

Chaplaincy and student welfare services

A state school community can decide to introduce a [chaplaincy/student welfare service](#) to complement other support services in the school. These services provide students, staff and/or parents with social, emotional and spiritual support, provide an additional adult role model in the school, and enhance engagement with the broader community including parents.

Chaplaincy/student welfare services are inclusive of, and show respect for, all religious and non-religious beliefs and other stances represented in the school community. All activities and events provided are non-discriminatory and equally available to students of all beliefs.

Establishing a chaplaincy or student welfare service

Local community support, including from the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C)/School Council, is required for the introduction of a chaplaincy/student welfare service in a school and, once introduced, to change the type of service provided at the school.

Schools can apply to access funds for these services through state and federal government grants, and/or community fundraising. Some schools may have a volunteer chaplain/student welfare worker.

School funds provided by the Queensland Government for educational purposes cannot be used for chaplaincy/student welfare services, with the exception of Independent Public Schools. Independent Public Schools can flexibly direct their budget to best meet their students' individual needs.

Schools access a chaplain/student welfare worker through an external organisation that has been accredited by the Department of Education and Training, known as an Accredited Employing Authority (AEA). Although the AEA is responsible for the recruitment, selection and employment of the chaplain/student welfare worker, the principal must endorse the AEA's selection. The AEA is also responsible for the ongoing professional development, training and professional supervision of the chaplain/student welfare worker in areas pertinent to their role in the school.

The principal utilises the P&C/School Council and, if one exists, the local chaplaincy committee (LCC), to develop and monitor the role and workplan (Form 2) of the service, taking into consideration the needs of the student population, the characteristics of the school community, and the availability of resources in the school.

As part of their training and qualifications, before they commence their service, chaplains/student welfare workers must have a current and valid [Blue Card](#), and receive a school-based induction program which includes [Student Protection](#) and [Code of Conduct](#) training.

Delivering a chaplaincy or student welfare service

Where the school community has supported the introduction of the chaplaincy/student welfare service, general interaction between students and the chaplain/student welfare worker within the school does not

require additional parental consent. While it is not compulsory for any student to participate in activities or receive services from a chaplain/student welfare worker, written informed consent (for example, Form 1) is required for ongoing one-to-one meetings with the chaplain/student welfare worker.

A chaplaincy/student welfare service is not a [counselling service](#). Chaplains/student welfare workers are not permitted to engage in evangelising or proselytising, nor attempt to undermine a student's religious or other beliefs.

In order to ensure coordinated case management of student support, each referral that a chaplain/student welfare worker makes to an external agency requires the explicit approval of the school's principal, deputy principal, or guidance officer.

Managing a chaplaincy or student welfare service

Although chaplains/student welfare workers are employees of the AEA and operate in schools as contractors, they are still subject to legislative and departmental procedures that impact on their duties, as well as reasonable directions from the principal (or delegate).

The principal ensures that all chaplain/student welfare worker records in relation to these services (which are the property of the department) are secured in accordance with the relevant provisions of the [Public Records Act 2002](#), the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#) and the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#).

The principal reports any instance of suspected inappropriate behaviour or conduct by the AEA or its staff, including behaviour considered in breach of either the department's Code of Conduct or Student Protection procedures, in accordance with existing departmental protocols to the department's Ethical Standards Unit.

The principal deals with complaints associated with the delivery of chaplaincy/student welfare services in a fair and equitable manner, and ensures all accountability and reporting procedures occur as required.

Forms

- [Form 1: Consent Form — one-on-one meetings with chaplain/student welfare worker](#)
- [Form 2: Workplan](#)