

Guideline

National School Chaplaincy Program for government schools

Please note this guideline is a recommended course of action.

Guideline overview

The National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) aims to support schools in promoting the wellbeing of students by providing funds that contribute to the maintenance or establishment of pastoral care services in the school.

[The NSCP project agreement 2015-2018 \(the project agreement\)](#) is the instrument by which the program is funded from 2015. The guideline has been updated to reflect the revised requirements for the administration and delivery of the program.

Scope

The NSCP for government schools guideline (the Guideline) assists NSCP funded South Australian government schools, service providers and pastoral care workers to deliver the program in accordance with the requirements of the [Australian Government project agreement \(2015-2018\)](#) and the Department for Education's policies and procedures. The Guideline should be read in conjunction with other supporting program documentation including the department's [NSCP service agreement](#).

Within South Australia, NSCP funded workers are called pastoral care workers (PCW). The nature of the pastoral care service in schools is a matter which must be decided by the school, following consultation with the school community. Students will not be obliged to participate in the program, and parents and students will be regularly informed by the school about the availability and the voluntary nature of the NSCP service.

NSCP funded services are designed to form part of the already existing wellbeing services provided within the school community. This initiative does not seek to diminish or replace existing careers advice, counselling services or any other wellbeing service funded by state and territory governments, schools or sector. The program is designed to provide a tailored option, based on the requirements of the school community and their decisions regarding the service to be delivered.

File number:	DECD16/01423	Status:	Approved	Version:	2.2
Policy officer:	Senior Policy Officer, National School Chaplaincy Program	Policy sponsor:	Director, Engagement and Wellbeing	Responsible executive director:	Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development
Approved by:	Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development	Approval date:	28/11/2018	Review date:	31/12/2019

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1. Guideline detail

The Guideline aims to provide:

- an overview of program requirements in order to ensure that the program is delivered in accordance with the Australian Government project agreement Australian Government project agreement (2015-2018) and the [Department for Education's](#) policies and procedures
- an understanding of funding arrangements and roles and responsibilities of parties to the project agreement and service agreement; and
- clarification about the key tasks to be undertaken by the parties to the project agreement and service agreement during the NSCP contract period.

1.1. General Principles

The following general principles apply to the program:

- participation in the program by school communities, parents and students is voluntary
- schools should inform students and parents of the voluntary nature of the program and of the choice of whether or not to utilise the services of a pastoral care worker
- schools should ensure that:
 - adequate permission arrangements are in place to confirm prior parental/guardian consent (refer section 1.6.2)
 - all students, parents and school community members are fully advised of the appropriate consent procedures and that these measures are consistent with state government school policy or guidelines, where applicable
 - the engagement of the pastoral care worker for the school is decided following consultation with the school community and governing council (refer section 1.6.3)
 - there is consultation with, and ongoing support from, the broader school community about the demand for, and role of, a pastoral care worker
 - school communities engage the services of a pastoral care worker to receive and maintain funding
 - funding under this program is used for expenditure that directly relates to the provision of pastoral care workers under the program. Schools cannot use their [Resource Entitlement Statement \(RES\)](#) monies to fund any part of the program; and
 - program funding does not diminish or replace existing funding and /or student wellbeing services.

1.2. NSCP Service

The NSCP service complements the care offered by other helping disciplines and aims to assist school communities through the provision of help and care to support the personal and social wellbeing of students and the school community. Services and actions could include:

- assisting school counsellors and school wellbeing staff in the delivery of pastoral care/wellbeing services

- working with school principal/wellbeing staff in providing students, their families and staff with support or appropriate referral pathways in difficult situations such as during times of grief or when students are facing personal or emotional challenges
- providing pastoral care and guidance to students about values and ethical matters or working with the principal/school wellbeing staff to refer students to, or sourcing appropriate services, to meet these needs; and facilitating access to support agencies in the community, where applicable
- supporting students and staff to create an environment which promotes the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development and wellbeing of all students
- supporting students and staff to create an environment of cooperation and mutual respect, promoting an understanding of diversity and the range of cultures and their related traditions
- being approachable to all students, staff and members of the school community
- supporting students, their families and staff of all beliefs and not seeking to impose any beliefs or persuade an individual toward a particular set of beliefs.

1.3 Choosing a service provider

Schools will be required to select a service provider of their choice noting the required qualification of service providers. This puts in place an arrangement that incorporates and empowers local level decision making in the form of principals and/or governing councils.

Refer to the [NSCP website](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program) at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program> for the list of service providers currently providing NSCP services to government schools in South Australia.

Schools will need to provide their nominated service provider to the department at Education.NSCP@sa.gov.au to ensure that payment can be made in a timely manner for NSCP service delivery.

1.3.1 Service agreements

It is a requirement for funding that the service provider nominated by the funded school enters into a service agreement with the department.

The service agreement:

- details the parties entering into the service agreement (service provider and the department)
- describes the service to be provided including:
 - minimum hours of service to be provided across the school year
 - location at which service will be delivered
 - the service commencement and completion dates
 - fees and manner of payment
- details the responsibilities of each party concerning child protection requirements including suitability of persons and Responding to Abuse and Neglect Education and Care training; and
- outlines reporting requirements.

The service agreement should be agreed and signed by the department and the chosen service provider prior to the commencement of the NSCP services in the school/s.

The first part of the master agreement contains the terms and conditions. This part of the document is used across the department for third party contractor services.

The second part of the document is the schedule which has been adapted to specifically reflect the NSCP requirements.

1.4 Governance arrangements

Governance arrangements should include accountability structures to support the delivery of the program, ensure compliance with the service agreement and outline clear responsibilities for:

- overseeing the performance of pastoral care workers (refer section 2 and [Attachment A code of conduct](#))
- recruiting and training strategies for pastoral care workers (refer section 2)
- dispute resolution processes (refer section 1.7)
- financial management
- risk management
- communication management
- fraud prevention strategies; and
- insurance (refer section 1.4.1).

1.4.1 Insurances

A service provider is required to have and maintain all of the following types and levels of insurance at a minimum:

- public liability insurance for an amount not less than \$20 million per claim
- professional indemnity insurance for an amount not less than \$1 million; and
- workers compensation insurance to the level required by state or territory law.

These insurances should be in place for as long as the service provider has any contractual obligations in connection with the delivery of NSCP services under the program. Service providers will be required to provide information annually regarding and/or evidencing the required insurances. Service providers should contact the department if they cannot meet this requirement for any reason.

1.5 Funding

The program is a calendar year support program. Funding is available for nominated schools to engage the services of a pastoral care worker via a service provider. NSCP services funded under this program may commence from January 1 in the calendar year they apply to, following the signing of a service agreement by both the service provider and the department.

Funding will be provided, in accordance with the provisions in the service agreement and is subject to Australian Government funding and continued school community support as outlined in section 1.6.3.

Where an organisation is acting as the service provider for a number of schools, the department will enter into a single service agreement which covers all schools for which the organisation is acting as service provider. Each payment is allocated to an individual school and should be expended accordingly.

1.5.1 Funding arrangements

Payments will be made directly to service providers (the employers of pastoral care workers in government schools) via an agreement between the department and each service provider. Schools nominate their service provider to the Engagement and Wellbeing directorate within the department. The funding is then calculated for distribution to service providers. Payment can only be made to the nominated service provider after the funded school provides the following information to the department in accordance with the schedule below.

January-March	April-June	July-September	October-November	December
Quarterly payment made upfront in January once the funded school/s confirm their nominated service provider	Quarterly payment made upfront in April once the funded school/s confirm in a simple online form that they received the previous quarter's service as agreed	Quarterly payment made upfront in July once the funded school/s confirm in a simple online form that they received the previous quarter's service as agreed	Two months payment made upfront in October once the funded school/s confirm in a simple online form that they received the previous quarter's service as agreed	One month payment made in arrears once the funded school/s confirm in a simple online form that they received the previous quarter's service as agreed

Service providers will be required to nominate a single bank account for all funding under the program.

1.5.2 Funding allocation

Schools are assessed according to the following criteria:

- Measure of Socio-Economic Need (MOSEN) score - 30% weighting
- level of existing wellbeing services provided at the school in addition to the usual staffing allocation (eg school counsellor, wellbeing practitioner, social worker) – 20% weighting
- remoteness of the school (as assessed by the ARIA outlined below) – 20% weighting
- number of enrolled students – 20% weighting
- statement of need provided by the principal (the statement needs to outline how the pastoral care worker will assist the wellbeing needs of the school community and identify the gap in the current services provided that the PCW can fill) – 10% weighting
- evidence of ongoing school community support for the NSCP service and pastoral care worker in the school.

Schools are ranked in order of funding priority according to the criteria/weightings above. The ranked school list permits the department to allocate funding to the next unsuccessful school/s in the list, in the event of any successfully funded schools declining their funding offer or withdrawing from the program.

The following sets out minimum service delivery for the different levels of funding available under the program:

Funding allocation	Minimum hours service delivery
\$10,000 (plus 20% for remote schools) ex-GST	200 hours (only possible for schools with enrolments of 50 students or less)
\$15,000 (plus 20% for remote schools) ex-GST	300 hours
\$20,000 (plus 20% for remote schools) ex-GST	400 hours

Schools and service providers can negotiate a level of servicing above the minimum hours specified above, however additional funding will not be provided if additional hours of service are provided.

To ensure that schools in remote communities are able to participate in the program, an additional 20% loading will be allocated to remote schools to cover increased costs and difficulties in attracting appropriate pastoral care workers. For the purposes of the program, the [Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia Plus \(ARIA\)](#) classification system is used to define geographical areas of remoteness. Schools within ARIA remoteness categories 4 or 5 are considered remote for the purposes of the additional 20% funding.

Further information on the ARIA is available at [the Department of Health website](http://www.health.gov.au/) at <http://www.health.gov.au/>.

1.5.3 Cluster model arrangements

Schools in regional and remote locations (eg schools in ARIA categories 2 to 5) have the option of entering into a cluster arrangement with neighbouring schools. A cluster arrangement allows the sharing of a resource through the employment of a single pastoral care worker within a region or amongst neighbouring schools. Given that funding is allocated for each individual school, it should be expended accordingly for services at that individual school.

Cluster arrangements can allow for flexibility in servicing between schools. For example, if school A (with 400 hours of servicing), school B (with 400 hours of servicing) and school C (with 100 hours of servicing) faced challenging travel distances to their schools and required periods of service to meet school and student needs, they could enter into a cluster arrangement and negotiate for the pastoral care worker to, for example, spend the first full 3 months providing service to school A, then move to providing a service at schools B and C consecutively.

Schools entering into a cluster arrangement may wish to enter into a mutual service level agreement in order to ensure all schools are satisfied with the arrangement. Details of elements that may be included in the agreement are in [Attachment D](#).

1.5.4 Goods and services tax (GST)

Australian Government NSCP funding is GST-free. However, the service provider will invoice GST for NSCP services. The department pays the funding GST-inclusive and claims back the GST on the business activity statement.

1.5.5 Use of funds

Funding can only be used for purposes that are directly related to the provision of NSCP services in the school/s for which the funds are provided.

School communities may engage the services of more than one pastoral care worker; however, the amount of funding will not increase if there is more than one pastoral care worker engaged at the one school under this program. Service providers will be responsible for paying the salary and other employment related costs for all pastoral care workers providing services under the program.

Funding can only be used in the calendar year for which payment is made. Funding provided for a particular school cannot be 'rolled over' to the next calendar year. Any unused entitlement will need to be paid back to the department.

If a pastoral care worker delivers 400 hours, where a 300 hour service has been granted, no additional funds will be provided ie a further \$5,000 will not be payable.

1.5.5.1 Acceptable use of funds

Administration Costs

Up to a maximum of 20% of the total annual funding may be used by the service provider for program administrative costs including:

- general administration fees
- administration/support staff costs
- training and personal development costs associated with the pastoral care worker; and

reasonable travel costs (not including salary) for providing NSCP services to schools including transport expenses such as fuel, fares, vehicle registrations and maintenance.

Pastoral care worker salary/wages

A minimum of 80% of the total annual funding should be used for the purposes of paying school pastoral care worker salary or wages and superannuation. This may include salary/wages whilst attending training or development but not any regular/daily commute.

Gaps in service

If schools and service providers are experiencing servicing complications such as difficulties in engaging an appropriate replacement for a pastoral care worker who has resigned, they may negotiate with the school to seek a suspension of services until the issues are resolved.

If a school has a gap in service within the calendar year due to the resignation of a pastoral care worker and there is a delay in sourcing a replacement, schools can continue to draw on unused service hours during the calendar year. Schools could renegotiate service details with their service provider to increase pastoral care worker contact hours and utilise the full calendar year allocation.

Excess funds can only be utilised by:

- increasing the pastoral care worker service hours, for example providing full-time services for a designated period, to ensure no underspend for that calendar year and/or
- employing additional service hours during the calendar year
- utilising the services of an existing pastoral care worker in the school, which is not funded under the program, to provide additional service hours that meet the requirements of the program guidelines, by increasing their operational hours in addition to the work they are providing under their current role.

The department may permit a reallocation of funds in extenuating circumstances between NSCP funded schools, in recognition that some schools/service providers, particularly in regional/remote communities may experience difficulties in recruiting/sourcing an appropriate pastoral care worker for the school. Schools/service providers will need to communicate with the department as soon as it becomes apparent that a suitable pastoral care worker cannot be recruited. Refer to Section 1.8 for details on minimum qualification requirements of pastoral care workers.

1.5.5.2 Unacceptable use of funds

Activities and the purchase of services and goods which are inconsistent with the purpose of this program will not be funded. This includes:

- the purchase of religious education or religious training packages and the purchase of goods related to these activities
- the purchase of capital items, assets or resources including, but not limited to capital works, vehicles, computers and text books
- any existing programs or support mechanisms that are already funded by alternate funding sources
- provision of services to other unfunded schools
- reallocation of funds between schools, that is, transference of unspent funds from one school to another, including schools that have a deficit unless approved as per Section 1.10.7 (gaps in service); and
- utilisation of unspent funds from allocations for previous years. Any unspent funds at the end of the calendar year will be recovered by the department unless otherwise advised.

1.6 Program management

1.6.1 Participation

It is not compulsory for any student to participate in activities or receive services from an NSCP funded pastoral care worker.

Parents/caregivers should be provided with information about the availability of the service and the voluntary nature of participation in their school.

An example of best practice information for schools about the NSCP is provided at [Attachment E](#). This information can be distributed to the school community in a number of ways including:

- enrolment packs
- newsletters
- brochures

1.6.2 Consent arrangements

Schools should follow existing departmental policies and guidelines when arranging consent (including consent forms) to participate in NSCP funded services.

At a minimum, schools should have procedures in place to ensure parents and students are informed of consent arrangements. These could include notification via the school website, newsletters and/or enrolment packs.

Participation in the program is voluntary and school communities will have supported the program to operate in their school when originally applying for funding. Therefore general pastoral care worker interaction within the school does not require mandatory opt in arrangements. General interaction may include the pastoral care worker's presence at school events such as camps and assemblies, general playground interaction and students who have approached the PCW directly during a moment of urgency. In such cases, the school community may determine if they wish to implement additional consent arrangements.

The department recommends that arrangements include:

- annual consent forms at enrolment, or as soon as possible following school year enrolment, that cover general information about the proposed school NSCP service and permits parents/guardians to opt out of the service; and
- consent forms for prearranged one on one appointments/sessions and ongoing assistance from the pastoral care worker, particularly where there is religious or spiritual content or where the activities require professional expertise such as therapeutic counselling.

Better practice for consent arrangements and an example are available at [Attachment B](#).

1.6.3 Community consultation and support

Evidence and feedback of consultation with the school community is a requirement for program funding. This should include clear evidence of the choice of service provider and pastoral care worker, based on the results of the school community consultation. Evidence may include:

- the documented results of parent and school surveys, for example a summary of the results and comments
- meeting notes from meetings of the representative parent body or school equivalent which document all discussion and decisions
- letters of support from school parent bodies
- information on the processes used to record details of any consultation including duration and frequency
- evidence of public discussions and resources such as newsletters; and/or
- evidence of confirmation of school community discussions and the resultant evidence of support for the program.

At a minimum, there should be consultation with the school's governing council on an annual basis to review and confirm the support of the school community for the program. School principals will use the outcomes of school community consultation to determine the nature of the service required in the school community.

Given the changing nature of school communities, consultation may be required more regularly.

The department recognises and values the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, communication protocols and cultures. Due to these factors, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school communities may not use school surveys, newsletters and similar material. If this is the case, verbal endorsement by parents and elders from the community and recorded in writing by the school will be sufficient evidence of school community consultation and support for the NSCP service in the school. It is important for the school to work with the Aboriginal Community Education Officer to disseminate information to community groups. Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school communities may also prefer to discuss the NSCP service with education staff at the school.

1.6.4 Working outside of school hours/grounds

The majority of NSCP services should be provided on school grounds and during normal school hours however it is recognised that services outside of the school may be required at times. If the NSCP service is required outside of school hours/grounds, pastoral care workers will need to obtain permission to undertake such work from the school principal and employing service provider prior to conducting any visit/providing any service.

It should be noted that the overall duty of care for students is the responsibility of the school principal.

1.7 Complaints

The department understands that effective complaints procedures can be an important mechanism for identifying where policy and administration can be strengthened.

As the school principal has an overall duty of care and is ultimately responsible for all students and staff within the school community, all complaints about the NSCP or pastoral care worker within the school should be directed to the school principal, or a complaints officer designated by the school principal, in the first instance. There should be a link to the [complaints information](#) on the school website.

Complainants are also able to lodge complaints with the service provider (according to the service provider's complaints processes) who is the employer of the pastoral care worker providing the NSCP service in the school. School principals and service providers are expected to notify the department of complaints. School principals should also notify the service provider (as the employer) of any complaints about the pastoral care worker/NSCP service in the school.

1.7.1 Definition

For the purposes of this program, a complaint is defined as an expression of concern or dissatisfaction where a response is explicitly or implicitly expected following an incident or pattern of behaviour by a particular program funded school pastoral care worker, or in relation to a particular NSCP service or service provider. Complaints can also relate to any aspect of the department's administration of the program.

1.7.2 Making a complaint

For the purposes of this program, a complaint is defined as an expression of concern or dissatisfaction all attempts should be made to resolve the complaints at the local level.

Where the complaint is made by the school about the service provider/pastoral care worker, the service agreement details the requirements of schools and service providers to inform the department as follows:

- Either party must immediately inform the other party if it becomes aware or reasonably suspects that a pastoral care worker may be or has been charged with, found guilty of, or convicted of an offence (including, but not limited to, a sexual offence), which may mean the person could be deemed as not being suitable to work in child-related prescribed position or function for the purposes of child protection legislation.
- The service provider must, within two business days, inform the department of:
 - the commencement of any significant internal inquiry into a pastoral care worker or the provision of NSCP services as well as any relevant outcome of that inquiry; and
 - any significant incidences occurring during or related to the provision of NSCP services at the school; and
 - any significant incidences occurring related to the pastoral care worker.

- Either party must inform the other party within two business days if they become aware that there has been a complaint about the pastoral care worker or the provision of NSCP services in the school.
- A principal or departmental officer may arrange an investigation of a complaint or incident or an investigation into the actions of a pastoral care worker or the provision of NSCP services.

The service agreement permits termination of the pastoral care worker from providing services at the school and/or termination of the service agreement.

However, if a complaint cannot be resolved at the school level, the complainant, can be directed to the [department's Education Complaint Unit](#) for advice.

Further information regarding the complaints process can be found at sa.gov.au.

1.7.3 Providing feedback

The department welcomes feedback about the program including news stories. Feedback can be provided by:

- emailing NSCP at Education.NSCP@sa.gov.au
- posting to National School Chaplaincy Program, Department for Education, 31 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000, or;
- telephoning the NSCP on (08) 8226 2002.

1.8 Minimum qualifications for employment as a pastoral care worker

Pastoral care workers may be required to undertake a wide range of possible tasks in delivering NSCP services. Given this and the position of trust, it is necessary to ensure that pastoral care workers have a minimum level of skills to provide these support services.

Pastoral care workers also need to have a highly developed ability to identify relevant issues and conduct appropriate referrals in each circumstance where required. Pastoral care workers can often be the first port of call for individuals needing assistance so it is important that they are equipped with detailed knowledge of relevant and available services and when they should be used, as well as a keen awareness of their own professional limitations.

As a result, a person engaged to provide pastoral care should be able to provide the following:

- evidence that they are recognised and supported by their school community and
- evidence of ordination, religious qualification or endorsement by an accepted religious organisation and
 - a [certificate IV in youth work](#); or
 - a [certificate IV in pastoral care](#); or

an equivalent qualification; and *NOTE: The certificate IV or equivalent qualification must include competencies in 'mental health' and 'making appropriate referrals'*

To be employed in schools, pastoral care workers are required to also have the following:

- [current Department of Human Services - Child Related Employment Clearance](#); and

- current [Responding to Abuse and Neglect Education and Care](#) training (day training followed by yearly online update).

1.8.1 Minimum qualification transition arrangements

The department recognises the challenges associated with recruiting appropriately qualified pastoral care workers in regional, remote and disadvantaged communities. On a 'by exception' basis, service providers can apply for approval from the Cross Sector Panel via the department to engage a pastoral care worker who is undertaking studies towards the minimum qualification requirements.

As the employer of pastoral care workers for the purposes of the NSCP, the service provider will need to provide evidence through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes or school principal or community leader advice, the relevant skills, abilities and experience of the proposed PCW to substantiate their capacity to work within the school.

1.8.2 Application for minimum qualification transition arrangements

Service providers (in liaison with the school principal) will need to complete the National School Chaplaincy Program Application for Minimum Qualifications Transition Arrangements (available by submitting an e-mail request to the NSCP inbox at Education.NSCP@sa.gov.au) and submit to the department which requires the following information:

- specific difficulties the school has encountered in recruiting or retaining a suitably qualified PCW
- alternative options considered to identify a qualified person
- qualities, skills, experience and other competencies that make the proposed candidate the best person for the position
- evidence of support from all parties for the proposed candidate
- required clearances
- details of studies being undertaken including expected completion date.

The cross sector panel will consider the circumstances of each case and advise the service provider of the outcome.

The proposed candidate cannot commence providing NSCP services unless:

- written confirmation of the application approval has been received by the service provider from the department; and
- all requirements have been met by the service provider and pastoral care worker including Department for Human Service child related employment clearance and RAN-EC training.

Service providers will be required to provide progress updates on minimum qualification studies to the department.

1.9 Child protection reporting requirements

1.9.1 Mandatory reporting

South Australia has mandatory reporting requirements in relation to child protection (refer [Attachment C](#)) and must comply with obligations under the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017 \(SA\)](#). The school principal, service provider and pastoral care worker (in addition to any other staff who may come into contact with children) are required to comply with the mandatory reporting obligations under the Act.

As the employer, service providers are responsible for school pastoral care worker training around mandatory reporting requirements and processes. This training will need to be conducted prior to the commencement of the pastoral care worker delivering NSCP services within the school.

As the site leader, the school principal should also ensure that any pastoral care worker delivering NSCP services in the school complies with all state legislative requirements.

Further details and information about mandatory reporting can be obtained from the Department for Education [website](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/) at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/>.

1.9.2 Child related employment screening

All service provider and pastoral care worker personnel coming into contact with children must comply with South Australian requirements (refer [Attachment C](#)).

In accordance with the department's [Screening and suitability – child safety policy](#), school principals need to ensure that any third party service providers (including those providing NSCP services to government schools) have a child-related employment screening assessment undertaken through the [Department for Human Services](#) and are inducted as to their child protection responsibilities at the site if they are engaged to:

- work with children and young people
- work in proximity to children and young people without constant supervision by a departmental employee
- have access to records relating to children and young people.

They are also required to hold current [Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care](#) (RAN-EC) training prior to delivering NSCP services in government schools and staff must abide by [Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people - Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings](#).

It is the joint responsibility of the service provider and school principal to ensure that personnel, including pastoral care workers hold and keep current all required clearances.

Refer to the department's [website](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-decd/relevant-history-screening/apply-relevant-history-screening-working-education) at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-decd/relevant-history-screening/apply-relevant-history-screening-working-education> for further information.

1.10 Additional information

1.10.1 School mergers and splits

NSCP funded schools must notify the department's NSCP team immediately of a school merger or split via the NSCP mail box Education.NSCP@sa.gov.au.

The service provider must cease delivery of the NSCP services at the school prior to the date of merger or separation.

Schools subject to a merger or separation into multiple individual school entities are subject to the below conditions:

- no increase in funding is available or applicable
- pastoral care worker/s cannot provide services to a school that is currently not approved for assistance under the program. Payments and service, for both mergers and separations of school entities, can only re-commence if official written approval is provided by the department.

- if a school is dividing into separate school entities or campuses, the school should present the department with a proposal outlining how they wish the existing NSCP services to be applied amongst each entity/campus including:
 - the school name/details that is dividing
 - the name/details of the campus/entity to receive the existing funding or apply for permission to divide the service between the schools
 - state the hours of service/funding to be allocated eg a single school receiving 400 hours service is splitting into 2 campuses and the school requests that 200 hours service is received at each of the 2 campuses.
- If a non NSCP funded schools merges with a funded NSCP school the existing funded NSCP can continue at the school providing that evidence has been presented to the department that the new combined school community is supportive of the program's continuation.
- If two funded NSCP schools merge a proposal will need to be provided to the department by the schools prior to the merger taking place. The proposal must provide evidence of continued support for the program by the combined school communities and how the proposed service delivery will continue. The department will consider the circumstances of the merger and the NSCP funding implications. The department will advise the school in writing of the outcome.
- If a school, after a merger, has a student population of 1,000 students or more, spread over more than one campus (with each campus maintaining separate school community governance arrangements or state registration as a separate campus), the school may apply to the department for consideration of continued funding.

1.10.2 School closures

If a school or campus entity closes and ceases to operate, then program funding also ceases. In these circumstances the school will need to:

- ensure a final financial acquittal report outlining expenditure and service details up to the date of the school closure is obtained from the service provider and provided to the department; and
- the service provider transfers unused surplus funds back to the department.

Funding cannot be transferred to existing neighbouring schools that did not apply for, or were unsuccessful in obtaining funding.

If the school closure is part of a broader merger and all displaced students move to a new school entity, the department may, on a case by case basis, consider arrangements to allow some/all servicing to transfer to the new school, subject to section 1.10.1. The department will review and determine the eligibility of each situation on a case by case basis.

1.10.3 Changing a service provider

Schools can alter their service arrangements and change service provider during the funding period after negotiating with their existing service provider and adhering to the agreed service agreement timeframes. Any alternative service provider is required to meet eligibility requirements and have a service agreement with the department.

1.10.3.1 School principal responsibilities

If a school community decides to change its service provider, the school principal should:

- ensure they have consulted with their existing service provider, endeavouring to accommodate any new requirements and resolve any issues
- ensure that the change has been endorsed by the school community
- notify the department immediately, providing details of the circumstances that have led to the change, effective date of change, new service provider and any variation to the service
- notify the existing service provider of the change

A service provider that ceases to act as a service provider for a school for any reason will need to:

- provide a final financial acquittal report to the department, outlining expenditure and service details up to the date of the termination of the service agreement
- transfer any pro rata payment to the new service provider. For example, if the service provider has provided 100 hours of service but was contracted (and paid) to provide 200 hours, the exiting service provider must transfer 50% of the funding to the new service provider.

1.10.3.2 New service provider responsibilities

An organisation that wishes to act as a service provider under this program will need to:

- meet all service provider requirements
- ensure that pastoral care worker/s sign a code of conduct and have the relevant and current [Department for Human Services and Social Inclusion - Child Related Employment clearance](#) in place prior to commencement of the new service
- ensure that pastoral care worker/s have the relevant minimum qualification requirements in place prior to commencing the service
- enter into a [service agreement](#) with the department for delivery of NSCP services.

1.10.4 Changing a pastoral care worker

Schools may change their pastoral care worker at any time during the funding period. Any proposed change of pastoral care worker should be negotiated with the existing service provider and should be in line with the outcomes of school community consultation.

Changes to the choice of a pastoral care worker by a school may impact a service provider's ability to continue to employ and supply the services of a pastoral care worker. Schools should be aware that a service provider who employs pastoral care workers of a specific faith may not be prepared to supply or employ a pastoral care worker of an alternate faith.

1.10.4.1 School principal responsibilities

If a school community decides to change its pastoral care worker, the school principal should:

- notify the service provider immediately and discuss the potential change to the service the school is considering
- if the desired change can be accommodated by the current service provider, the principal will need to negotiate and document all relevant variations to the service provision
- ensure that any change has been endorsed by the school community

If the service provider is unable to accommodate the change required by the school, the school could consider changing their service provider. In this circumstance the school principal should:

- notify the department immediately, providing details of the circumstances that have led to the change, effective date of change, new pastoral care worker and any variation to the service
- notify the existing service provider of the change.

1.10.4.2 Service provider responsibilities

If there is a change in pastoral care worker which the service provider can accommodate, the service provider is required to:

- ensure that the pastoral care worker/s sign a code of conduct and have the relevant a current [Department for Human Services and Social Inclusion - Child Related Employment clearance](#) in place prior to commencement of the new service
- ensure that pastoral care worker/s have the relevant minimum qualification requirements in place prior to commencing the service

If the service provider is not able to accommodate a change in pastoral care worker and the school decides to engage an alternative service provider, the exiting service provider is responsible for ensuring compliance with the arrangements outlined in Section 1.10.3.2.

1.10.5 Exiting schools

If a school community determines that they no longer wish to participate in the program and receive funding, they can exit at any time. In these circumstances, the school should negotiate with the service provider to ensure that:

- a final financial acquittal report to the department outlining expenditure and service details up to the date of the school exiting the program obtained from the service provider; and
- the service provider transfers unused surplus funds back to the department.

Schools no longer wishing to participate in the program will need to provide the department in writing (at Education.NSCP@sa.gov.au):

- the wish to withdraw from the program including the effective date of exiting and the reason for exiting the program
- details of consultation conducted with the school governing council and school community and provide evidence of support for the decision to exit from the program and cease funding eg copy of meeting minutes with motion passed in support of exiting the program
- provide confirmation that consultation has occurred and that the service provider has been notified of the decision to exit the program.

1.10.6 Mutual terminations

Mutual terminations can be initiated where the school and service provider no longer wish to participate in the program. The school should contact the department immediately and the department will contact the service provider and discuss if a mutual termination is appropriate with both parties. In the event that it is, all unspent funds are to be repaid by the service provider to the department, based on the number of service hours not yet provided to the school (refer section 1.5.2). Schools that initiate a mutual termination are considered 'non-funded' schools and cannot re-enter the program at a later date.

Alternatively if a school and/or service provider is experiencing temporary issues, such as difficulties in sourcing a replacement pastoral care worker, they may consider communicating with the department regarding a temporary gap in service as per Section 1.10.7.

Schools should note that if a service provider seeks a mutual termination or is terminated through no fault of the school, they will need to source a new service provider in order to continue to receive services. Suspension of service is also applicable if the school wishes to maintain the existing pastoral care worker as a new 'employer' should be sourced and a new [master agreement](#) be signed by the department prior to the use of program funds.

1.10.7 Gap in service

If schools are experiencing servicing complications such as difficulties in sourcing an appropriate replacement pastoral care worker, there may be a gap in service until the issues are resolved.

Given that minimum annual service hours have been awarded, schools can continue to draw on unused service hours during the calendar year. Schools could renegotiate service details with their service provider to increase pastoral care worker hours and use the full calendar year allocation. For example, schools may wish to negotiate full-time service for a specified period to use additional hours. Please note unused service hours will not roll over to subsequent calendar years.

Schools and service providers who have experienced a gap in service are still required to provide reports required as per section 3.1. Reports including financial acquittals will need to provide details of funds expended and what service has been provided before and after the gap in service.

1.10.8 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the department, including those in relation to the NSCP, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1991](#) (FOI Act). Decisions regarding requests for access will be made by an authorised FOI decision-maker in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

Further information on the process and requirements, including how to lodge a request for access under the Freedom of Information Act 1991 is available on the [Department for Education website](#) at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/legal-services/freedom-information-foi-requests>.

1.10.9 Privacy

The department is bound, in administering the program, by the provisions of the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Privacy Act) and the [Information Privacy Principles](#) (IPPs). Further information about how the department handles information is available at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/your-privacy>.

Legal entities involved in the delivery of the program will be required to abide by the IPPs and the Privacy Act when handling personal information collected for the purposes of the program.

The IPPs regulate the way state government agencies can collect, use, store, and disclose personal information.

More information about the Information Privacy Principles, including a copy of the IPPs can be obtained from the Department of the [Premier and Cabinet website](#) at www.dpc.sa.gov.au.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Authority/responsibility for
Department for Education	<p>The department has overall responsibility for the administration of the program through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• developing and updating program guidelines and supporting documentation• implementing this guideline• making payments in accordance with the project agreement• ensuring funding for each school is properly acquitted and Australian Government funding is properly accounted for• managing program funds, policy and performance• assessing applications and distributing NSCP funding under a cross sector agreement• communicating with stakeholders to ensure they are informed of their responsibilities in relation to program delivery and compliance• monitoring adherence with program requirements• participating in an Australian Government evaluation of the program• reporting to the Australian Government against milestones identified in the project agreement; and• facilitating best practice and continuous improvement in relation to the delivery and management of the program through communication with schools and service providers.
School principal	<p>The principal, in consultation with the parent body and the school's governing council, is responsible for working with the service provider to lead, coordinate and manage all aspects of NSCP services within the school, including complaints management. The principal may appoint another member of the school's staff to undertake these tasks on their behalf.</p> <p>The principal is responsible for the welfare of students within their school by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• undertaking and/or coordinating ongoing consultation with the school community (at a minimum on an annual basis), to assess the demand, support for, and nature of NSCP services• seeking governing council approval for the NSCP service in the school

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- collaborating with service provider in recruitment and selection of pastoral care worker/s
 - checking that all pastoral care workers and other service provider personnel who may come into contact with students in their school comply with all legislative, policy and other requirements and permissions necessary (eg site based induction on [protective practices](#), up to date [Responding to Abuse and Neglect Education and Care](#) training) to have access to and work on the school premises
 - making every effort to inform all parents and students of the voluntary nature of program participation
 - ensuring that sufficient procedures are in place for students and their families to consent to the voluntary service
 - completing, endorsing and submitting the school's application for funding
 - endorsing the choice of pastoral care worker prior to employment
 - overseeing the delivery of the NSCP service within the school
 - ensuring that effective complaint handling protocols, including the documentation of complaints to notify the service provider and /or the department (if appropriate) of complaints or issues that may arise
 - ensuring that the [complaint handling process](#) is promoted to the school community including the principal's role as a direct channel for students/parents/carers to approach as needed
 - immediately act on and report to the department any concerns raised by students, staff or other school community members of any breaches to this guideline and the code of conduct
 - ensuring induction to the school is provided to the pastoral care worker
 - ensuring appropriate facilities and relevant resources are provided as required and as per risk management requirements or as per state or school policy (eg work space, lockable filing cabinet, access to relevant IT and policy documents such as [protective practices](#) etc.)
 - approving all NSCP service activities and matters that vary students' school routine and participation or attendance
 - advising the service provider of variations in routine such as absences of the pastoral care worker and long-term gaps in service when there is no service provision and other day to day management issues
 - ensuring that a pastoral care worker does not deliver NSCP services if a child protection check expires and a renewal is

not in place; and

- ensuring that details of the NSCP are published and maintained on the school website.
-

School governing council

School communities are expected to demonstrate their support for pastoral care services by:

- affirming support for the NSCP services including the suitability of the role and/or faith of the pastoral care worker (this can be done via a combination of methods including surveys, questionnaires, governing council meeting minutes etc) which should be done annually at a minimum as per section 5
 - if required, providing and maintaining cash and/or in-kind assistance through activities such as fund raising to ensure that the pastoral care service remains viable; and
 - assisting the school principal in monitoring and reviewing the nature and role of the pastoral care worker, including the service being provided.
-

Service provider

For the purposes of the National School Chaplaincy Program, a service provider is a legal entity (an organisation incorporated under Australian Government or state legislation) that may enter into a contract with the Department for Education in order to provide NSCP services to government schools.

Service providers are the employing bodies of pastoral care workers.

Service providers and principals work collaboratively to select a pastoral care worker for appointment to a school and to negotiate and document a work plan which details the duties and tasks the pastoral care worker will undertake in the school.

Service providers are responsible for:

- the financial management of the pastoral care worker in the schools at which they employ pastoral care workers
 - recruitment and selection of the pastoral care worker in consultation with the principal (the service provider must seek the principal's endorsement for the appointment of the pastoral care worker)
 - ensuring adequate induction is provided for pastoral care workers prior to commencement within a school, including all role requirements and boundaries as per the National School Chaplaincy Program and the code of conduct
 - ensuring that pastoral care workers have minimum qualifications within agreed requirements and keeping evidence of these qualifications
-

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- ensuring that pastoral care workers and any service provider staff who may come into contact with children, have appropriate and current [Department of Human Services - child related employment clearance](#) in place and keeping evidence of clearances
 - ensuring that pastoral care workers have completed [Responding to Abuse and Neglect Education and Care](#) training
 - monitoring of the pastoral care worker role in consultation with the principal, including that an agreed work-plan is in place and that the pastoral care worker is complying with the work-plan
 - maintenance of required insurances; and
 - notifying the Department for Education of complaints
-

Pastoral care worker

Pastoral care workers are responsible for supporting the spiritual, social, and emotional wellbeing of their students regardless of faith or beliefs.

A pastoral care worker should (where applicable):

- provide support for a range of day to day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people across a wide variety of issues including health, social and values education and emotional support
- work with the principal, the school's wellbeing staff or equivalent to refer students to appropriate services when required
- have or develop an appropriate and suitable external network of professional groups working with the community
- adhere to existing school operational requirements and report to the principal or their nominated staff member where required

Pastoral care workers should also ensure that all services that are delivered are:

- approved by the principal
 - have the appropriate prior parental/guardian consent, where relevant, as per existing school policy
 - have the voluntary consent of students who participate
 - assist the principal in notifying students/parents about all aspects of the pastoral care worker's role including the voluntary nature of the program and the need for consent forms to be signed prior to participation in services, as appropriate
-

- report on services relating to the program and participate in any monitoring and /or evaluation strategies required by the principal and/or the service provider
- avoid theological terminology and language that assumes that those with whom they speak share their beliefs and ensure that any faith based statements are presented as personal beliefs rather than as factual assertions
- ensure that they take responsibility for, and obtain prior approval from the principal for, any external people they invite onto school premises to provide student activities such as musical shows or lectures or to assist in providing pastoral care
- deliver services in a way that respects the range of spiritual views and cultural traditions in the school community, and also respects the stated views of parents/guardians to ensure the spiritual and moral education of their children
- refer students/parents/carers to specialist services within the school as appropriate
- inform the school principal if they have identified matters that require referral to professional agencies.

Australian Government
Department of Education
and Training

The Australian Government [Department of Education and Training](#) is responsible for:

- providing NSCP funding to the SA government under the [NSCP project agreement 2015-2018](#); and
- monitoring and assessing achievement against milestones in the delivery of the NSCP to ensure that outputs are delivered within the agreed timeframe.

Cross sector panel

Group of government, Catholic and independent school sector representatives responsible for:

- selecting and prioritising schools for funding in their jurisdiction
- making decisions concerning program administration in accordance with the project agreement; and
- providing relevant information for submission of milestone reports to the Australian Government in accordance with the project agreement.

2.1 Responsibilities of school principal

The school principal (as site leader) is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the NSCP requirements are met including ensuring that the PCW does not commence delivering the NSCP service in the school until they are appropriately qualified (subject to section 1.8).

School principals and service providers work collaboratively to select a pastoral care worker for appointment to the school and to negotiate and document a work plan which details the duties and tasks they will undertake in the school.

Refer to [section 2 table](#) for further details concerning the responsibilities of school principals.

2.2 Responsibilities of service provider

The department recognises that, as the employer of pastoral care workers, providers of NSCP services have arrangements in place to ensure appropriate development and quality assurance of their workers.

Service providers are expected to provide ongoing professional development and support through:

- pastoral care worker specific training
- mandatory reporting requirements in relation to child protection
- links with other professional services.

The department does not assess minimum qualifications or equivalency of qualifications. The service provider is responsible for determining this. The decision should be guided by the supporting program documentation. Service providers must retain sufficient evidence of the pastoral care worker/s qualifications including assessment of equivalency. This documentation may be requested by the department as part of monitoring activities.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) takes a holistic view of some previously unrecognised skills and knowledge that an individual has achieved outside of the formal education and training system. The RPL process assesses this unrecognised learning against the required qualification.

RPL is carried out by Registered Training Organisations (RTO) qualified to undertake such assessments against the [community services national training package](#). A service provider or a PCW directly undertakes the RPL process with an appropriate RTO.

Refer to [section 2 table](#) for further details concerning the responsibilities of service providers.

2.3 What do pastoral care workers do?

Pastoral care workers are required to respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs regardless of race, religion, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. While the key tasks of a PCW will vary depending on the needs of individual school communities, they could include:

- working closely with, and/or as part of the school wellbeing committee or team to plan for and deliver student resilience and wellbeing services
- providing students, their families and staff with support or appropriate referrals (in consultation with the principal) in difficult situations such as during times of grief or when students are facing personal or emotional challenges
- supporting students to express a desire to explore their spirituality. This may include providing guidance about spirituality, values and ethical matters and/or appropriate referral of questions of faith/spirituality
- providing services with a spiritual content (excluding religious education) including facilitating discussion groups and lunch time clubs if approval and consent for the activities have been obtained

- developing relationships with, and referring students/parents/carers to specialist services within the school as appropriate or externally under the direction of the school principal if there are existing state or school referral policies
- organising one-on-one or group sessions with students, parents, staff and other members of the school community as requested and required by the school community
- contributing to extra-curricular activities eg running breakfast clubs
- delivering peer leadership and support programs
- participating in school activities such as sport, camps, gardens etc
- contributing to school newsletters
- report to school community organisations on service provision within the school community
- attending governing council or equivalent parent body meetings to provide details of the program and the services that are available, as required
- facilitating activities connecting students with other members of the community
- mentoring/coaching
- facilitating community partnership programs between the school and the wider community (in consultation with the principal and other relevant school wellbeing staff)

2.4 What don't pastoral care workers do?

When delivering services under the National School Chaplaincy Program, pastoral care workers are required to adhere to this guideline and the code of conduct (refer [Attachment A](#)).

The role of a pastoral care worker should not include the following:

- delivery of religious education
- coerce students to attend activities that have religious content/focus
- attempt to convert students to a religion or set of beliefs through proselytising or evangelising
- ask or encourage students to proselytise within the school
- deliver activities/services that promote a particular view or religious belief without prior approval and consent
- put students in a position of feeling manipulated or intruded on by intense persuasive conversation
- initiate faith discussions with a view to coercing or manipulating students to a particular view or spiritual belief
- take advantage of the pastoral care worker's privileged position to proselytise or advocate for a particular view or spiritual belief (even though the individual pastoral care worker may respond to questions and in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her own beliefs)
- attempt to undermine students' religious or other beliefs

- criticise, or display disapproval of, diversity relating to culture, race, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression
- use other methods such as social media-blogs, Facebook, newsletters and/or school websites, to proselytise to students within their school, in their role as a program funded pastoral care worker
- provide professional support services outside of their role, for example therapeutic counselling or legal or medical advice
- provide support to students who have indicated that they do not wish to access the service of a pastoral care worker, or where an appropriate consent process has not been followed
- provide support to individuals/families that are no longer part of the NSCP funded school community
- perform religious services/rites (such as worship or prayer during school assembly etc) without the appropriate prior consent
- express views that are discriminatory or biased on the grounds of religious ideology, beliefs or sexuality; and
- encouraging students to be 'friends' on social media.

Regardless of individual pastoral care workers' personal and/or spiritual views, they are required to treat all students with dignity and respect.

Pastoral care workers should adhere to the guideline and relevant code of conduct at all times and not participate in any activity in a private capacity that might impact or be perceived to impact on their delivery of the services under the program.

For example, a PCW should not make public comments which could be perceived as compromising their capacity to fulfil their duties in accordance with the code of conduct. This could include, but is not limited to, using methods such as social media, including blogs and Facebook, in a private capacity to proselytise and target students from the NSCP funded school.

3. Monitoring, evaluation and review

3.1 Financial acquittals

The department is required to report on use of NSCP funds via an acquittal process.

3.1.1 Service providers

From 2017 service providers will be required to submit annual financial acquittal reports directly to the department.

The details required are:

- service provider name and contact details
- NSCP agreed service hours across all schools
- NSCP delivered service hours across all schools
- NSCP annual funding (ex-GST) received across all schools
- NSCP annual funding (ex-GST) expended across all schools

- NSCP funding to be returned to the department (if any funds were not spent during the year)
- financial acquittal report (excel spreadsheet) document to be uploaded detailing the specifics above against each school that the service provider delivered NSCP services to in 2016.

NSCP funded service providers will be directly notified of the acquittal requirements including due date, required content and online link to acquittal.

3.1.2 Government schools

As per section 1.5.1, NSCP funded government schools are required to submit simple quarterly statements online confirming service delivery to ensure payment to their nominated service providers. Schools will be notified directly when reports are due.

3.2 Reporting Schedule

As per section 1.5.1, schools will be required to submit quarterly confirmation of service delivery by their nominated service provider. Funded schools may also be required to participate in any monitoring activities as described at 3.

3.2.1 Prerequisites for payments

As per section 1.5.1, payment to service providers will only be made once a master agreement has been signed by both the service provider and the department, the funded school has ongoing school community support for the program and the funded school has provided the relevant confirmation of service delivery as required.

3.2.2 Prerequisites for further payments

Refer to sections 1.5.1 and 3.3.1 for requirements.

3.3 Monitoring

Program monitoring of the NSCP is undertaken by the department staff within a risk management framework.

The Australian Government funding is contingent on the department meeting required milestones, failure by schools/service providers to provide requested information may be considered in the assessment of future funding applications.

The department will conduct a range of monitoring activities to verify that NSCP services are delivered in accordance with the conditions of the [project agreement](#) and other relevant agreements, which may include (but are not limited to):

- responding to concerns from members of the school community or seeking feedback from them to verify participation and progress
- conducting site visits (to schools and/or service providers) to review compliance with the project agreement and other relevant agreements
- examining school/service provider documentation associated with claims for payment.

Schools and service providers should keep adequate records to verify the provision of NSCP services. This includes keeping records that demonstrate ongoing school community support for the program.

3.3.1 Monitoring visits

The department may conduct monitoring visits to schools and service providers during the funding period. Monitoring visits provide an opportunity for the department to ensure that delivery of the NSCP service in schools complies with the requirements of the project agreement, other relevant agreements and supporting structures such as the code of conduct.

Visits also provide an opportunity for principals to express their satisfaction or concerns with the program regarding implementation and service delivery.

Monitoring visits may be made according to the following principles:

- a random sample of visits to participating schools
- annual visits to organisations acting as service providers
- targeted visits to schools/service providers experiencing difficulties/complaints

3.3.2 Desktop monitoring

The department will also conduct desktop monitoring to oversee program delivery. Schools and service providers may be asked to provide additional information throughout the funding period. This may include (but is not limited to):

- certification forms which require school principal sign off against program compliance requirements
- evidence of pastoral care worker minimum qualifications
- evidence of child-related employment screening clearances
- copies of complaints registers
- follow up on resolution of complaints
- evidence of ongoing school community support for the program and pastoral care worker in the school, including governing council meeting minutes and results of school parent surveys
- satisfaction with service provision
- verification of details that have been provided in financial acquittal reports.

3.4 Evaluation

Under the project agreement, the department agrees to participate in an evaluation of the NSCP as conducted by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. NSCP funded schools will be advised of any details concerning this as it becomes available.

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Cross sector panel	Group of representatives from South Australian government, Catholic and independent school sectors.
Service agreement	Written agreement between the department and service provider detailing service provision for the NSCP.
Pastoral care	The practice of looking after the personal needs of students, not just their academic needs, through the provision of general spiritual and personal advice.
Pastoral care worker (PCW)	<p>For the purposes of this program, a pastoral care worker is an individual who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is engaged to provide pastoral care to the the department school community • may be from any faith • is recognised by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having the skills and experience to deliver NSCP services to the school community • is recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution • meets the NSCP’s minimum qualification requirements • holds a current Department for Human Services child related employment screening • has undertaken and keeps updated Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RAN-EC) training; and • should be able to provide evidence that the requirements are met. <p>Pastoral care workers are not required to be religiously affiliated. The NSCP project agreement at 30.A(iii) requires chaplains/pastoral care workers to be recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution.</p>
Proselytise	Attempt to convert someone to another opinion and/or belief, particularly a religion.
Project agreement	Agreement between the Australian Government and the states and territories including SA which provides for conditional grants for delivery of the National School Chaplaincy Program.
Recognised or accepted religious institution	As per the Australian Tax Office ruling (TR92/17) , a religious institution is a body which is instituted for religious purposes.
School principal	The educator who has executive authority for a school.

Screening

The assessment of a person's relevant history, conducted by the Department of Human Services

Service provider

A legal entity (an organisation incorporated under commonwealth or state legislation) that may enter into a contract with the Department for Education.

A service provider is any organisation which can provide a pastoral care worker in accordance with the National School Chaplaincy Program for government schools guideline and agrees to comply with the department's policies and procedures (set out in the Guideline and supporting documentation including the service agreement).

Service providers are not required to be religious organisations, but they are obligated, when employing pastoral care workers, to comply with the [NSCP project agreement](#) at 30.A(iii) which requires pastoral care workers to be recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution (refer section 2.4 of this guideline).

Details of the role and responsibilities of the service provider are in section 2.2 of this guideline.

5. Supporting documents

School principals, service providers and pastoral care workers in government schools are required to operate in accordance with the following departmental policies, guidelines and supporting documentation. Documents can be found on the departments [National School Chaplaincy Program website](#) at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program> or obtained from The department by request at Education.NSCP@sa.gov.au.

- NSCP Service Agreement
- NSCP Quarterly Newsletter
- NSCP Financial Acquittal Template (when required)
- NSCP Application for Minimum Qualification Transition Arrangements (available via e-mail).

6. References

Name	Content	Link
NSCP Website	The most updated NSCP information and resources for stakeholders	https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program
Protective Practices	Protective practices	https://www.education.sa.gov.au/supporting-students/your-childs-education/protective-practices-information-parents-and-caregivers
Child Safe Environments	Guidelines for mandated notifiers and information for organisations	https://www.education.sa.gov.au/child-protection/child-safe-environments

Keeping Safe: Child protection curriculum	Details and resources about the child protection curriculum	https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/curriculum-and-teaching/keeping-safe-child-protection-curriculum/about-keeping-safe-child
Screening and Suitability	Information including the screening guide and links to apply	https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-decd/relevant-history-screening/about-relevant-history-screening
Non-departmental service providers in preschools, schools and educational programs procedure	Mandatory procedure that details the process for site leaders when considering/managing requests from non-departmental service providers to provide direct support/services in schools.	https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/non_decd_service_providers_in_preschools_schools_and_educational_programs.pdf
Australian Government Department of Education and Training website	Current information about minimum qualification courses and units of competency	http://www.myskills.gov.au

Attachments

Attachment A: Code of conduct

Attachment B: Consent arrangements – better practice guidance

Attachment C: Child protection

Attachment D: Cluster service agreement – better practice guidance

Attachment E: Information for schools – better practice guidance

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Published December 2018

Related legislation [Education Act 1972](#)
[Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#)

Related policy documents [Screening and Suitability – Child Safety](#)
[Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum](#)
[Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people – Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings](#)
[Non-DECD service providers in preschools, schools and educational programs procedure](#)

Keywords National School Chaplaincy Program, NSCP, service provider, pastoral care, pastoral care worker, PCW, guideline, wellbeing, school community

REVISION RECORD

Version	Approved by	Approved date	Review date	Amendments
V2.0		July 2016		Added sections on changing service providers, definitions, engaging service providers, transition arrangements for minimum qualification requirements, financial acquittal requirements, and school closures/mergers to reflect departmental policy and practice. Updated existing content to reflect departmental policy and practice; and provided clearer guidance around the roles and responsibilities of each NSCP stakeholder.
V2.1		12/12/2016	30/11/2018	Updated funding arrangements, financial acquittal and reporting content for 2017-2018. Removed requirement for service agreement between school and service provider.
V2.2	Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development	28/11/2018	31/12/2019	Updated existing content to reflect departmental policy and practice. Reflect legislative changes and references to external documents.

A code of conduct is a document between an employer and employee which outlines the expected behaviour of the employee in the performance of their duties. The pastoral care worker will already have a signed code of conduct with the service provider when appointed to a school.

The school may choose to adopt the service provider's code of conduct and the school board/governing council may choose to develop their own code of conduct which reflects their local context.

Should you wish to enter into a separate code of conduct with the pastoral care worker, an example is below. Best practice examples would include content similar to the example provided.

Please alter to individualise for your school community context.

Code of Conduct Example

Pastoral care workers are responsible for supporting the spiritual, social, and emotional wellbeing of their students regardless of faith or beliefs. Pastoral care workers should be able to provide support for a range of day to day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people. They can become involved in a wide variety of issues including health, social and values education and emotional support.

It is expected that pastoral care workers will work with the principal and the school's student wellbeing staff, if student referral to appropriate services is required. To assist in facilitating this, pastoral care workers should have or develop an appropriate and suitable external network of professional groups working within the community.

In providing these services, the pastoral care worker is required to sign and observe this code of conduct at all times.

The pastoral care worker is obligated to:

1. Adhere to all relevant state policy and legislation, including that concerning child safety, privacy, and confidentiality eg [Protective practices guidelines](#).
2. Not conduct themselves in a manner which impacts their delivery of the services under the program. As such, pastoral care workers must adhere to the program guidelines and the code of conduct at all times where conduct in a private capacity might impact their delivery of the services under the program.
3. Recognise, respect and affirm the authority of the principal and/or school governing council, and work in consultation with them.
4. Contribute to a supportive, safe, inclusive and caring learning environment within the school.
5. Respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs that may be different from their own, including respecting the rights of parents/guardians to ensure the moral and spiritual education of their children is in line with the family's own convictions.
6. Actively discourage any form of harassment or discrimination on the grounds of religious ideology, beliefs, race, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
7. Respect & honour school community members including students, children, staff and families regardless of race, religion, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

8. Not perform professional or other services for which they are not qualified and if not qualified, refer to school wellbeing staff for follow up.
9. Work with school wellbeing staff in referring a student to a service or organisation which is best placed to support the student's particular needs in accordance with the student's own beliefs and values.
10. Provide accurate and impartial information about the support and services available in the broader community, including community groups and religious groups.
11. Not put themselves, or allow themselves, to be placed in a compromising situation, recognising that there are circumstances where confidentiality may be sought by the student.
12. Avoid unnecessary physical contact with a student, recognising however that there may be some circumstances where physical contact may be appropriate such as where the student is injured or distraught.
13. While recognising that an individual pastoral care worker may in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her own beliefs, a pastoral care worker must not take advantage of his or her privileged position to proselytise or advocate for a particular view or belief.
14. Adhere to the *National School Chaplaincy Program for government schools guideline*.

Acknowledgement by pastoral care worker

I understand and agree to the terms of this Code of Conduct

Signature of pastoral care worker

Name of pastoral care worker

Signature of witness

Name of witness

Position of witness

Date

The following may be used as guidance in consent arrangements and processes:

- Developing a register of students whose parents/guardians have opted out of NSCP services
- Integrating consent arrangements for NSCP services into the school's current wellbeing/welfare services governance system
- Consent forms could include additional information such as:
 - a clear description of the approved/endorsed services or activities to be/being provided by the pastoral care worker
 - a clear description of any spiritual/religious content in the proposed structured activities as approved by the school principal
 - references to alternate strategies/activities for students if parents/guardians choose to opt out of NSCP services
 - details of the qualifications held by the pastoral care worker where consent is needed for activities that require professional expertise such as one on one sessions
 - information on how and where to lodge a complaint.

An example consent form is provided on the following page.

Pastoral Care Worker (PCW) Consent Form

The pastoral care worker.....(insert name here) employed by
(insert service provider name here) delivers the following activities in our school:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

The PCW holds a qualification in.....

The faith (if applicable) of the PCW is

Participation in activities conducted by the PCW is voluntary.

For those students whose parents/guardians choose to opt out of NSCP services, the following alternative activities will be provided:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Please tick the following option/s that apply:

- I do not give permission for my child(insert name here) to receive formal support from the pastoral care worker
- I do give permission for my child.....(insert name here) to receive formal support from the pastoral care worker
- on an ongoing basis
- on an individual basis (one on one discussions with a student)
- In a group setting (discussions with groups of students)

This consent remains in place until you, as the parent / caregiver advise in writing otherwise.

..... (parent / caregiver signature)

...../...../..... Date



Schools, service providers and pastoral care workers must comply with all relevant Commonwealth and South Australian laws and policies including those relating to a current [Human Services - Child Related Employment Screening](#) such as the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017 \(SA\)](#).

The [Non-DECD service providers in preschools, schools and educational programs procedure](#) is also a mandatory document that applies to site leaders (school principals) when managing or considering requests from any person or organisation that is independent of the departments looking to provide or providing a direct support/service to children and young people in the departments schools and educational programs.

This procedure requires that, "...a the departments employee must be able to see the child or young person at all time during the provision of Services by a non- the departments Service Provider".

Prior to participation in the program, all pastoral care workers and service provider personnel who may come into contact with children under this program must have:

- A current [Department for Human Services - Child Related Employment Screening](#) and
- A current relevant certificate of completion for the [Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care \(RAN-EC\)](#) training (to be updated online yearly)

All clearances/training as above must be renewed regularly. Renewal of clearances must follow South Australian requirements.

If a current Child Related Employment Screening expires, pastoral care workers and other service provider personnel must not continue to work with children until the relevant clearance is current.

Records of all current Child Related Employment Screening clearances should be retained by the service provider and all documentation must be made available and accessible for viewing by the departments staff, upon request by the departments.

Where the a current Child Related Employment Screening reveals any convictions or pending charges, the results of the check must be provided to the departments for a decision about the suitability of a potential pastoral care worker. The proposed PCW cannot commence services under the program without written authority from the departments.

For further information, visit the Department of Human Services Screening Unit webpage at <http://screening.sa.gov.au/>

A Service Level Agreement may be entered into by all schools within a cluster situation in order to gain agreement on future processes and ensure all schools are satisfied with the arrangement. The agreement could include:

- what service and scheduling meets the needs of all schools
- how the service will operate between the schools, ensuring that each school gets their allocated service hours
- how any cross cluster group activities will be attributed to each schools' allocated service hours
- how the travel time will be allocated between each school, for example, three hours of travel can be claimed as one hour per school
- how funding will be individually allocated to each school, given pooling of funding is not permitted.

Agreements of this nature and any variation should be agreed upon by all participating schools and the service provider.

School community members including students, parents/caregivers and staff should be provided with information about the NSCP service in the school.

This information can be distributed to the school community in a number of ways including:

- enrolment packs
- newsletters
- brochures.

An example of best practice information for schools about the NSCP would include the following messages:

- the NSCP aims to support schools in promoting the wellbeing of students by establishing or maintaining pastoral care workers (PCW) in South Australian schools.
- the current NSCP is a Australian Government funded program from 2015-2018
- the NSCP is not intended to diminish or replace existing careers advice, counselling or wellbeing services. It is designed to form part of the wellbeing services that already exist within school communities.
- the nature of the service is decided by schools, following consultation with school communities
- the program is designed to provide a tailored option, based on the requirements of the school community and their decisions regarding the service to be delivered
- availability of the service and the voluntary nature of participation in their school
- it is not compulsory for any student to participate in activities or receive services from an NSCP funded pastoral care worker
- details of the service provider and the pastoral care worker providing NSCP services to the school
- consent arrangements including how/when the pastoral care worker can be accessed by the school community
- details of the complaints process including that students, parents/caregivers and school staff are able to approach the principal directly
- a link to the [NSCP website](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program) at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/national-school-chaplaincy-program> which includes supporting program documentation such as the NSCP guidelines.