



POLICY TITLE: CHAPLAINCIES IN ACT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
PUBLISHED: 2007
IDENTIFIER: CGS200705

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Should a school board identify a need to appoint a chaplain, the principal, in conjunction with the school board, has responsibility for the implementation of a chaplaincy program in a school.
- 1.2 The appointment must be at no cost to the Department nor to the internal operation of the school.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 This policy outlines a set of operational procedures and guidelines for schools seeking to appoint a chaplain.

3. DEFINITIONS

School chaplain:

A person who is recognised:

- by the local school, its community and the appropriate governing authority as having the skills and experience to deliver school chaplaincy services to the school and its community
- through formal ordination, commissioning, recognised qualifications or endorsement by a recognised or accepted religious institution or a state/territory government approved chaplaincy service. (*Guidelines of the National School Chaplaincy Programme*, Department of Education, Science and Training)

Chaplaincy committee:

A school board appointed committee which should include representatives of local community and religious organisations.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 The school board:

- in consultation with the school community, is responsible for identifying the need to appoint a chaplain
- selects the chaplaincy committee
- endorses the appointment of a chaplain.

4.2 The chaplaincy committee:

- advises the school board of the viability of a chaplaincy program and makes recommendations to appoint or not appoint a chaplain
- nominates a candidate for the chaplaincy position to the principal
- must be satisfied as to the nature of the candidate who must undergo a police check and provide a satisfactory screening report to the principal before the appointment is confirmed. Further information on this process can be obtained from the *Working with Children and Young People - Volunteering Policy and Procedures* and the *Visitors in Schools Framework* documents.
- is responsible for monitoring the program
- secures funding for all associated on-costs of the chaplaincy position from sources outside the school and Department. It is important to note that a school or college will not have responsibility for funding or employment of the chaplain.

4.3 Approval

4.3.1 The principal of the school approves the appointment of a chaplain.

4.3.2 The principal of the school, or the project leader appointed by the principal, and the contract officer for the provider of the chaplaincy services must sign the *Provision of Chaplaincy Services Agreement* [see attached]. This Agreement sets out the roles and obligations of the parties for the purpose of the provider of the chaplaincy services.

4.4 The chaplain's role:

- will be inclusive of all peoples regardless of the individual's religion or personal beliefs
- must not be in conflict with the student management and/or counselling program of the school. Where such conflict arises the policies of the Department and the school board are to be followed
- must be agreed upon by the school board, the principal, the chaplain and the chaplaincy committee. The agreement must be in writing and include a statement of tenure
- will not include a formal teaching role unless the chaplain is a member of the teaching staff. Ultimate responsibility for the supervision of students and duty of care rests with the principal
- will not include teaching a particular religion.

Attachment: Agreement: Provision of Chaplaincy Services

Policy Owner: Director, Schools Northern Canberra

Related Policies: *Religious Education in ACT Government Schools*
Working with Children and Young People: Volunteering Policy and Procedures
Visitors in Schools Framework.