

# SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

## Position Description

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Classification</b>   | Education Support Employee Category B – Level 4         |
| <b>Employment Status</b>  | Fulltime hours  |
| <b>Hours of Work</b>  | 8.30am to 4.36pm (or varied by agreement), School terms |
| <b>Expected level of contact with children and young people within this role:</b> Regular |   |

## Position Purpose

The College is aware of the socio-cultural changes and ideologies which impact on young people and the crisis of values that stress and challenge them. Students need Pastoral Care throughout their time at the College. At times however they need more specific assistance to handle their problems and crises in a constructive way. Rather than be passive in the face of these needs, the College has taken a dynamic and active approach and provides short-term opportunities of one-to one or small group relationships to enable growth, healing and empowerment to take place within individuals and their relationships. The College accepts the normal professional and confidentiality requirements of a Counsellor and offers collegial support for the work they do.

The School Counsellor provides direct counselling support and other intervention services for individual students and groups identified as at-risk and/or experiencing or demonstrating mild to moderate mental health needs. The role is to co-ordinate supports for students with critical needs both within and external to the school, including working proactively with other health professionals to engage further support as required. As well as to enhance promotion and prevention activities in the school by contributing to the whole school health and wellbeing plans, building the capacity of teaching staff and school leadership to manage student health and wellbeing, and helping to embed mental health promotion and prevention programs and strategies in the school.

## Reporting Relationships

**Position reports to:** Deputy Principal-Heads of Campus on a day-to-day basis, and accountable to the Principal through the Business Manager.

**Leads/Direct reports:** Nil.

**Key relationships:** College Leadership, School Psychologist - Counselling Services, Head of Student Wellbeing and Wellbeing team members, Head of Inclusion & NCCD, Heads of House, School Nurse, teaching staff, students and parents/guardians and various external welfare agencies.

**Key Duties & Responsibilities** includes but are not limited to:

## Expectations for Counsellors

The overall role of the Counsellors covers personal support, counselling, therapy, and recommendations.

- Taking an active role in the provision of high standard care and support for all members of the College Community.
- Working in consultation with the Principal, Deputy Principal-Heads of Campus, Head of Student Wellbeing, Heads of House and Year Level Co-ordinators in identifying the individual members of the College Community requiring specific care and support.
- Deliver professional support service, including the direct counselling for students with a range of mental health issues, applying sound theoretical knowledge and practical expertise.

- Plan and implement evidence-based intervention strategies for students with complex needs including collaborating with families, other professionals and agencies when appropriate, and manage the associated risks.
- Work collaboratively to contribute to policies and operational practices that will guide the work of others, including other school wellbeing staff and teachers.
- Provide leadership and professional learning to others, such as teachers and other school wellbeing staff, to build the capacity of schools to improve students' learning and developmental outcomes.
- Liaise with external service providers where necessary to provide support to students.
- Maintain professional competence and continued professional learning, including attending professional development activities throughout the year.
- Meet relevant policies and legislative requirements in relation to student health information privacy.
- Providing an availability to individual students who feel the need to discuss aspects of their lives on a personal basis.
- Assessing the need for referral to outside agencies or professionals.
- Participating in the development and implementation of programmes that promote healthy relationships between and among students and staff.
- Being available to individual members of staff who may require assistance with particular student or group of students.
- Arranging appointments in a discreet way and ensuring that specific teachers are informed about any likely student absence from class.
- Informing the College Leadership Team of situations that may have repercussions for the College within the wider community. E.g. Mandatory Reporting Issues.
- Liaising with outside Community services.
- Providing support to parents through Parenting Programs.
- Accepting referrals of students for assessment and possible follow-up work.
- Being available to be involved in meetings and processes which require psychological reflection and input.
- Listening to students' academic, emotional, social, and behavioural concerns in an open and non-judgmental way.
- Working directly with students to develop solutions and set achievable goals.
- Assisting with conflict mediation and resolution between students, students and teachers, or parents and teachers to ensure students' goals are not disrupted.
- After consultation with the Deputy Principal-Heads of Campus, Head of Student Wellbeing, Heads of House and Year Level Coordinators, the Counsellors may approach individuals who are perceived to be in need of assistance.
- Perform other duties as directed by the Principal or their delegate.

#### **Child Safeguarding**

- Be involved with Mandatory Reporting process or support a staff member to make a mandatory report, as required.
- Be familiar with and comply with the school's childsafeguarding policy and code of conduct, and any other policies or procedures relating to child safeguarding.
- Assist in the provision of a child-safe environment for students.
- Demonstrate duty of care to students in relation to their physical and mental wellbeing.

#### **Accountability:**

- The Counsellor makes an appointment and meets with the Principal once per Semester in order to review the operation of this service.

- The Counsellor will meet with the Deputy Principal-Head of Campus on a regular basis to ensure students wellbeing is being managed and supported.
- It is expected that Professional Supervision is carried out on a regular basis.

### **General**

- Support the ethos, values, and vision of Lavalla Catholic College as a Catholic school in the Marist tradition.
- Contribute to a healthy and safe work environment and comply with all safe work policies and procedures.
- Attend staff/school meetings as required relevant to your role and within rostered hours of work.
- Demonstrate professional and collegiate relationships with colleagues.
- Participate in the completion of an Annual Review Meeting, as required.

## **Essential Requirements for the Role**

### **Qualifications & Experience**

- Demonstrated experience in assessing, conceptualising and analysing wellbeing issues, and providing evidence-based direct counselling for a range of mental health issues.
- Demonstrated experience in planning and implementing evidence-based intervention strategies for clients with complex needs.
- Hold a valid employee Working with Children Check card and must be willing to undergo a National Police Record Check.

### **Personal Attributes & Skills**

- Demonstrated ability to input into the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and strategies relating to mental health and wellbeing.
- Highly developed communication, networking and interpersonal skills including the ability to liaise effectively with a wide range of people.
- Ability to provide leadership and professional learning that informs and influences the work of others involved in the engagement and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Clear understanding of legislative requirements regarding privacy of health information.
- Approachable and professional therapeutic style.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills.

### **Child Safeguarding**

- Experience working with children.
- A demonstrated understanding of child safety.
- A demonstrated understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children.
- Be a suitable person to engage in child-connected work.

## **Our Commitment to Child Safety**

Lavalla Catholic College is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Each member of the College community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

All staff are required to be conversant with, and comply with, the College's Marist Child Safe Adult Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding Policies. **It is a condition of employment for a staff member to be deemed a person suitable to work with children.**

### **Our Vision and Mission**

Lavalla Catholic College is a welcoming, inclusive community called to make Jesus known and loved through education in the Marist Tradition. With '*Strong Minds and Compassionate Hearts*' we unite to inspire, journey with and prepare learners for life in our changing world.

In our daily actions, we build positive relationships following the model of Jesus Christ. We are inspired by the Marist Characteristics: *Simplicity, Love of Work, In the Way of Mary, Presence, and Family Spirit.*

### **Position Description**

**Authorised by:** The Business Manager

**Last reviewed:** August 2024