Presbyterian Ladies' College
MELBOURNE

Position Description

Position:	**School Counsellor (Years 7 to 12)**
Position Status:	Full-time / or 0.8 FTE 12-month fixed term
Classification:	In accordance with the Presbyterian Ladies College Teachers Agreement (2019-2021)
Reports to:	Head of Counselling. All positions in the College ultimately report to the Principal.

Presbyterian Ladies' College

Presbyterian Ladies' College (PLC) Melbourne is a leading ELC-Year 12 Christian independent school for girls offering both the VCE and International Baccalaureate. PLC has an outstanding academic tradition, an international focus and strong pastoral and co-curricular programs focusing on encouraging leadership, service and life-long personal development and learning.

PLC seeks to appoint staff who are passionate about education, with the highest professional skills who will actively support the Christian teachings and ethos of the College, and possess a willingness to make a positive difference to the lives of PLC students. This will be visibly demonstrated through their behaviours, attitudes and role-modelling of the four PLC values: truth and excellence, character and integrity, service, care and respect. All staff must also commit to a culture that supports and embraces Child Safe Standards.

Position Overview

The Counselling Department supports students, parents and staff across the whole school from ELC to Year 12. All members of the Counselling Department seek to enhance the personal, social and educational development of students. Teamwork and liaison with staff and parents are integral to the role.

Duties include counselling students from Years 7 to 12, providing parenting support for families and guidance for staff, conducting psychoeducational assessments and supporting the implementation of the personal development curriculum. The School Counsellor must have the capacity, experience and willingness to work across the entire Senior School.

Key Responsibilities:

Examples of duties include but are not limited to:

- work as a team member of the Counselling and Careers Department, and with the school community on the development and maintenance of pastoral care in the College

- provide counselling for students which aims to enhance their personal, social and educational development
- be responsible for psychological assessment and possible referral of students and their families
- assist with students' transition to the school, including meeting with new students
- liaise with school and Boarding House staff, including the School Nurse
- assist in the design of year level programs relating to personal development (e.g Personal Development Program,) and to participate in such programs
- keep the Deputy Principal and Director of Student Wellbeing updated on areas of concern regarding students' individual wellbeing
- meet regularly with the Head of Counselling, Deputy Principal (Pastoral, Students and Staff), Year Level Coordinators, Learning Enhancement Staff and Head of Boarding
- where appropriate, be responsive to possible crises and emergency situations
- provide support, guidance and relevant information for staff in their work with students
- share knowledge and skills with teaching staff through in-services with respect to specific issues, e.g. mandatory reporting, wellbeing, mental health issues, adolescent development, grief and loss
- establish and maintain liaison with external specialists and agencies where required
- be accurately informed about the school organisation and relevant curriculum
- attend departmental and staff meetings
- assist with the annual scholarship testing
- work collaboratively with Learning Enhancement staff and YLC's to contribute to the school's annual NCCD process
- work with the Director of Student Wellbeing, VCE Coordinator, IB Coordinator and other staff on documentation relevant to the VCE and the IB (for example Special Exam Arrangements, SEAS Applications, other supporting documentation and recommendations)
- provide appropriate support, information and referral for parents
- attend school functions where it is appropriate for the Counselling Department to be present
- participate in school activities, including camps and extra-curricular events as appropriate
- attend appropriate Professional Development as required by the Psychology Board of Australia (PBA) and the Australian Psychological Society (APS)
- be involved in regular professional supervision
- provide short-term support and referral to external professionals for staff, as appropriate
- support the Christian teachings and ethos of the College

Other Duties

- as directed by the Head of Counselling
- attend scheduled staff meetings, House meetings, Year Level meetings, School Assemblies, Chapel Services, Whole School, Year Level and House events
- participate in co-curricular programs and outdoor education, including attending a week-long (five day) camp each year
- actively contribute to a broad range of College activities and attend after hours commitments when required
- actively contribute to College-wide committees

Knowledge, Skills and Experience:

- excellent communication skills both written and verbal, including an ability to present to parents, students and staff
- strong interpersonal and relationship building skills and a client-centred focus
- excellent time management skills with an ability to prioritise tasks and meet deadlines
- high level attention to detail, ensuring accuracy of information in documentation
- superior organisation and planning skills
- demonstrated initiative and strong problem-solving skills with an ability to improve processes and practices
- high level computer skills with MS Office; experience with One Note an advantage
- good research skills
- previous experience in a similar role involving exercise of discretion, tact and judgement
- actively support the College's mission, values and goals in all dealings with members of the school family and wider community
- demonstrated ability to work within a team environment
- outstanding interpersonal and communication skills, with demonstrated ability to build rapport and interact effectively at all levels of the College
- strong organisational and time management skills, with an ability to prioritise tasks, meet prescribed deadlines, and concurrently manage a number of competing tasks
- outstanding ability and experience in counselling in a school setting
- highly competent computer, writing and proofing skills

Key Attributes:

- ability to work independently and collaboratively as required
- calm under pressure
- a commitment to ongoing professional learning and growth in skills
- a warm, positive and considerate manner
- commitment to continual upgrade of personal skills and qualifications
- exceptional communication skills displaying sensitivity and discretion
- superior level of English grammar, spelling, literacy together with a high level of proofreading skills
- meticulous attention to detail and desire for accuracy
- committed to striving for continuous improvement and achieving exceptional outcomes
- demonstrates high levels of confidentiality, trust, credibility and honesty
- demonstrates a respect for and acceptance of difference in students, parents and staff
- displays empathy, enthusiasm, commitment and is highly motivated
- possesses a strong work ethic
- exercises ownership and concern for quality of own work reflected in accuracy and attention to detail
- is flexible and has an ability to adapt and operate effectively in a challenging and changing environment

Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications:

- Current Working With Children Check (WWCC) for Employees
- Relevant qualifications

- Registered Psychologist (PBA and APS)

Key Relationships:

- Counselling Department
- Careers Practitioner
- Director of Student Wellbeing
- Head of Learning Enhancement
- Learning Enhancement Department
- Year Level Coordinators
- Heads of Boarding
- VCE Coordinator
- IB Coordinator
- Whole School Teachers, Staff and Students

Additional Information Relating to the Position

We provide a challenging, stimulating and nurturing Christian environment that is dedicated to the learning and development of the whole person – academic, emotional, social, creative, physical and spiritual.

We value:

- learning that is inspired by faith
- endeavour that enables the achievement of excellence
- service that defines leadership

We seek to promote the development of staff and students who exhibit the following attributes:

- *Scholar*: a confident and engaged person with an inquiring mind who takes responsibility for their learning
- *Thinker*: a creative, reflective and adaptive person who uses their intelligence to serve for greater good
- *Citizen*: a thoughtful, kind, and open-minded person with an informed world view, a well-developed social conscience and a sense of justice that is grounded in the values of Christian faith
- *Advocate:* a passionate person with a strong sense of agency who affects society and those around them in positive ways
- *Leader*: an articulate, capable and responsible person of integrity who works collaboratively, has a heart for service and uses their education to make the world a better place

All staff commit to:

- the Christian Ethos of the College
- Child Safety
- the Values and Behaviours of the College
- College policies, Staff Code of Conduct and legislative requirements
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Child Safety Commitment

All students who attend Presbyterian Ladies' College Melbourne (PLC) have a right to feel and to be safe. The wellbeing and safety of all students in our care is our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. The protection of students is the responsibility of everyone who is employed at, or is engaged by, PLC in child-connected work. To ensure the safety and best interests of all students, we take into account the needs of those with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, those from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with a disability.

Staff Obligation to Child Safety

All staff at Presbyterian Ladies' College Melbourne (PLC) take an active role, and are well informed of their obligations in relation to Child Safety under Ministerial Order No. 870 *Child Safe Standards.* The PLC Child Safety Commitment is incorporated into the School's employment cycle from recruitment and reference checking, to induction and a commitment to regular Professional Learning. All staff at PLC are required to sign a statement that they have read, understood and agree to abide by the PLC Child Safety Policy and the PLC Child Safety Staff Code of Conduct.

In attending to Child Safety all staff must:

- provide a safe and welcoming environment for all PLC students and any young people who visit PLC to engage in PLC approved activities
- promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people to whom PLC provides services
- ensure that all interactions with students are positive and safe
- provide adequate care and supervision of all students, not only on the campus but whenever students are involved in PLC approved activities
- act as a positive role model at all times for students
- report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures of alleged abuse to a Child Safety Officer
- maintain valid VIT or WWCC (Employee) documentation
- report to the Principal any criminal charges or convictions received during the course of employment or volunteering that may indicate a possible risk to children and young people, including any such charges or convictions prior to employment

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Commitment

Presbyterian Ladies' College (PLC) is committed to providing a safe workplace and learning environment that supports and enhances the health and wellbeing for students, staff, contractors, visitors and volunteers.

PLC will provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and free of risks to health so far as is reasonably practicable, comply with OHS Legislation as a minimum standard, strive to fully integrate health and safety in to all aspects of College activities, establish a leader-led positive safety culture, and continuously promote and improve its health and safety practices.

In attending to Health, Safety and Wellbeing all staff must:

- participate in OHS related induction and training
- adhere to Presbyterian Ladies' College's OHS policies and procedures

- comply with instructions given for the health and safety of themselves and of others, and adhere to safe work procedures
- actively participate in the development of risk assessment and / or job safety analysis, identifying, assessing and controlling hazards
- report all hazards, injuries, incidents and near misses via Wyse
- assist with workplace inspections
- cooperate with management in its fulfilment of its OHS legislative objectives
- take reasonable care to ensure their own health and safety and that of others, and to abide by their duty of care provided for in the legislation

Policy and Compliance Commitment

Staff Obligation to Privacy

All PLC staff gain access to private and confidential information in the course of their duties. PLC Staff are expected to share this information in a professional context within the PLC community. Any confidential information may not be shared with any person beyond those expectations.

In attending to policy and compliance all staff must:

- perform their duties in an ethical, lawful and safe manner, and adhere to the compliance obligations relevant to their position
- maintain current registrations and certifications, including compliance with standards and codes of conduct required by professional bodies
- participate in mandatory compliance training
- maintain a current knowledge of, and compliance with the College's policies
- report and escalate compliance concerns, issues and failures

Mrs Cheryl Penberthy
Principal

March 2022

The purpose of this position description is to provide a general overview of the key responsibilities of the position and is not intended to represent the entirety of the position nor is it intended to be all-inclusive.