



SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM



CHAPLAIN'S ROLE

Build Relationships with Students, Staff and Families

- Move around the school when parents and children are available (before school, recess breaks, close of school...)
- Create a 'Chaplains Chat' in the newsletter.
- Coordinate New Parents' Welcome Morning Tea – Terms 1 and 3.

Offer Pastoral Care

- Run programs to develop leadership, self-esteem, resilience and other social and emotional skills. These will include, but not be limited to, Aussie Optimism, Monday and Thursday Games Club in the library and whole school Friday lunch time games session
- Provide support, encouragement and guidance to members of the school community.
- Be available to respond appropriately to crisis and special needs situations such as home visits, hospital visits and funerals.

Provide a Positive Role Model

- Provide articles for the newsletter.
- Demonstrate leadership in all areas of the school's values

Provide Practical Help for Teachers and Administrative Staff

- Visit classes
- Be a key person in the Student Services Team
- Assist staff with practical day to day problems where appropriate and related to role statement.
- Respond to teacher referrals within one week.

Provide a Link between Schools, other Professional Services and Local Communities

- Create networks to facilitate the chaplain's role as described (refer to contact details for support organisations at the end of this document).
- In consultation with the Principal and the Student Services team initiate advertise or support activities or programs that would enhance the Pastoral Care program of the school.
- Coordinate Christmas appeal for the Salvation Army.

AUSSIE OPTIMISM

What is Aussie Optimism?

The Aussie Optimism Program is a universal mental health promotion program for primary school students. At West Greenwood we use the following four school-based components:

- Feelings and Friends (Years 1-2);
- Feelings and Friends (Year 3);
- Positive Thinking Skills (Year 4);
- Social Life Skills (Year 5-6).

There is also a family-based component, entitled Aussie Optimism: A Program for Parents and Families.



Aim

The aim of the Aussie Optimism Program is to promote mental health, and prevent depression and anxiety in children and to assist them in meeting the challenges and stresses of life, e.g. stressful life events, peer pressure, the move to high school and the changes associated with adolescence. There are four programs for primary school students, each developed to suit the varying cognitive and social-emotional abilities of students in primary school.

Aussie Optimism at West Greenwood Primary School

At West Greenwood Primary School, the program is run by Mrs Penny Edison, our school chaplain. The majority of classes participate at some stage during the year. This is decided on a needs basis.

A range of skills is taught in the program, including:

- Identification of emotions in self and others
- Learning the link between feelings and thoughts
- Learning to develop an optimistic view of life
- Communication skills
- Assertiveness and negotiation
- Coping strategies
- Social problem solving
- Dealing with (family or peer) conflict

ACTIVITIES

Salvation Army Christmas Collection

Coordinate Christmas Appeal – facilitate school-wide collection of hamper goods to give to the Salvation Army at the end of year Christmas Concert.

Library Games Club

Lunchtime board games in Library on Mondays for Yrs 3-6 students.

Friday Games Session

Young adult mentors from Lakeside Christian Church facilitate a games session during one lunchtime break. The term 2 and 3 program for 2017 has been a 'Minute to Win It' session, with students from all age groups welcome to attend the fortnightly activities in the undercover area.

New Parent Morning Tea

We foster positive connections with parents during school drop-off time, and through the New Parent Welcome Morning Tea. The morning tea is held in Week 4 of terms 1 and 3. The purpose is to make a connection with parents who are new to the school and introduce them to other parents and staff.

Pastoral Care Conversations

One-to-one pastoral care conversations related to:

- resiliency skills and coping strategies to deal with setbacks and challenges.
- ongoing development of self-regulation skills (emotions management e.g. anger or anxiety-related challenges and other social skills).
- support as students adjust to family separations and new blended family arrangements.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Early Childhood Australia is the peak national, non-profit, non-government organisation that acts in the interests of young children. They provide a range of options and outcomes to support growth and development of young children.

[beyondblue](#) is a national, independent, not-for-profit organisation working to address issues associated with depression, anxiety and related substance-use disorders in Australia.

Children of Parents with a Mental Illness_ provide information for family members across Australia who have a parent experiencing a mental illness, and for people who care for and work with them. The overall aim of the initiative is to promote better mental health outcomes for children (0-18 years) of parents experiencing a mental illness.

[Australian Childhood Foundation](#) is a national organisation aimed at protecting children and preventing abuse and violence. A range of useful resources for families including information in a range of languages is available

Kids Help Line 1800 55 1800

headspace.org.au

reachout.com.au

Lifeline 131114

ARAFMI Carers Support arafmi.asn.au

Crisis Care (24 hours) 1800 199 008