

SCHOOL COUNSELLOR K-12

Role Description

The School Counsellor is a key role in the life of NBCS responsible for the provision of services relating to the wellbeing of the students. The role requires initiative, discretion, expertise and varying levels of confidentiality in dealing with matters of importance to the psychological and emotional wellbeing of students. The School Counsellor also supports the management of students with emotional and behavioural challenges. The School Counsellor must hold appropriate professional qualifications and maintain membership of a relevant professional body. As a part of the Wellbeing Team the School Counsellor works closely with students, staff and parents as well as those in the wider community to support the mental health and wellbeing of students in our care. This will also include referral for further treatment outside of the resources that are provided at NBCS. It is expected that the School Counsellor will support the strategic vision and mission of NBCS, and uphold the Christian values of the school.

Reporting Relationships

- The School Counsellor is a member of the Wellbeing Team and reports directly to the *Assistant Principal - Wellbeing* for all wellbeing, organisational and staff matters.
- Takes direction to support student wellbeing from the *Assistant Principal – Student Welfare, Head of Primary and Head of Secondary*.
- Takes direction to support student learning from the *Assistant Principal -Curriculum*.
- Ultimately, all roles within the NBCS community are responsible to the *Principal*.
- Other key relationships include Deputy Head of Primary, Year Advisers 7-12, Wellbeing Adviser 7-12, Senior Chaplain, Heads of Department, Learning Enrichment.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

The position responsibilities are summarised in the following areas:

- 1. Provide information to teachers and school leaders that supports their understanding of emotional and behavioural difficulties in students.**
 - Ensure that teachers are informed about the role of the School Counsellor and understand the process for referral.
 - Assist teachers to identify, understand and manage students with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
 - Support teaching staff in the management of students with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
 - Write Management Plans for staff to guide them in teaching students with high level Mental Health concerns.
 - Where required present to staff during meetings about students at risk.
 - Provide training for teachers in topics of student wellbeing and support strategies.
- 2. Provide information to parents that supports their understanding of student mental health**
 - Liaise with parents regarding referral and ongoing management of their child.
 - Work to ensure ongoing collaboration between all key stakeholders in the management of students (i.e. parents, school staff, outside agencies).
 - Conduct and/or participate in events for parents and carers outside of working hours.

3. Provide support and information to students to assist with mental health challenges

- Ensure that students understand the role of the School Counsellor and the processes for accessing the School Counsellor.
- Provide counselling for students who are referred for mental health challenges and consult with / refer to external professionals as appropriate.
- Encourage students to contact the School Counsellor for guidance and advice not available from other key wellbeing staff.
- Identify and manage students with emotional and behavioural disorders and provide recommendations for support from external specialists when required.
- Delivery of 1:1 counselling using evidence-based therapies with a focus on short term interventions and support.
- Facilitate groups using evidenced based techniques that may address intervention or prevention in a variety of areas related to Mental Health and Wellbeing.

4. Promote mental health and resilience by advising on key programs as appropriate

- Educate students about the issues relevant to mental health and adolescence and promote understanding of self-awareness.
- Provide mental health information to parents, students and staff through seminars, presentations and newsletter articles.
- Attend Grade Meetings and Mentor Groups where appropriate to work in partnership with and/or provide coaching for teachers on wellbeing topics and strategies.
- Use clinical expertise to support with program design and delivery of wellbeing programs across the school.

5. Administration and Communication

- Maintain accurate and timely student records to professional standards.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date information through Compass and One Note.
- Attend and contribute to Wellbeing Team Meetings.
- Attend meetings with teachers across the school related to Case Management of students.
- Attend general staff meetings as appropriate.
- Prepare reports for files, hospitals/referrals, and parents related to student needs.
- Use data to highlight areas and students needing further support.
- Prepare caseload summary reports for Assistant Principal Wellbeing.

6. Professional Development, Training and Supervision

- Maintain professional registration with appropriate board.
- Maintain and adhere to Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct as dictated by relevant professional body.
- Attend approved professional development courses to maintain membership of professional body.
- Maintain a network of external professionals to facilitate referrals.
- Attend Association of Independent Schools Counsellors' networking meetings as appropriate.
- Undertake regular professional supervision.

7. Risk Management

- Report directly to the Principal on any matters relating to Child Protection.
- Ensure that mandatory reporting requirements are followed.
- Act, as necessary, to provide information to Senior Leadership when relevant issues relating to risk management arise.
- Conduct risk assessments across a range of mental health presentations as the need arises.
- Involvement in the NBCS Critical Response Team.

8. Additional requirements:

- When required, attend co-curricular activities including school camps, retreats, excursions to support teachers and students.
- Participate in school administration, assemblies and other community events within the school.
- Fulfil the requirements of this position description and other duties as reasonably required from time to time.
- Ensure personal safety and the safety of colleagues, contractors, student and visitors by complying with the WHS policy.
- Consistently uphold the NBCS values and comply with all school policies and procedures.
- This role is also required to at times be available outside 'normal' school hours, to support the Principal and other Executive staff in a range of wellbeing and administrative duties.
- As a key member of the Wellbeing Team, the School Counsellor must conduct all their duties in a caring, collaborative and professional manner, characterised by humility, honesty and integrity.

Note: No Role Description can capture the complexity of working on a school executive. Therefore, this job will include other duties as they arise, and will require the staff member to be proactive in looking for what needs to be done.

Attributes, Skills and Abilities:

- Professional qualifications in Psychology enabling professional registration.
- Experience leading and supervising others.
- Active and ongoing commitment to and involvement with a Christian/fellowship.
- Firm personal belief in accordance with the NBCS Staff Statement of Beliefs.
- Passionate about working with children and teenagers.

Key Capabilities:

- Exceptional interpersonal & communication skills.
- Ability to coordinate and participate in a team environment.
- Leadership and coaching abilities.
- Understanding of the academic and wellbeing needs of students as these relate to the learning and personal growth outcomes for students.
- The ability to develop positive, professional relationships with staff.
- Initiative.
- Organised.
- Expertise in identification, formulation and counselling of students.
- Ability to provide psycho-education about adolescent mental health to teaching staff.
- Ability to identify appropriate external professionals for students requiring support outside the services of the specialist staff at NBCS.
- Strong ability to collaborate with educators in formulating support programs for students.
- Willingness to collaborate effectively with a broad range of key academic and wellbeing staff to enhance student outcomes.
- Demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional development and professional currency.
- Professionalism and discretion at all times in relation to confidential matters.
- Flexibility and ability to adapt to the frequently changing demands of a school context.
- Commitment to the provision of a high standard of professional care.
- Approachable
- Knowledge and understanding of the development across both the early years and adolescent development.
- Familiarity and experience in interpreting psychometric reports.

Events and Specific Tasks:

More specific information will be provided around events and specific tasks for School Counsellor. The Assistant Principal Wellbeing will be responsible for providing this information.