



# ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE POSITION DESCRIPTION SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

As a Catholic College for boys in the Marist tradition, the Gospel is at the heart of all we do. Everyday moments of prayer, reflection and peacefulness in the light of the Gospel, have a formative influence on the culture of our College. We consciously seek to adopt St Marcellin Champagnat's vision that "to educate young people, you must love them, and love them all equally". It is from this vision together with the pillars of the Marist Charism: Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Love of Work, and In the Way of Mary that our distinct characteristics are shaped. We aim to be close to the most vulnerable and accompany our students in their development as good Christians and good citizens.

The School Counsellor at Saint Augustine's College has an indispensable role to play in supporting and promoting the mission and goals of the College where faith and educational excellence are reconciled. It is important that staff see themselves as being in cooperative partnership with parents and the Catholic Community and seek to support the Marist Charism in dynamic ways. The young people in our care should develop skills in building positive relationships based on those modelled by College staff. Teaching practices at St Augustine's College are focused on the continual development and enrichment of the educational experiences and outcomes for all students as they develop into young men with 'strong minds' and 'gentle hearts'.

## ACCOUNTABLE TO COMMUNICATING WITH

Principal  
Deputy Principal Pastoral Care  
Director of Boarding  
Heads of Residence  
College Nurse  
Staff of St Augustine's  
Staff of St Monica's

## CLASSIFICATION

Guidance Counsellor Teacher  
Guidance Counsellor (without Teacher Qualifications)  
Counsellor (without Teacher Qualifications)  
Remuneration in accordance with the Catholic Employing Authorities Single Enterprise Collective Agreement – Diocesan Schools of Queensland 2019-2023  
Executive Director

## AUTHORISATION

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

An employee in this position is required to focus on student wellbeing and work collaboratively with school communities to promote and foster the development and mental health of all students, through the provision of a comprehensive counselling service.

The School Counsellor acknowledges and attempts to be responsive to the diverse needs of the contemporary Catholic school, which is an increasingly complex community of teachers, parents and learners. This response occurs in partnership with parents and other members of the school community.

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

The School Counsellor is sensitive to the developmental needs of the students and the staff in their support of students. The role holder requires a global knowledge of the issues presenting in the school as well as an awareness of the unique character of each school and the range and depth of resources available in any one school.

The School Counsellor role has a focus on fostering the development, mental health and resilience of all students, including those considered at-risk and those with special needs. This focus is achieved by applying guidance and counselling skills through direct and indirect processes and through systemic and individual interventions - thus contributing to equitable educational access, participation, and outcomes for all students. The School Counsellor is a certified professional who works in partnership with the school by contributing specialized knowledge and skills in a collaborative, collegial manner.

The School Counsellor informs and renews their practice by continuing professional development and research on best practice. Professional registrations are maintained and industry standards and regulations pertaining to their registrations are followed.

## 2. ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Typical duties performed may include, but are not limited to:**

### 2.1 Facilitate proactive and preventative practices and initiatives that promote social, emotional and education development and the mental health and wellbeing of all students in partnership with school communities.

- > Collaborate with school staff and other Counselling personnel in the identification and development of proactive activities for all students addressing the content areas of academic development, life career development, and knowledge of self and others. Some examples might include:
  - Attending Staff Meetings and contributing ideas
  - Class visits/talks (eg: study skills, career planning, building positive relationships)
  - Cooperatively facilitating student peer support programs (eg peer mentoring, buddy systems)
  - Cooperatively facilitating a personal and social development program to be implemented by staff
  - Managing careers and or self-help resources
  
- > Develop and or provide early intervention activities which address the emerging needs of at-risk students and are aimed at reducing the likelihood of long-term negative outcomes for these students. Some examples might include:
  - Facilitating small group preventative and proactive programmes for students (eg social skills, anger management, YCDI).
  - Encouraging the development of a safe and welcoming environment for students
  - Cooperatively implementing innovative or research-based programmes
  
- > Employ collaborative, consultative approaches with school communities and other support staff to develop relevant policies, programs and structures. Some examples might include:
  - Cooperating in the development, maintenance and evaluation of behaviour management initiatives
  - Participating in policy development and implementation (e.g. bullying, gifted and talented, student protection)
  - Being a member of internal committees (e.g. equity, curriculum, pastoral, or student support committees)
  - Cooperating in the development and implementation of student support programmes (e.g. personal and social development, peer mentoring, peer mediation, career education)

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

- > Contribute to the professional development of school staffs. Some examples might include:
  - Provide feedback from professional development and research
  - Alert staff to professional development opportunities
  - Provide resources for the staff eg health resources
  - Provide professional development and in service for staff (eg student protection, critical incident management, anti-bullying)
  - Present on relevant issues at staff meetings
  - Provide information/advice to staff on working with students with special needs, family problems, etc.
  
- > Provide opportunities for parent education. Some examples might include:
  - Writing Items for newsletter
  - Providing information and development programmes for parents (eg parenting skills, drug education, career planning, adolescent development)
  - Facilitating parent support groups
  - Attending information nights in order to liaise with parents on topics such as transition, subject selection, induction, careers, behaviour management, family relationships

### **2.2 Manage Counselling and Consulting Services for students with personal, social, emotional and educative needs.**

- > Work collaboratively as part of a team in responding to and containing critical incidents affecting school communities. Some examples might include:
  - Perform a needs assessment to determine those most affected and the amount of counselling support required.
  - Provide counselling and support to students and assist staff and families on methods of support for students.
  - Liaise with outside agencies for referral and support.
  - Collaborate with school staff and other CES personnel to provide contact and follow up mechanisms for affected students
  
- > Assess and identify the level of need of students in crisis and the provision of appropriate interventions. Some examples might include:
  - Work with families in crisis and where necessary make appropriate referrals.
  - Counsel students in crisis and provide referral where necessary.
  - Liaise with outside agencies to provide emergency accommodation and support for homeless students
  
- > Liaise with, refer to, and work collaboratively with other agencies and professionals. Some examples might include:
  - Develop links with community-based support structures and professionals working in similar capacities such as government child health and welfare agencies, Family and Child Connect
  - Liaise with other Catholic Education Services support staff such as Psychologists, Inclusive Education Consultants, Therapists and Indigenous Liaison Officers.
  - Refer parents and students to outside professionals or agencies
  
- > Provide appropriate counselling and support for students. Some examples might include:
  - Individual counselling
  - Family counselling regarding the students' needs
  - Group counselling

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

- Educational counselling including assisting students with study plans; time management; stress management; subject selection
  - Counselling students regarding special consideration processes for both school and QTAC
  - Facilitating referrals to external counselling agencies
  - Establishing support networks for students
- > Develop and collaboratively implement behaviour management intervention plans. Some examples might include:
- Consult with staff to assist with classroom behaviour management
  - Observe students in the classroom
  - Consult with and advise parents
- > Respond to referrals. Some examples might include:
- Consult with staff
  - Consult with parents
  - Follow up with the relevant student
  - Consult with outside agencies where required
- > Participate in and sometimes manage processes to meet individual student needs. Some examples might include:
- Student support meetings
  - Review meetings
  - PLP meetings
  - Ascertainment, NCCD or EAP processes
  - Enrolment support
- > Participate in interventions to assist students at points of transition. Some examples might include:
- Transition from one school sector to another
  - Involvement in the enrolment support process for students with special needs.
  - Subject and course selection
  - Transition from school
- > Act as an advocate for students. Some examples might include:
- Consult with administration when issues of suspension or exclusion arise.
  - Consult with parents when difficult issues arise for the student.
  - Consult with and provide information to teachers when difficult issues arise for the student.
  - Facilitate conflict resolution and mediation between parents and students, student and student, staff and students
- > Consult with, refer to, and work collaboratively with school staff. Some examples might include:
- Class teachers
  - Learning Support Teacher Inclusive Education
  - Administrators
  - School Pastoral Workers
  - Vocational Education Coordinator, Year Level / Pastoral Coordinators, Subject Coordinators
  - Home School Liaison Officers
  - School Officers working with students with behaviour management or special needs
- > Consult and work collaboratively with parent/carer to further the wellbeing of students

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

### 2.3 Facilitate the gathering of data and assessment process

- > Work collaboratively to determine appropriate assessment for students. Some examples might include:
  - Meet with the person making the referral to determine the outcome that is desired.
  - Gather information through observation, interview, and referral to existing records.
  - Determine, in partnership with other stakeholders, the best way to achieve the desired outcome and what, (if any) assessment is required to achieve that outcome
  
- > Conduct or facilitate assessments as part of the school's process of providing effective intervention for students. All personnel conducting assessment must meet qualifications and experience requirements stipulated by professional associations. Some examples might include:
  - Behaviour checklists or reports to assist in the process of behaviour management
  - Psychometric and other assessments to assist in the process of verification or other intervention (as per qualification of Counsellor)
  - Referral to Psychologists within Catholic Education Services
  - Referral to outside professional (eg psychiatrist, psychologist, speech pathologist, etc.) to assess a student, to provide further information to support an intervention
  - Vocational interest inventories or computer based questionnaires to assist in the process of subject selection and career planning
  
- > Conduct or facilitate appropriate assessments across a range of domains. Some examples might include:
  - Cognitive functioning
  - Achievement/learning
  - Adaptive skills
  - Social-emotional functioning
  - Behaviour
  - Instructional environment
  - School Functioning
  - Vocational Interest
  
- > Use a range of types of assessments. Some examples might include:
  - Observations
  - Interviews
  - Functional analysis
  - Curriculum-based
  - Criterion-referenced
  - Psychometric (where qualifications are at required standard)
  
- > Work with team members in response to reports from outside professionals. Some examples might include reports from:
  - Child and Youth Mental Health
  - Psychologists
  - Psychiatrists
  - Speech Pathologists

### 2.4 Maintain professional standards of practice that are consistent with registration boards, membership of professional associations and in compliance with CES requirements.

- > Maintain registration with appropriate Professional Boards such as the Queensland College of Teachers (QCOT) and/or the Psychologists Board of Australia (through AHPRA Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency) and provide up to date evidence to Manager Counselling and Psychology

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

- > Qualify for full membership of appropriate Professional Associations such as Australian Guidance and Counselling Association (AGCA) and/or Australian Psychological Society (APS) and/or Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW). If membership maintained, provide up to date evidence to Manager Counselling and Psychology
- > Recognise that the counselling relationship operates within the parameters of confidentiality and a Professional Code of ethics
- > Balance ethical issues of privacy and confidentiality for each student with appropriateness of sharing information with other professionals.
- > Respond appropriately in compliance with CES guidelines to student protection issues. Some examples might include:
  - Mandatory reporting of sexual or physical abuse / likely sexual or physical abuse
  - Mandatory reporting of emotional abuse or neglect
  - Mandatory notice of inappropriate behaviour / misconduct
- > Respond appropriately in compliance with CES guidelines to requests or communication from legal representatives. Some examples might include:
  - Responding to subpoenas for documents
  - Responding to subpoenas to give evidence
  - Responding to court orders
  - Responding to requests from law firms and family consultants
- > Participate in regular individual and group supervision and mentoring activities provided by Catholic Education Services (CES) and co-ordinated by the Manager Counselling and Psychology. Provide evidence of this to Manager Counselling and Psychology.
- > Attend Professional Development provided by CES.
- > Attend and maintain own professional development by attending conferences and other professional activities and by professional reading
- > Maintain awareness of current research relating to best practice.
- > Use the action-research model as a guiding principle for professional activities. Some examples might include:
  - Data Analysis – on the counselling service eg client, age, sex, type of problem
  - Conduct pre and post assessments to evaluate interventions
- > Attend Critical Incidents as required by school or CES
- > Inservice staff as required to support school/Diocesan initiatives. Some examples might include:
  - Feeling Safe
  - Responses to National Safe Schools Framework
- > Maintain a comprehensive and professional record keeping system (in compliance with CES guidelines). Some examples might include:
  - Maintain accurate, up to date records of students' confidential, personal and sensitive information that complies with policy and legal requirements.
  - Keep up to date file registers

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

- Deal with correspondence (write letters, disseminate information)
  - Keep accurate counselling statistics and submit to CES
- > Participate in CES Policy Development when required. Some examples of areas where counsellor input would be sought are:
- Behaviour Management or Cyber Safety
  - Critical Incident Intervention
  - Student Protection
- > Develop and manage a Counselling Programme. Some examples might include:
- Work in partnership with the school (Principal and other key stakeholders) and with the Manager Counselling and Psychology to develop and evaluate the Counselling Programme each year.
  - Submit (to the Principal) and manage the Counsellor budget for the school and account for expenditure.
  - Order the resources required for Counselling programmes.
  - Use the CES Resource Centre to support the Counselling programme.

### 3. GENUINE OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- > Accountable and responsible for ensuring professional behaviour
- > Excellent relational skills
- > Capacity to manage change in self and others
- > Ability to cope with own emotions and behaviour effectively
- > Ability to comply with legislation and professional regulations to reduce the risk of harm to self and others
- > Ability to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality
- > Ability to communicate in English both verbally and in writing to meet necessary standards with respect to clarity, accuracy and professionalism appropriate to the position
- > Ability to locate appropriate and relevant information from multiple sources and convey, integrate and implement knowledge in practice
- > Ability to prioritise workloads and manage multiple tasks with competing timelines
- > Ability to accept responsibility for own work
- > Intermediate to advanced skills in Microsoft Office applications necessary to demonstrate the required range of skills and tasks
- > Competent use of digital technologies necessary to demonstrate the required range of skills and tasks

#### **Physical requirements of the position:**

- > Work is normally performed in a typical interior office and/or classroom environment
- > Manoeuvring within the school environment appropriate to the position
- > Frequent use of telecommunication and electronic equipment

### 4. MANDATORY QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS/SECTION CRITERIA

- > Formal qualifications at Degree level are required in the disciplines of Education, Counselling, Psychology or Social Work and relevant post graduate qualifications and experience as required by the employer.
- > School Counsellors with Teaching, Counselling, Psychology or Social Work registrations are required to provide evidence of current registration with one or more of the following:
  - Teachers require registration with Queensland College of Teachers (QCT)
  - Psychologists require general registration with Psychology Board of Australia (AHPRA)
  - Counsellors require registration with a recognised counselling association [ACA, PACFA, AGCA]
  - Social Workers require membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

- > Social Workers require current Working with Children Suitability Card or eligibility.
- > A strong demonstrated commitment to the objectives, vision, and ethos of Catholic Education.

### 5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- > Statement of Principles for Employment in Catholic Education
- > Code of Conduct for Employees of Catholic Education
- > Catholic Employing Authorities Single Enterprise Collective Agreement Diocesan Schools of Queensland 2019-2023

### 6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The incumbent will need:

- > An in-depth understanding of and commitment to the mission and objectives of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns
- > A sound working knowledge of the Catholic Education context and an appreciation for Catholic Education issues.

### 7. EMPLOYEE ACCEPTANCE

The employee's signature signifies an understanding and acceptance that the content contained herein and forms an integral part of their employment terms and conditions.

I have read and acknowledge receipt of this Position Description:

Name

Signature

Date