

FEBRUARY 2024

# Chaplaincy and Student Wellbeing Services in Tasmanian State Schools Policy

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Version 1.0 – 26/02/2024

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# 1 Purpose

This Policy aligns with the Federation Funding Agreement Schedule (“the FFA Schedule”) for the National Student Wellbeing Program (NSWP) and provides advice to school principals about the provision of chaplaincy and/or student wellbeing services in Tasmanian Government Schools.

This Policy applies to all Department for Education, Children and Young People (the department) schools providing chaplaincy and/or student wellbeing services, regardless of whether or not a school receives funding under the National Student Wellbeing Program (NSWP).

The Policy clarifies how section 39 of the Education Act 2016 (the Act) and section 4 of the Education Regulations 2017 (the Regulations) apply to the provision of chaplaincy and student wellbeing services in schools.

The Policy is to be read together with the Chaplaincy and Student Wellbeing Services in [Tasmanian Government Schools Procedure](#) (the Procedure) and the [Working with External Support Providers in Schools Procedure](#) (WESP Procedure).

A [Schools Checklist](#) is also available.

## 2 Policy Statement

Schools may appoint a Chaplain and/or Student Wellbeing Officer to support the wellbeing of students through:

- Pastoral care services.
- Strategies developed in consultation with the school community, relevant school staff and school principal, that support the wellbeing of the broader school community, for example: coordinating volunteering activities and support, breakfast clubs, lunch time activities, excursions, school incursions, and parent/carer workshops.

A program delivered by a Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer may in some circumstances constitute an activity to which a parent is entitled to object to their child participating in under Section 4 of the Regulations.

Under Section 39 of the Act, a parent of a child or young person attending a government school may object as a matter of conscience to that child or young person participating in an activity prescribed by the regulations.

In order to ensure compliance with the Act and the Regulations, schools engaging the services of a Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer must:

- Establish appropriate processes to ensure that participation in chaplaincy/student wellbeing services and chaplaincy/student wellbeing related activities by all students is voluntary.
- Give parents/carers the opportunity to opt their children out of participating in chaplaincy/student wellbeing related activities.
- Provide parents with written information about the role of the Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer in the school and the voluntary nature of chaplaincy/student wellbeing services.

Schools must ensure under no circumstance the school's duty of care is delegated to the Chaplain or Student Wellbeing Officer.

Schools engaging the services of a Chaplain or Student Wellbeing Officer must further ensure the following:

- The services provided by the Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer must be consistent with their qualifications and must not extend to other service areas, in particular but not limited to, teaching or counselling.
- Chaplaincy and student wellbeing services must be compatible with the priorities for school improvement, codes and practices of the schools and contribute to the wellbeing of students.
- The Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer are acquired through an Approved Provider.
- Chaplains/Student Wellbeing Officers meet minimum qualification requirements (outlined further below), and are inducted and operate in accordance with the Procedure, including:
  - The Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer signs the *Behaviour Standards and Code of Conduct for School Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers*.
  - The Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer completes all departmental mandatory training (including [Safeguarding Training](#)).
  - The school provides the Chaplain or Student Wellbeing Officer with a copy of the [Safe. Secure. Supported. Our Safeguarding Framework](#) and any relevant policies and procedures.
  - [eSafety Training Module for the NSW from the eSafety Commissioner](#).
  - Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers must have a current Tasmanian [Registration Working with Vulnerable People \(RWVP\)](#).

Schools may acquire funding for school chaplaincy and student wellbeing services through the NSW or other sources including fundraising, donations, and/or the School Resource Package (SRP). Schools will not receive additional funding from the department to engage Chaplains and/or Student Wellbeing Officers.

For schools purchasing chaplaincy and/or student wellbeing services through NSW funding, there is no obligation on the school or School Association to fund additional chaplaincy and/or student wellbeing services beyond those funded under the NSW.

The [WESP Procedure](#) applies to Chaplains/Student Wellbeing Officers, where they are working directly one-on-one with a student, at a school site during school hours, it does not apply to small group activities.

### 3 Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers

Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers must:

- Comply with all relevant legal and policy requirements when operating in schools. This includes meeting their mandatory reporting obligations, as well as complying with the department's [Safe. Secure. Supported. Our Safeguarding Framework](#) and relevant department and school-based policies, such as professional conduct, privacy, complaints,

and information management policies. There are minimum qualifications and requirements for employment as a Chaplain/Student Wellbeing Officer.

- Complete all mandatory training set by the department including [Safeguarding Training](#) and the [eSafety Training Module for the NSWSP from the eSafety Commissioner](#).
- Have regard to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- Have regard to the national policies and strategies led by the National Office for Child Safety, including the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.

For the purposes of the NSWSP, a Chaplain is defined as an individual who:

- May be of any or no faith.
- Is recognised by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having the skills and experience to deliver school chaplaincy services to the school community.
- Is recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution.

For the purposes of the NSWSP, a Student Wellbeing Officer is defined as an individual who:

- May be of any or no faith.
- Is recognised by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having the skills and experience to deliver student wellbeing services to the school community.

### **3.1 NSWSP Minimum Qualification Requirements**

Both Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers are required to hold a minimum qualification or qualifications equivalent to or higher than a Certificate IV as determined by the State of Tasmania, and this qualification or qualifications must include competencies in:

- Mental health and making appropriate referrals.
- Providing pastoral care, and/or working with youth.

Examples of relevant qualifications which are acceptable, include:

- a Certificate IV in Youth Work.
- a Certificate IV in Pastoral Care.
- a Certificate IV in Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care.

#### **3.1.1 Cyberbullying Professional Learning Package for NSWSP Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers**

Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers are required to undertake [the eSafety Training Module for the NSWSP from the eSafety Commissioner](#) in responding to and preventing cyberbullying delivered within three months of commencing NSWSP services and refresh this professional learning at least once every two and a half years (NOTE: this training is not available for non-NSWP funded chaplains and student wellbeing officers).

Approved Providers are required to record evidence of the completion of this professional learning package, and may be requested to provide evidence as part of regular reporting.

### **3.1.2 Safeguarding Training**

Chaplains/Student Wellbeing Officers must complete the department's [Safeguarding Training](#) or provide evidence to the school that they have completed equivalent alternative training at or above the skill level required by the department prior to commencing with the school site. This training is to be undertaken annually.

### **3.1.3 Funding**

Funding of up to \$20 280 per school, per annum is available for schools (\$24 336 is available for remote schools).

To obtain the maximum funding provided via the NSWSP, Chaplains and/or Student Wellbeing Officers are required to provide a minimum of 360 hours of service per year.

Funding is provided in accordance with the FFA Schedule.

## **4 Related policies**

[Enquiries and Complaints Management Policy](#)

[Partnering with External Organisations Policy](#)

[Personal Information Protection Policy](#)

[Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Policy](#)

[Religious Instruction in State Schools Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy and Procedure](#)

## **5 Related procedures**

[Chaplaincy and Student Wellbeing Services in Tasmanian Government Schools Procedure](#)

[Duty of Care for Students on Departmental Educational Sites Procedure](#)

[Enquiries and Complaints Management Procedure](#) (Staff Only)

[Mandatory Reporting Procedure](#)

[Off-Campus Activities Planning Procedures](#) (Staff Only)

[Working with External Support Providers Procedure](#)

## **6 Supporting information/tools**

[Australian Government Website - National School Wellbeing Program](#)

[Behaviour Standards and Code of Conduct for Chaplains and Student Wellbeing Officers](#)

[DECYP Website – National Student Wellbeing Program](#)

[DECYP Website – Complaints – schools and Child and Family Learning Centres \(CFLCs\)](#)

[DECYP Strategic Plan](#)

[eSafety Training Module for the NSW from the eSafety Commissioner](#)

[National Student Wellbeing Program Federation Funding Agreement Schedule](#)

[National Student Wellbeing Program DECYP Intranet \(Staff Only\) – includes list of Approved Providers](#)

[Official Order – Chaplaincy and Student Wellbeing Services in Tasmanian Government Schools](#)

[Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Website](#)

[Safe. Secure. Supported. Our Safeguarding Framework](#)

[Safeguarding Training](#)

[School Checklist – Chaplaincy and Student Wellbeing Services in Tasmanian Government Schools](#)

## 7 Definitions

### **Approved Chaplaincy/Student Wellbeing Provider (Approved Provider)**

The approved person, corporation, other legal entity, partnership or joint venture, including any employee and agent, who has signed a Provider Agreement, and is able to provide chaplaincy/student wellbeing services in Tasmanian Government Schools.

### **Chaplain**

The person engaged as a School Chaplain by the Approved Chaplaincy/Student Wellbeing Provider who the Provider will supply to the school to provide chaplaincy services to that school. A title other than chaplain may be used, if the title is appropriate to the religious affiliation of the individual.

A Chaplain must meet the minimum qualification requirements and have the skills and experience to deliver chaplaincy services to the school community.

### **Chaplaincy Services**

Pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of students and the broader school community. Chaplaincy services in Tasmanian Government Schools should be provided during the school term and within school hours or at school-related activities approved by the school.

### **Contract for Services**

The Contract for Services between the Tasmanian Government School Leadership and an Approved Provider for the provision of chaplaincy and/or student wellbeing services in that Tasmanian Government School.

### **External Support Provider (ESP)**

An individual or organisation, independent of the Department for Education, Children and Young People that provides a direct one-on-one support to student at a Tasmanian Government school, at a school site, during school hours.

### **NSWP**

The National Student Wellbeing Program.

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care is the practice of the general wellbeing of students and the school community.

### **Provider Agreement**

The Contract for Services Agreement between the State of Tasmania through the Department for Education, Children and Young People and the Approved Provider for the provision of chaplaincy/student wellbeing services in Tasmanian Government Schools.

### **Remote Schools**

Includes Tasmanian Government schools which are located more than 30 kilometres from the central business post office in the four main population centres, being Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport.

### **School Association**

Has the same meaning as that provided in section 7(1) of the [Education Act 2016](#) and [Secretary's Instructions No. 7 for School Associations](#).

### **Student Wellbeing Officer**

The person engaged as a Student Wellbeing Officer by the Approved Chaplaincy/Student Wellbeing Provider who the Provider will supply to the school to provide student wellbeing services to that school. A title other than Student Wellbeing Officer may be used, if the title is appropriate.

A Student Wellbeing Officer must meet the NSWP minimum qualification requirements and have the skills and experience to deliver student wellbeing services to the school community.

### **Student Wellbeing Services**

Pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of students and the broader school community. Student Wellbeing services in Tasmanian Government Schools should be provided during the school term and within school hours or at school-related activities approved by the school.

## **8 Legislation**

[Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997](#) (Tas)

[Education Act 2016](#) (Tas)

[Education Regulations 2017](#) (Tas)



[Personal Information Protection Act 2004](#) (Tas)

[Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#) (Tas)

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**Last significant review:** 28 August 2023

**Review due:** 31 January 2025

**This document replaces:** Chaplaincy Services in Tasmanian Government Schools Policy (v1.2)