SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

LAVALLA CATHOLIC COLLEGE
STRONG MINDS COMPASSIONATE HEARTS

Position Description

Classification	Education Support Employee Category B – Level 4
Employment Status	Fulltime hours
Hours of Work	8.30am to 4.36pm (or varied by agreement), School terms
Scope	Whole College (with some intercampus travel)
Expected level of contact with children and young people within this role: Regular	

Position Purpose

The School Counsellor provides professional counselling, assessment and evidence-based intervention services to students identified as being at risk and/or experiencing mild, moderate or complex mental health and wellbeing needs.

As a member of the College Counselling Team, the School Counsellor contributes proactively to the promotion of positive mental health and the prevention of mental health concerns across the College. This includes contributing to whole-school health and wellbeing plans, strengthening the capacity of teaching staff and College leadership to identify and respond to student wellbeing needs, and supporting the development and implementation of evidence-based mental health promotion, early intervention and prevention programs and strategies.

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, Counselling Team, 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:

1. Student Counselling and Wellbeing Support

- Provide a high standard of professional care and support to students and their families within the College community.
- Deliver confidential, professional counselling services to students experiencing a range of personal, social, emotional, behavioural and mental health concerns.
- Provide students with an accessible and supportive environment in which they can discuss personal matters in a safe, open and non-judgemental manner.
- Accept referrals for student assessment, counselling and ongoing support, and identify students who may benefit from early intervention.
- Work collaboratively with students to identify concerns, develop appropriate strategies and establish achievable goals.
- Provide evidence-based therapeutic interventions and support strategies appropriate to students' individual needs.
- Assess student needs and determine when referral to external health professionals, specialist services or community agencies is required.

2. Student Case Management and Intervention

- Develop, implement and monitor evidence-based intervention strategies for students presenting with complex wellbeing, mental health or behavioural needs.
- Work collaboratively with families, health professionals, external agencies and relevant College personnel to coordinate appropriate support.
- Identify and appropriately manage risks relating to student safety, mental health and wellbeing, escalating concerns in accordance with College policies and legislative requirements.
- Assist in conflict mediation and resolution involving students, staff and families, where appropriate, to support positive relationships and student outcomes.
- Participate in meetings requiring professional counselling perspectives, psychological reflection and specialist wellbeing input.
- Following consultation with relevant College leaders, proactively approach students who may be identified as requiring additional support.

3. Collaboration and Consultation

- Work collaboratively with the Principal, Deputy Principals – Heads of Campus, Head of Student Wellbeing, and Heads of House to identify and respond to the individual support needs of students.
- Provide professional advice, guidance and recommendations to College leadership and staff regarding student wellbeing and appropriate support strategies.
- Assist teachers and other College staff in responding to the needs of individual students and groups of students requiring additional support.
- Liaise with external service providers, health professionals and community agencies to facilitate coordinated support for students.
- Provide families with information about appropriate external support services and referral pathways when required.

4. College Wellbeing Programs and Capacity Building

- Contribute to the development, implementation and review of College policies, procedures and operational practices relating to student wellbeing and mental health.
- Participate in the development and delivery of programs that promote positive mental health, respectful relationships and healthy interactions between students and staff.
- Provide professional learning, guidance and support to teachers and other wellbeing personnel to build their capacity to identify and respond to student wellbeing needs.
- Contribute professional expertise to initiatives that enhance student engagement, personal development and learning outcomes.

5. Professional Practice and Compliance

- Maintain appropriate professional standards, competence and ethical practice in accordance with relevant professional requirements and College expectations.
- Engage in ongoing professional learning and development, including participation in relevant training, professional development activities and reflective practice.
- Maintain accurate, appropriate and secure counselling records in accordance with College procedures, professional obligations and relevant privacy legislation.
- Ensure the confidentiality and appropriate management of student health and personal information, recognising circumstances where disclosure is required or authorised by law, including child safety and mandatory reporting obligations.
- Ensure counselling appointments are arranged discreetly, with appropriate consideration given to student privacy and minimising disruption to learning.
- Communicate relevant appointment arrangements to teachers where necessary to facilitate student attendance and minimise disruption to classes.
- Immediately escalate and report concerns relating to student safety, child protection and mandatory reporting in accordance with legislative requirements and College policies.

6. Other Duties

- Keep the College Leadership Team appropriately informed of significant student wellbeing matters that may have implications for the College or the wider community, in accordance with confidentiality, privacy and reporting obligations.
- Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the scope, skills, and responsibilities of the position, as directed by the Principal, Deputy Principals – Heads of Campus, Business Manager or their delegate.

7. Child Safeguarding

- Actively contribute to maintaining a child-safe environment that promotes the safety, protection and wellbeing of all students.
- Be familiar with, understand and comply with the College's Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and all other policies, procedures and legislative requirements relating to child safeguarding.
- Demonstrate an ongoing duty of care to students, taking appropriate action to protect their physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing.
- Participate in the mandatory reporting process, including supporting and assisting staff members to fulfil their mandatory reporting obligations, as required.
- Identify, respond to and appropriately escalate concerns, disclosures or allegations relating to child safety in accordance with College policies, procedures and legislative requirements.

8. Accountability and Professional Supervision

- Meet regularly with the Deputy Principal – Head of Campus to review student wellbeing matters, discuss emerging concerns and ensure appropriate support, intervention and follow-up arrangements are in place.
- Participate in regular external professional supervision to support reflective practice, professional accountability, ethical decision-making and ongoing professional development.
- Ensure relevant reports, records and disclosures are appropriately documented and communicated to authorised College personnel and external agencies, as required by legislation, professional obligations and College procedures.
- Maintain professional accountability for counselling practice, student case management and the appropriate implementation of agreed support strategies.

9. General Responsibilities

- Support and promote the ethos, values and vision of Lavalla Catholic College as a Catholic school in the Marist tradition.
- Contribute to maintaining a healthy and safe working environment and comply with all relevant Work Health and Safety policies, procedures and requirements.
- Attend staff meetings, College meetings and other relevant meetings as required, within rostered hours of work.
- Establish and maintain positive, professional and collegiate relationships with colleagues, students and families.
- Participate in the College's Annual Review Meeting and associated performance and development processes, as required.

Essential Requirements for the Role

Qualifications & Experience

Essential

- A relevant Graduate or Postgraduate qualification in Counselling, Psychology, Social Work, or a related discipline.
- Demonstrated experience in assessing, conceptualising and analysing student or client wellbeing needs, and providing evidence-based counselling interventions for a range of mental health concerns.
- Demonstrated experience in developing, implementing and evaluating evidence-based intervention strategies for individuals with complex needs.
- Competency in the administration and interpretation of appropriate screening tools, assessment instruments and needs assessments.

- A current Employee Working with Children Check and a satisfactory National Police Record Check.
- Current driver's licence.

Desirable

- Demonstrated experience working within a secondary school environment, preferably supporting adolescents and young people.
- A sound understanding of child safeguarding principles, mandatory reporting obligations and legislative requirements relating to the privacy, confidentiality and management of personal and health information.
- Experience working collaboratively with families, schools, external health professionals and community support agencies.

Personal Attributes and Skills

- Highly developed communication, interpersonal and networking skills, with the ability to establish and maintain effective professional relationships with students, families, colleagues and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to provide professional leadership, guidance and learning opportunities that build the capacity of others to support the engagement, development and wellbeing of children and young people.
- An approachable, empathetic and professional therapeutic manner, with the ability to establish trust and rapport with young people.
- Highly developed listening, assessment, problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise sound professional judgement, maintain appropriate professional boundaries and manage sensitive and confidential information.
- Excellent organisational, planning and time management skills, including the ability to manage competing priorities and maintain appropriate case documentation.
- Ability to work independently while contributing effectively as part of a collaborative College wellbeing team.
- Demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional learning, reflective practice and maintaining professional competence.

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.*