



## PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### POSITION DESCRIPTION

**POSITION:** School Chaplain

**REPORTS TO:** Principal and Deputy Principal

**LOCATION:** Keilor East Campus

### PURPOSE

To provide ministry to the school community, supporting students' spiritual and pastoral needs and student learning and wellbeing.

### NATURE AND SCOPE

Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School is a school for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year Twelve. The school operates on three campuses with a student population of over 3,000. The Kindergartens and Junior School (boys) are located in Essendon, the Junior School (girls) in Moonee Ponds and Gottliebsen House Middle School (boys), McNab House Middle School (girls) and the Larkin Centre (coeducational Senior School) are located in Keilor East.

The school has an excellent record for the academic achievement of its students in all areas. The curriculum is designed to challenge students intellectually, to develop their knowledge within particular disciplines and to gain an appreciation of contemporary society and its history. The academic programme is complemented by a diverse co-curricular program of Drama, Dance, Music and Sport.

The school actively promotes the safety, wellbeing and participation of all students, including supporting children from culturally diverse backgrounds and those with individual needs and encourages every student to thrive in the classroom and beyond.

## SCHOOL VALUES

**RESPECT:** We acknowledge the dignity and intrinsic worth of individuals and our world. We demonstrate fairness, kindness, and an awareness of diverse perspectives, recognising the impact of our actions on others.

**EXCELLENCE:** In education and all that we do, we pursue the highest standards with focus and a commitment to continuous growth. We embrace challenges, learn from mistakes, and cultivate a culture of mastery and exceptional outcomes.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** We act with integrity and take responsibility for ourselves, others, and the world around us. We demonstrate honesty, reliability, and ethical behaviour in all we do.

**CURIOSITY:** We learn and grow through questioning, exploring, and deepening understanding, simulating wonder and innovation. We value intellectual engagement and lifelong learning.

**HEART:** We show kindness, courage, and empathy in our actions and relationships. We stand for what is right, support others, and build meaningful connections based on trust and compassion.

## POSITION CONTEXT

The School Chaplain is at all times responsible to the Principal, Deputy Principal and Heads of Section for diverse duties relating to ministry and pastoral care and effective teaching. This is a position of responsibility in the school and the School Chaplain is expected both to support the school's aims and the ethos of the Uniting Church.

Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School is associated with the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania within the Uniting Church in Australia. There are two School Chaplains responsible for the exercise of a ministry within the school community. This normally involves the preparation and conduct of worship and celebrations, the exercise of pastoral care, assisting in faith formation and growth and classroom teaching and co-curricular responsibility. The School Chaplain is available to discuss matters of difficulty with students, particularly in situations of grief and loss. The School Chaplain is also expected to assist in maintaining open channels of communication between the Church and the School.

Depending on the form of appointment, the School Chaplain has up to three lines of accountability:

- To the Heads of Sections for the day-to-day delivery of ministry to the school community and the teaching of students
- To the Synod (through the equipping Leadership for Mission [eLM] Unit) for support in fulfilling the vocation to Chaplaincy.
- To the Presbytery of Port Phillip West in terms of oversight of a ministry within a school associated to the Uniting Church.

The nature of the Presbytery accountabilities is further explained under the “Conditions” section of this document.

School Chaplains lead the school's Religious Education programme and oversee all religious activities within the school, including the Commencement, Easter, Mid-year, Valedictory and Christmas Church Services.

Religious Education classes are compulsory for students up to Year Nine, designed to foster the ideas of social development and awareness within a Christian framework. Student wellbeing and care is an important facet of the programme.

The School Chaplain is expected to at all times, lead in a manner that is aligned with the school's values, policies and procedures and the philosophy of an independent school associated with the Uniting Church and support child safe standards and equal employment opportunity principles, including support for an equitable, safe, and productive environment for all staff and students and treating all school community members with dignity and respect.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***Teaching***

- Teach Religious Education or other related subjects as required, recognising the multi-denominational and multi-faith nature of the school community
- Develop and conduct creative and innovative lessons which are prepared thoroughly and designed to engage all students in learning
- Maintain a positive environment in the classroom which is respectful of all present and fosters student learning
- Take responsibility for dealing with disciplinary matters and report any matters of serious concern
- Maintain accurate records of student attendance, the teaching programme and of student assessments
- Provide prompt and regular feedback to students on their progress within the subject(s) taught
- Report on student progress in accordance with school procedures
- Attend all parent-teacher meetings, which may include evenings
- Attend and actively participate in faculty and staff meetings
- Contribute to the development of teaching and assessment materials within the subject taught

### *Supporting wellbeing*

- Coordinate and nurture the faith and spirituality of the School Community. A key focus will be to establish regular contact with students and staff with a view to provide pastoral care to the individual.
- Provide pastoral care and assist in faith formation and spiritual development for members of the school community and their families, as requested
- Advise and assist members of staff in relation to matters of concern for wellbeing
- Monitor the well-being of students in class and report any matters of concern
- Undertake rostered supervisory duties outside of the classroom and exercise responsibility for the welfare of students
- Consult with Year Level Coordinators, Heads of Section, Deputy Principal and the Principal as necessary.

### *Conducting worship*

- As a member of the school's team of chaplains, plan the annual programme of school church services
- Prepare, coordinate and lead worship which is engaging and relevant to the needs of young people and of staff at the school's scheduled services and school assemblies
- Prepare and conduct services (such as weddings, funerals) for members of the wider school community where appropriate
- Liaise with local congregations of the Uniting Church , the Presbytery of Port Phillip West and the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania as appropriate

### *Other matters*

- Support the extracurricular life of the school which will include participation in the school's sport program
- Participate actively in the coordination of the welfare, social justice and fund raising activities of the school
- Undertake professional learning activities regularly in order to keep up to date professionally
- Participate in committees and bodies of the school at the invitation of the Principal
- Actively participate in the Uniting Church's School Chaplain's Network
- Provide support for the school's aims and the philosophy of a school associated with the Uniting Church.
- Maintain a safe and healthy environment, adhering to school OHS policies and procedures, including emergency management procedures.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The School Chaplain will ideally demonstrate the following skills, qualifications and experience:

- Minister of the Word or Deacon in the Uniting Church or another Christian faith

Reference	Rev.	Date	Page
School Chaplain	3	2025	Page 4 of 6

- A strong Christian theology with a liberal and open attitude towards people of all faiths, with the ability to work well with all groups of staff and students.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate effectively and sensitively with secondary students
- An energetic, caring, warm and pro-active approach
- Demonstrated experience supporting student wellbeing and providing chaplaincy services, preferably within a school environment
- A strong commitment to child safety, including demonstrating an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children with diverse needs and backgrounds
- An inspiring and engaging speaker able to connect with students, staff and families
- Strong curriculum knowledge, with a desire to develop innovative curriculum
- A desire to collaborate with other staff members
- Effective ICT skills
- A commitment to actively supporting and engaging in the broader school life, including co-curricular activities
- Support for the values and policies of the school
- Secondary teaching qualifications and experience teaching Religious Education would be an advantage.
- VIT registration or Permission to Teach is required (which incorporates Working with Children Checks and National Criminal Record Checks).

## CONDITIONS

The role may be retained within the School as:

- 1) A placement of the Uniting Church in Australia
  - a. as defined under the Terms of Placement for the role and
  - b. fulfilling the usual Presbytery accountability expectations of a position offering chaplaincy and which is designated as a Placement. These include:
    - i. Participation in UCA Code of Ethics Training (half day) twice yearly.
    - ii. Participation in professional supervision at least every 6 weeks
    - iii. Participation in at least two Presbytery in Council meetings a year.
    - iv. Where possible, participation in the Presbytery retreat using the study leave allocation for a full time placement.
- 2) A regular employment arrangement under the employment conditions as per the *Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School (Teacher, Kindergarten Teacher, Kindergarten Assistant and School Assistant Staff) Agreement 2022* - "the agreement".

When the role is retained under paragraph 1), the incumbent should have reasonable regard to the conditions of "the agreement" that will assist with the effective operations of the School.

Reference	Rev.	Date	Page
School Chaplain	3	2025	Page 5 of 6

When the role as defined under paragraph 2) the incumbent should consider how their participation in events in clauses 1b) would ensure a continuing orientation to the offering of quality chaplaincy in a Uniting Church context.

**This is a full time ongoing position.**

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The role of School Chaplain is a dynamic one. In particular, specific features of the position description may alter as a result of changing circumstances.

The position description should not be seen as limiting and is open to review, by negotiation, by either party.