Position Description
Head of Counselling

Lourdes Hill College educates young women to embrace life and a passionate love of learning in a nurturing, inclusive and innovative Catholic learning community. We equip each person to reach their potential and boldly embody Benedictine values, listening actively with the 'ear of the heart'. Our overarching vision is to be universally recognised for empowering generations of young women to be a transforming Benedictine presence in our world.

Position Overview
The Head of Counselling provides strategic and operational leadership of the College counselling service and contributes specialist psychological expertise to the College-wide approach to student wellbeing, safety and engagement. The role leads a proactive, evidence-informed and responsive service that supports the social, emotional, personal, academic and spiritual development of students within the Good Samaritan Catholic and Benedictine tradition of the College.

As a senior professional leader, the Head of Counselling leads and develops the College Counselling Team, oversees the quality and consistency of counselling practice, and works collaboratively with College leadership, House Pastoral Leaders, staff, families and external professionals. The role balances operational leadership with strategic influence, overseeing the delivery of high-quality counselling, student engagement services and safeguarding initiatives and the ongoing development of this area of the College through data-informed practice, capacity building and collaborative whole-school (wellness and support) initiatives.

Duties and associated indicators of successful performance include:

Religious & Mission Stewardship
- Models a professional and relational approach grounded in dignity, compassion, humility and presence, consistent with the Good Samaritan and Benedictine traditions and College values.
- Provides counselling and wellbeing support within the Catholic ethos of the College, respecting the dignity, agency, culture and circumstances of each student and family.
- Contributes specialist expertise to formation, pastoral and wellbeing initiatives that strengthen connection, belonging, hope and the holistic development of students.
- Supports College service, social justice, outreach and formation programs through participation and therefore appropriate preparation, consultation, pre-briefing and debriefing of participating students.

Staff Leadership and Professional Capacity Building
- Provides day-to-day leadership, direction, supervision and support to members of the College Counselling Team and provides support as needed to the Pastoral Team and wider staff.
- Develops and communicates a clear vision, service model and priorities of the team that align with the College mission, strategic direction and whole-school wellbeing framework.
- Builds team capability through induction, coaching, mentoring, case consultation, reflective professional dialogue and regular team meetings.
- Oversees the quality, consistency and professional standards of practice, including appropriate allocation and delegation of work.
- Leads performance and development processes for supervised staff in collaboration with College leadership.

- Plans and delivers professional learning for staff to strengthen understanding of student mental health, child safety, trauma-informed practice, referral pathways and appropriate classroom or pastoral responses.
- Promotes a culture of professional learning, ethical practice, collaboration, accountability and continuous improvement within the counselling service.

Strategic Wellbeing Leadership and Service Development

- Provides strategic advice to College leadership on student mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, student attendance, emerging needs, service priorities and appropriate preventative responses.
- Develops, implements and reviews team procedures, resources and service-delivery practices to ensure a coherent, accessible and evidence-informed approach.
- Uses de-identified trends, service data and professional judgement to identify emerging needs and inform targeted programs, resourcing and whole-school wellbeing priorities.
- Develops and contributes to proactive programs, resources and information sessions for students, staff and families at House, year level and whole-school levels including but not limited to Stella wellbeing lessons.
- Leads or contributes to parent information sessions relevant to adolescent development, mental health and wellbeing.
- Promotes the role and referral pathways of the counselling service through appropriate College communications and activities.
- Supports the implementation of the College Strategic Plan through counselling, wellbeing and student support priorities.
- Leads and develops the support of At-Risk cases in conjunction with Pastoral Team, Head of Wellbeing, Diverse Learning Team and Deputy Principal - Students and Wellbeing.

Student Counselling / Welfare, Assessment and Case Management

- Provides timely, confidential and developmentally appropriate counselling / welfare to individual students and small groups across a range of social, emotional and personal matters.
- Conducts appropriate assessment of student needs and reviews personalised support, safety, referral or intervention plans.
- Leads a proactive and responsive approach to early identification and support for students experiencing vulnerability, risk or complex needs.
- Coordinates case management and triage processes, including the prioritisation, allocation, review and escalation of complex matters.
- Works collaboratively with students, families, House Pastoral Leaders, teachers and relevant College staff to support safe, coordinated and practical responses.
- Makes appropriate referrals to external agencies and health professionals and contributes to coordinated wrap-around care.
- Provides professional consultation and support in relation to students participating in outreach, immersion and international programs, including pre-briefing and debriefing where required.
- Contributes to transition and enrolment processes by identifying and responding to relevant student wellbeing information in partnership with appropriate College staff.

Student Protection, Risk and Critical Response

- Works in accordance with College student protection, child safety, mandatory reporting, reportable conduct, privacy and risk-management policies and procedures.
- Assists with at-risk, student protection and complex student matters in line with College processes, professional obligations and delegated responsibilities.
- Collaborates with the Principal, College Leadership and Pastoral Teams to support compliance with child safety and student protection requirements.

- Provides specialist advice and coordinated support in response to critical incidents, significant wellbeing concerns and re-emerging social or emotional issues.
- Escalates concerns promptly and reports to relevant authorities or government departments where required by law, policy or professional obligation.
- Supports post-incident follow-up, re-entry and continuity-of-care planning for affected students and the College community as appropriate.

Record Keeping, Governance and Professional Practice

- Leads team in maintaining accurate, timely, secure and appropriately detailed records of counselling / intervention contacts, assessments, interventions, referrals and case decisions.
- Ensures counselling/intervention documentation, information sharing and record retention comply with legal, ethical, professional and College requirements.
- Prepares reports, briefings and documentation required by College leadership, external authorities or professional obligations.
- Reviews and continuously improves counselling/intervention record-keeping systems, templates and protocols to strengthen consistency, security and best practice.
- Maintains confidentiality, professional boundaries, informed consent and sound judgement while recognising importance of information sharing in school settings and requirement to disclose relevant information as per Principal request.
- Maintains current professional registration, knowledge and practice through supervision, professional learning and engagement with relevant professional networks.

Collaboration and Community Partnerships

- Builds strong, respectful and professional relationships with students, families, staff and College leaders to support student wellbeing and engagement.
- Works closely with Student Pastoral and Wellbeing Team Including Home Group Teachers) to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to student support.
- Participates in College processes and forums relevant to at-risk students, NCCD, AARA, pastoral leadership, middle leadership and student wellbeing.
- Collaborates with learning support and relevant psychology professionals to support students whose social or emotional needs affect learning and participation.
- Liaises with external agencies and professionals, including public and private health, child safety and allied health services, to coordinate appropriate care.
- Develops professional partnerships and referral networks, including links with social workers, counsellors and psychologists in Catholic education settings.
- Provides clear, timely and appropriate communication to families and staff while maintaining privacy, confidentiality and professional obligations.

Service Operations and Resource Management

- Oversees the effective daily operation of the College counselling/ welfare service, including referral, triage, caseload allocation, team communication and service continuity.
- Establishes clear service expectations, protocols and communication pathways for students, families and staff.
- Monitors service demand, caseloads, response priorities and emerging resourcing needs, and provides advice to College leadership.
- Coordinates counselling team meetings, professional consultation, documentation and reporting requirements.
- Ensures counselling resources, spaces, records and systems support safe, confidential and effective practice.

- Contributes to budget planning and responsible resource management for counselling programs, professional learning and service priorities.

Other Duties

- Undertakes any other duties required by the College Principal that are reasonably within the scope of the role.
- Acts as a key contact for consultation on Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns.

Other Information:
This role reports to the Deputy Principal - Students and Wellbeing.

Boards / Committees
Provides specialist input and representation on College and external boards, committees, case-management forums and professional networks, as required.

Direct Reports

- College Counselling Counsellors
- Family and Liaison Officer
- School Officer, if allocated

Key Relationships

- Principal
- Deputy Principal - Students and Wellbeing
- Head of Pastoral Care
- Head of Wellbeing
- House Pastoral Leaders and Home Group Teachers
- Diverse Learning and Curriculum Leaders
- Students, parents and carers
- External health, child safety and allied health professionals
- Catholic Education / ISQ counselling and wellbeing networks

Qualifications and Experience

- Current registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as a psychologist.
- Clinical Psychology endorsement, or progress towards endorsement, is preferred.
- Ideally, more than five years of experience in a clinical, school psychology or counselling role working with children, adolescents and families.
- Demonstrated experience leading, supervising, coaching and developing a professional team (preferred)
- Demonstrated capacity to assess and respond to student mental health, wellbeing, child safety and risk concerns within a school context.
- Demonstrated capacity to work collaboratively with families, school staff, external agencies and allied health providers (preferred).
- Qualifications or substantial experience in education or a school setting are highly desirable.
- Qualified to supervise student counsellors
- Ongoing commitment to professional supervision, continuous learning, ethical practice and evidence-informed service improvement.

Skills and Attributes

- Commitment to the mission, values and ethos of Catholic education and the Good Samaritan Benedictine tradition of Lourdes Hill College.
- Highly developed interpersonal, consultation and communication skills, with the capacity to build trust and work effectively across the College community.
- Demonstrated discretion, confidentiality, professional judgement and ethical decision-making
- Strong leadership, organisation, administration and time-management skills, including the ability to prioritise complex and competing demands.
- Capacity to lead improvement, manage change and develop practical, sustainable systems and solutions.
- Excellent written communication, case documentation and report-writing skills.
- High level of initiative, self-direction, resilience and professional accountability.
- Advanced digital literacy; experience with relevant student management and record-keeping systems is advantageous.

Term of Appointment

The role is employed and remunerated through negotiation in accordance with the applicable industrial instrument, College policies and the terms specified in the letter of appointment. The appointee is expected to lead in accordance with the College mission and values and to comply with all relevant professional, legal, policy, safeguarding, privacy and reporting requirements.