



## Methodist Ladies' College Position Description

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Head of Student Counselling</b>
<b>Reports to:</b>	<b>Director of Student Wellbeing</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Student Counselling</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>July 2021</b>

### **Primary Purpose**

The Head of Student Counselling provides dynamic leadership to manage the operation of MLC's professional student counselling service. In line with the strategic directions of the College, the Head of Student Counselling has a critical role to promote the safety, participation and empowerment of MLC students. They also contribute to enhancing the culture of supporting students through their learning and wellbeing, developing independent and adaptable thinkers who are resilient and prepared for life beyond the College.

### **Position in Context**

MLC is one of Australia's most respected and innovative schools, with over 2,200 students from our Early Learning Centre (MLC Kindle) to Year 12, including international students and boarders. MLC is a technology-rich environment; teaching staff and students from Year 3 have a notebook computer and Prep to Year 2 students have an iPad. MLC is comprised of four relatively autonomous schools: Junior School (MLC Kindle – Year 6), Junior Secondary School (Years 7 and 8), Middle School (Years 9 and 10) and Senior School (Years 11 and 12). The Senior School program offers a comprehensive curriculum including the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), International Baccalaureate (IB) and Vocational Education and Training (VCE - VET). Year 9 students may participate in a unique eight-week residential experience at our remote MLC Marshmead campus near Mallacoota. Every student at MLC is offered a wide variety of subject choices, co-curricular activities, leadership opportunities and a strong support network through an extensive student wellbeing program.

The College has approximately 800 staff in total, including 400 staff who are employed either full-time or part-time and 400 casual staff. The College has one main campus at Kew which includes our Early Learning Centre (MLC Kindle) to Year 12 and the Tiddeman Boarding House. We have two remote sites for our Education Outdoors program. One site is located near Mallacoota, and the other site is located in the Gippsland Lakes area.

MLC is managed by an executive group of staff, led by the Principal, and is governed by a non-executive Board of Directors. The Head of Counselling reports to the Director of Student Wellbeing.

The Counselling team provides a professional service to students (Prep - Year 12) and their families which enhances the personal, social and educational development of students. The Counselling service is part of a range of support services and student wellbeing initiatives which aim to optimise student wellbeing and learning. All Counsellors provide confidential short-term counselling for students and their families. They also work collaboratively with teaching staff, parents and students to achieve the best outcomes for students. The Counselling service also supports the student wellbeing programs of the school community.

The MLC Student Counselling Team comprises 5.2 FTE counselling staff including a full-time Co-ordinator. The team is located in Student Support Services with a Senior Office Administrator.

### **Major Duties and Responsibilities**

#### **Counselling Team Operations**

- Provide clear, effective and supportive leadership for the Student Counselling team that has a focus on continuous improvement and ongoing review and service development.
- Oversee the operation of the Student Counselling service. This includes allocation of resources, referrals, maintenance of student counselling statistics, file management and budget.
- Ensure that professional requirements of privacy and confidentiality are managed appropriately and effectively.
- Provide regular high-quality supervision to all counselling team members.
- Accountable for the clinical assessment, referral and short-term counselling of students and their families.
- Liaise with external mental health professionals and agencies.
- Participate in support teams providing individual programs for students.

#### **Strategic and Initiatives**

Member of the Student Wellbeing Committee (comprising Vice Principal, Director of Student Wellbeing, 4 Deputy Heads of School, Head of Boarding, Head of Counselling, Director of Learning Support and a Chaplain representative). The Student Wellbeing Committee sets the direction, priorities and goals for the student wellbeing agenda across Years P – 12. Contribute to the planning and organising of Student Wellbeing Network meetings based on College needs and priorities.

Provide regular reports on Student Counselling statistics trends and themes to Senior Leadership

Compliance with legislation/ ministerial orders related to student health and wellbeing such as, Child Protection and Child Safe.

As a Child Protection Officer (CPO), support other CPO's in the management of Child Safety issues. Works with the Senior Child Protection Office to ensure the College meets its Child Protection Reporting obligations.

Coordinate the on 'on call' service to Senior Leadership providing expert advice on urgent student mental health issues.

Member of College Incident Management Teams as required.

Provide consultation to MLC staff on mental health/student wellbeing matters

Contribute to the development and maintenance of student wellbeing programs across the College

## **Person Specification**

### **Essential Criteria (skills, qualifications, knowledge and experience)**

- Extensive counselling experience with children, adolescents and their families
- Experience in adolescent mental health, child welfare, educational settings, crisis management and/or community health
- Highly developed counselling and assessment skills
- The ability to lead, motivate and empower staff and to inspire students.
- Proven management skills with experience of developing team members.
- Collaborative team member
- Strong influencing, communication, presentation and documentation skills.
- Skilled at engaging with and developing positive relationships with a range of personalities at all levels of the organisation.
- Flexible, responsive and creative with an innovative mindset.
- Well developed organisational and decision-making skills with the ability to prioritise effectively.
- Outstanding planning skills.
- Excellent technology skills.
- Relevant tertiary qualifications - Post-graduate or equivalent qualifications in social work/ psychology/ counselling
- Experience in an educational setting

### **Desirable Criteria (skills, qualifications, knowledge and experience)**

- Relevant professional association membership i.e. Australian Psychological Society, Australian Association of Social Workers, Australian Association of Family Therapy
- Masters/ Post graduate qualifications in Psychology, Counselling or Family Therapy will be well regarded

- Mediation skills and training

Understanding of current Child Protection/Child Safe Standards and Family Court practice

### **Qualifications**

Social Worker:

- Eligibility for Membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)

Psychologist:

- Full registration as a psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
- Endorsement in the area of educational and developmental, clinical or counselling psychology is desirable

### **Key contacts for the Head of Student Counselling**

Direct Reports

- Student Counsellors
- Intake Counsellor
- Senior Office Administrator- Student Support

### **Primary Internal Contacts:**

- Director of Student Wellbeing
- Vice Principal
- Heads of Schools
- Deputy Heads of Schools
- Director of Learning Support
- Head of Boarding
- House and Student Coordinators
- Directors of MLC Marshmead and MLC Banksia
- Director of Education Outdoors
- International Student Coordinator
- Coordinator Indigenous Programs
- College Nurses
- Chaplains
- Learning Support Department
- Student Wellbeing Committee

## **External Contacts:**

- Parents and families
- External mental health professionals and agencies
- External supervisors (individual and team)
- Professional Associations and School Counsellor Networks

*MLC performs thorough assessments of potential and existing employees. The assessments will be used to ascertain whether the potential or existing employee is a fit and proper person to be trusted to work in a school environment and in the position applied for or held. The screening process includes, but is not limited to, Criminal Records Checks and Working with Children Checks.*

### *MLC's commitment to child safety*

*MLC is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. All members of our community, including employees, contractors, agency staff and volunteers, have an important role in providing students with a safe and nurturing environment in which to prosper and thrive. MLC has zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently within our policies and procedures.*

*MLC is committed to preventing child abuse through identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices, supported by regular training and development.*

*We support and respect all children, as well as all members of our community. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal students, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.*

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