

National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Funding

We have been very fortunate, for the past three years, to secure National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Funding through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Our student welfare worker, Mrs Libby Fowler, is employed at the school for 12 hours per week.

The welfare worker supports students and staff to create an environment which promotes the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development and wellbeing of all students. This is achieved through alternatives offered on the playground, such as the gardening and sports programs, support for students with social and emotional issues on the yard, social stories before and after play and school activities, targeted programs to address mutual respect, resilience, conflict resolution, relationship development and self-esteem. Resources such as *Bounce Back*, *Values in Australian Schools* and *Friends* assist in this regard.

The student welfare worker provides students and families with support and appropriate referrals in difficult times such as grief or when students are facing personal or emotional challenges. *Seasons for Growth*, a grief and loss program for students who have suffered a loss through death, separation, divorce etcetera, is one such opportunity.

These initiatives are planned to meet the needs of students to create an environment of cooperation and mutual respect, promoting an understanding of diversity and the range of cultures and their related traditions.

The school works in partnership with the welfare worker to operate comprehensive programs both within and out of class. Some examples of the programs already include:

- In class: wellbeing lessons with structured active and passive games, Stop, Think, Do, collaborative games, modified games, team building, rapport building, social skills, problem solving, party games and social stories based on playground follow up.
- Recess and lunch breaks: activities offered are both active and passive - planned games for target class groups, craft groups, library, board games.

It is important to note that participation in any of the welfare worker programs or activities is voluntary.