
# National School Chaplaincy Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the National School Chaplaincy Program?

The National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) is an Australian Government funded initiative that provides funding for the employment of chaplains in Australian schools.

The current NSCP commenced in 2019 and concludes in December 2022.

The aim of the NSCP is to support the emotional well-being of students by providing pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community.

What is meant by ‘pastoral care’?

‘Pastoral care’ is the practice of looking after the personal needs of students — not just their academic needs — through the provision of general spiritual and personal advice.

Who is a chaplain?

The NSCP defines a chaplain as an individual who:

1. is recognised by the school community and the appropriate governing authority for the school as having the skills and experience to deliver school chaplaincy to the school community; and

2. is recognised through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised religious qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution; and

3. meets the NSCP minimum qualification requirements.

What are the NSCP minimum qualification requirements?

The minimum qualification requirement for a chaplain is either:

1. a Certificate IV in Youth Work, a Certificate IV in Pastoral Care, or a Certificate IV in Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care; or

2. an equivalent qualification to the above.

The certificate or equivalent qualification must also include competencies in ‘mental health’ and ‘making appropriate referrals’.

In addition, NSCP funded chaplains are required to complete a three hour online professional learning package aimed at responding to and preventing cyberbullying.

The package, developed and delivered by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, is available to NSCP funded school chaplains for a period of 18 months from July 2019.
More information is available on the Australian Government Department of Education [webpage](https://www.education.gov.au/national-school-chaplaincy-program).

NSCP funded chaplains can register for the training at <https://esafety.gov.au/nscpchaplain>.

How much NSCP funding do schools receive?

The NSCP provides up to $20,280, or up to $24,336 in remote and very remote areas, per annum to funded schools.

Are there conditions attached to the engagement of chaplains via the NSCP?

The NSCP Project Agreement requires that participation by schools and students is voluntary and that chaplains may be from any faith. Chaplains are not permitted to proselytise and must respect, accept and be sensitive to other people’s views, values and beliefs. Chaplains must hold a valid blue card and comply with state legislation and policies — including, but not limited to, child protection matters — as well as meet minimum qualification requirements.

How can parents find out what the chaplain does in their child’s school?

The principal should establish communication processes to provide parents at enrolment, and/or on request, information which outlines the school’s chaplaincy service. This supports parents to make an informed decision regarding their child/ren’s participation in chaplaincy activities and/or provide consent for ongoing one-on-one meetings. It is useful to publish this information on the school’s website, in the parent handbook and/or in the school newsletter.

Can a school choose a student welfare worker instead of a chaplain under the NSCP?

The NSCP is strictly for the provision of chaplaincy services only. Student welfare workers are not funded under the NSCP.

However, schools may wish to deliver student welfare worker services using other funding sources, such as community raised funds.

How were schools selected for funding for the 2019 school year?

For 2019, schools that received funding in 2018 under the previous NSCP funding round (2016-2018) received the same level of funding, plus indexation.

How did schools apply for funding for the 2020-2022 school years?

During 2019, all Queensland state and non-state schools were invited to apply for NSCP funding for the 2020-2022 school years.

How were schools selected for funding for the 2020-22 school years?

A chaplaincy and student welfare worker programs cross-sector panel, consisting of Queensland state, Catholic and independent school representatives, was convened.

By agreement of the cross-sector panel, the allocation of funding to schools was determined by each school sector with consideration for factors such as the number of full time equivalent student enrolments, continuity of service provision, socio-economic disadvantage, geographic location and other characteristics of the school community.

What happens if a school withdraws from the NSCP?

If a school withdraws from the NSCP, each school sector will reallocate funding to other schools in their sector with consideration for the factors described above.

What happens if a school doesn’t use the NSCP funding?

Schools unable to demonstrate the ongoing engagement of a chaplain may risk losing their NSCP funding allocation. This is monitored through routine reporting.

Additional information

Additional information regarding chaplaincy services in state schools is contained in the department’s *Chaplaincy and student welfare worker services* policy statement and supporting documents available at:

<https://education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-support-services/chaplaincy-student-welfare-worker-services>.

For additional information regarding chaplaincy services in state and non-state schools, refer to contact details noted below.

Contact details

State schools — State Schools - Operations

Email: ChaplainsWelfareWorkers@qed.qld.gov.au

Independent schools — Jacky Dawson

Email: jdawson@isq.qld.edu.au or (07) 3228 1520

Catholic schools — Yvonne Ries

Email: yvonner@qcec.catholic.edu.au or

(07) 3316 5810