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| School Counsellor | **Position**  **Description** |  |

**Reporting to: Director of Student Wellbeing**

**Status: Part Time (5 weeks’ annual paid leave)**

**Tenure: Ongoing**

**Hours: 19 hours per week; (times and days to be negotiated)**

**Salary:**  **General Staff Level 4 to Level 6 (based on qualifications and  
 experience)**

**Commencing Location: Mt Ridley campus**

**Prepared: August 2023**

Position Context

**Hume Anglican Grammar** is an independent, multi-campus, co-educational and Anglican Diocesan School offering education from Prep to Year 12 in the Northern growth corridor of Melbourne. We aim to provide our students with an education that prepares them for the challenges of life, equips them to contribute to the community in an environment based on Christian values and at a cost affordable to as many families as possible. It is our fundamental belief that young people who are genuinely happy will engage, aspire and thrive within our learning community. By establishing high standards in all that we do, every student is encouraged and supported to discover and fulfil their unique potential.

Hume Anglican Grammar has an open enrolment policy so educates children from many faiths and with a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities. It has a strong sense of inclusivity and a community-minded focus. We are a progressive school, not just in the development of buildings and grounds, but also in innovative thinking and advancements in our approach to teaching and learning. This is led by a group of dedicated and expert teachers who practise their craft with skill, and by building the strongest of relationships with our students. It is not by chance that we have young people who readily display warmth, humour and respect for one another and their teachers.

Since 2011, the School has occupied the Mt Ridley P-12 campus of 10 hectares, this site will ultimately have some 1,400 students. In 2019, it opened an 8-hectare second campus in Donnybrook. Commencing with junior primary, each year additional classes and year levels are added so the campus will ultimately have an enrolment of 1,600 from Prep to Year 12. At Donnybrook, the first cohort of Year 7 have commenced, so inaugural secondary students.

In 2023, the School opened its third campus in Kalkallo, as a Primary (P-6) school and as feeder to the Mt Ridley and Donnybrook Secondary schools, it will follow a similar growth pattern to Donnybrook with eventually some 600 students.

This year, the school has 2,287 students and employs some 240 staff - 163 teaching and 77 non-teaching. Currently, the student enrolment at each campus is: Mt Ridley 1,400, Donnybrook 672 & Kalkallo 215.

The school is on a growth trajectory and in 2024 is projected to increase to 2,573 students (Mt Ridley 1,400, Donnybrook 840 & Kalkallo 305) and ultimately have some 3,600 students (Mt Ridley 1,400, Donnybrook 1,600 and Kalkallo 600) with a corresponding cohort of teaching and general staff on its three campuses with plans for further expansion.

Purpose of the Position

Hume Anglican Grammar acknowledges the critical role of the School Counsellor in helping to support students across the school community. Through this role the school is able to provide support for students when they are experiencing personal difficulties that impact upon their overall wellbeing. The School Counsellor is required to provide a child and adolescent counselling service in the school and to work with other staff to support students and families. An important aspect of the role is to facilitate access to education and participation in school and to maximise student wellbeing and promote the best educational outcomes for students.

The School Counsellor will have a tertiary qualification in counselling and have an extensive background in counselling children. He/she will liaise closely with key leaders of the school, especially those entrusted with student wellbeing responsibilities, so that together they can provide timely and proactive support for our students, whilst also being equipped to provide direction for other staff, when unexpected situations arise.

The School Counsellor will be recognised and highly respected by colleagues, parents and community members as an individual with appropriate experience to be able to carry out the key duties of this role, with minimal supervision. They will have demonstrated a clear understanding of processes and procedures associated with handling case-sensitive situations and of the importance of maintaining strict confidentiality, where appropriate.

This position affords the successful candidate with the opportunity to help shape and develop our existing student wellbeing program across the Prep – 12 and develop age and stage appropriate wellbeing programs for students.

Through this role the School Counsellor should help build the capacity of the school community to work toward the same goals. It is expected in this role, that close links are to be maintained with outside agencies and specialists.

Nature of the Position

The School Counsellor is required to be on duty the 38 term weeks and the week prior to the commencement of the academic year. All paid and unpaid leave must be taken outside of these times during the non-term weeks. Hours of work are from 8:15am to 4:26pm including a 30-minute meal break. There will be times when the School Counsellor will be required to work outside of set hours. When this occurs time in-in-lieu will be provided.

Upon commencement, this position will be based at the Mt Ridley Campus with a requirement to travel to the other campuses. In the future there may be the requirement to perform part or all of this role at other locations.

Responsibilities and Duties

Subject to the discretion of the Principal, the School Counsellor is responsible for overseeing the wellbeing of students across the school, particularly where they have personal issues that leave them vulnerable.

Hume Anglican Grammar is absolutely committed to zero tolerance of child abuse.

**Counselling**

Provide counselling, therapy and programs for individuals and groups for a range of mental health, emotional and family issues. This involves:

* Experience and competence with individual psychological therapy, including a range of evidence-based therapies (e.g., CBT, DBT, ACT, solution-focused therapy)
* Familiarity and experience with evidence-based group programs for mental health issues and resilience building
* Facilitating small group preventative and proactive programs for students (e.g., social skills and anger management)
* Providing a high level of care and concern for each student accessing counsellor support
* Making independent assessments of students and provide appropriate interventions and/or referrals to other health services.
* Managing time and case load to ensure that appropriate time is allocated for planning, administration, communication and follow through in addition to consulting with new students

**Communication and collaboration**

Communicate students’ particular needs and plan evidence-based interventions with other staff, health professionals, and parents. This involves:

* Ensuring that relevant information is communicated promptly and effectively, internally but also overseeing the process of completing and submitting information and reports to external agencies, upon request
* Managing student meetings on short/medium/long term basis as appropriate
* Initiating contact with parents and ensuring on-going communication is maintained throughout a period of concern with regards to specific student issues
* Addressing correspondence (phone calls, emails, letters and referrals) in an appropriate and timely manner
* Ensuring ongoing communication between Heads & Assistant Heads of Student Wellbeing, Year Level Coordinators, Director of Student Wellbeing, Head of Student Wellbeing – Secondary, School Counsellor, Assistant Principals, Chaplain, Deputy Principal and Principal
* Meeting regularly and working co-operatively with staff to discuss current concerns
* Being an effective and collaborative member of student psychological/counselling services team

**Case Management**

Plan evidence-based interventions in collaboration with other staff, relevant professional and parents. This may involve:

* Liaising with relevant Health Care Professionals and Community support teams
* Communication and planning evidence-based interventions with school staff
* A good knowledge and understanding of diversity of the student population and school community (e.g., CALD, ATSI, disadvantage, disability, giftedness etc.) and principles and practices for inclusion
* Participation in a multidisciplinary team
* Communication and planning evidence-based interventions and psychoeducation resources with parents
* Referring parents and students to professionals or agencies as needed
* Advocating for students with additional needs and other issues.

**Professional development**

Provide professional learning and information to build capacity of schools and families to improve students’ learning and developmental outcomes. This may involve:

* Providing advice to the Principal and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) regarding management of individuals, groups, or events
* Keeping informed of new research findings, strategies and other developments which impact upon the counselling process
* Providing and facilitating professional learning and information for teaching staff
* Providing professional learning and information to parents
* Building connections with local networks of School Psychologist/Counsellors through affiliation groups, local programs, and ISV schools.

**Wellbeing Promotion**

Assist in the organisation and implementation of programs that address the developmental needs of students. This may involve:

* Assisting in the education of students about issues relevant to mental health and adolescence and promote understanding of self-awareness
* Providing mental health information to parents and teachers through seminars and presentations on school campus
* Working with the Director of Student Wellbeing, the Head of Student Wellbeing – Secondary, and the Student Wellbeing Leadership Team to assist in the design and implementation of developmental evidence-based wellbeing curriculum that address the growth and wellbeing of staff and the needs of students from Prep -Year 12
* Working with the Director of Student Wellbeing and Wellbeing Leaders to develop and implement preventative programs that respond to the emerging trends from the year level.

**General duties**

* Collect, collate, and maintain student information and records to meet legislative and system requirements to inform research and policy development
* Maintain the confidentiality of clients, and work within the accepted and written codes of ethical and professional practice
* Keeping and maintenance of individual records, files and notes as per school guidelines
* Collection, collation, and maintenance of practice related data, e.g., caseload demographics, outcome measures
* Informing the Director of Student Wellbeing of current referral issues and suggest strategies to manage these
* Effective case load management to ensure that appropriate time is allocated for planning, administration, communication, and follow-up
* Ensuring that relevant school policies and Statutory Requirements are implemented at a personal level.
* Weekly report to the Director of Student Wellbeing
* Maintain professional competence and continued professional learning
* Attending to record keeping aspects of counselling including updating, filing consultation notes, and completing reports, in a timely manner
* Actively participate and assist in the conduct of Open Days, Presentation Nights, and other special events
* Carrying out other duties as directed by the Principal or nominated delegate.

Qualifications and Experience

# Essential

* Demonstrated experience in working within a student wellbeing area in a school or in a counselling capacity with school aged children and adolescents
* Commitment to act in accordance with the ethical and professional guidelines outlined by relevant professional organisation
* Extensive knowledge and understanding of the specific developmental needs of school aged children and adolescents
* Exemplary counselling experience, preferably within a school environment with school aged children and/or adolescents
* An undergraduate degree in psychology or counselling, or a post graduate degree in counselling, psychology, social work, or youth work
* Working with children check / National police criminal history check.

# Desirable

* Training related to child safe practices
* Tertiary qualifications e.g., a post graduate degree in related field
* A current driver's licence.
* Involvement in professional communities such as the Australian Psychology Society, Australian Counselling Association, and peer supervision networks

Personal Qualities

* Integrity, approachability, and trustworthiness
* Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills to build relationships with students
* Ability to positively influence the development of student wellbeing
* Commitment to professional learning and improvement
* Personal sense of initiative, enthusiasm, and high energy
* A resourceful team member who is able to operate in a mentoring, collaborative and inclusive manner
* Self-motivation and empathy
* Cultural awareness and a commitment to inclusivity

Key Selection Criteria:

1. Experience in child/adolescent counselling
2. Proven ability to work in a school, or similar environment, in developing strong relationships with key stakeholders
3. Capability to manage case load and effective organisational skills

**This Position Description may be altered from time to time to meet the operational needs of the School.**