service providers who employ PCW's in SA Education Department sites, *Schools Ministry Group (SMG)*, *Centacare* and *Uniting Country SA*.
- Pastoral Care Workers can be [secular](#) as long as they meet program requirements including but not limited to: Meeting the minimum qualification requirements (e.g. Certificate IV in Youth Work); Holding relevant child protection clearances; Endorsement by an accepted religious organisation.
- The NSCP is not intended to diminish or replace existing careers advice, counselling or wellbeing services. It is designed to form part of the wellbeing services that already exist within school communities.
- It is not compulsory for any student to participate in activities or receive services from an NSCP funded Pastoral Care Worker.

What is Linden Park's history with this program?

- In 2016, the LPPS Governing Council endorsed an application to the NSCP. The school was successful and funded for 2017-2018 for \$15,000 (ex GST) per year. This funding has been rolled over to include 2019.
- After seeking feedback from the school community in 2019, the Governing Council voted to endorse an application for the National Schools Chaplaincy Program 2020-2022.
- As a result of the 2019 application, the school has secured funding for 2020-2022 (300 hours total).
- The school uses this funding to engage a PCW rather than a 'chaplain', which may be the case in some schools (particularly interstate). Regardless, all PCWs are prohibited from proselytising.
- Parents of students who are identified for support are given an 'opt-in' permission form. Students who have consent from their parents may work with the PCW (access to the program may be dependent on need and availability).
- The PCW program is in addition to the existing wellbeing initiatives at the school such as a program based on 'What's the Buzz', individual/small group support with a School Service Officer (SSO), Play is the Way, Child Protection Curriculum, restorative practices and counselling with leadership staff.

What is happening in 2020?

- In 2020, we welcome back Ellen O'Dea who was the school's PCW in 2018 before taking maternity leave.
- Ellen is employed through Centacare and works at the school on Wednesdays.
- Ellen has a Diploma of Community Services, a Certificate 4 in Youth Work, a Certificate 4 in Community Development, and a Certificate 3 in Community Services Work. She has extensive experience working with children and young adults with high risk behaviours and limited social development and those who are experiencing isolation, mental health issues and family difficulties.
- Ellen is available for families through the front office.

Why Centacare?

- The three service providers currently providing NSCP services to SA government schools are *Centacare*, *Schools Ministry Group (SMG)* and *Uniting Country SA*, all of which the Department have determined to comply with the *National School Chaplaincy Program* for government schools guideline .
- The school decided to use a provider that has proven successful in other schools and who the Department for Education have already determined to comply with the [National School Chaplaincy Program for government schools guideline](#).
- One of the requirements of the program guidelines is that PCWs have 'evidence of ordination, religious qualification or endorsement by an accepted religious organisation'. In our case, our PCW is 'endorsed' by *Centacare*, who does not have the requirement that the person is religious or 'of faith' where other services do. For more information about *Centacare Services*, please visit www.centacare.org.au .

What does the PCW do at the school?

- The PCW works on Wednesdays at the school and provides services to assist in meeting the wellbeing needs of students. Some services delivered may include:
 - Implementing individual programs to develop student participation, engagement, optimism, wellbeing and social/relationship skills (e.g. resilience, cyber safety).
 - Organising playtime activities that focus on student engagement and wellbeing
 - Providing support to students who request and for whom parent/guardian consent is obtained
 - Providing students, families, and staff with support to manage personal difficulties
 - Modelling positive behaviours such as relationship building and maintenance
 - Volunteering to assist with school programs (e.g. sports days)
 - Connecting families with services and local community resources (food, programs, agencies)
 - Referring students and staff to appropriate school support services (e.g. Behaviour Coach)
 - Working with school leadership staff to deliver services that meet school wellbeing needs

***Please note that the PCW service is additional to the school's capacity to support student wellbeing and these are services that may be recommended and/or are available by school-based staff*

How are students identified for PCW programs or support?

- Students can be referred to the PCW by their parent or carer, teacher, Leadership staff or school support staff or they may self-refer.
- Some teachers will at times request support from the PCW to deliver a program to the whole class (e.g. with a focus on bullying or resilience).
- For all of the above, an 'opt-in' or permission form will need to be completed via the *EdSmart* email that is sent to parents after a referral is received.

What do I do if I want my child to access PCW support or programs?

- Parents can speak to their child's teacher, enquire at the front office or send an email to dl.0647.info@schools.sa.edu.au
- Parents can request to meet or speak with the PCW and/or Deputy Inclusion to discuss their child's needs and appropriate approaches or programs prior to any support commencing.
- Feedback is given to parents about their child's progress.
- Please note: due to the overwhelming interest in PCW support, students receiving support are prioritised according to need and therefore some students may need to wait to access services.

What happens if I don't want my child involved in PCW support or programs?

- Parents who do not wish their child to have access to this support service, need to inform the front office staff in writing or send an email to dl.0647.info@schools.sa.edu.au .
- A list of students who do not have permission is maintained by the school and made available to the PCW, class teachers and other appropriate staff.
- If there are students in a particular class who have been opted-out, then that class will not be engaging in whole class sessions or any other school activities with the PCW. There may be small groups or individuals in that class who access the service in other ways. As an alternative, Teachers can access support from the school leadership team (including the new School Counsellor from Term 3 2020) when delivering wellbeing programs.
- All students at LPPS have access to emotional, wellbeing and mental health support from their teacher and from the leadership staff at the school. The PCW is an additional service to this and is often seen by students as a neutral alternative.
- As with all school programs, if you have any feedback or concerns, please use the '[Feedback or Request a Meeting](#)' link or refer to the [complaints brochures](#) available on the school's website.

Handy links

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program>

<http://lindenpkr7.sa.edu.au/feedback-or-request-a-meeting/>

<https://www.education.gov.au/student-resilience-and-wellbeing-resources>