Pittwater House

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE	Head of Counselling and Student Health
NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT	Permanent Full Time
REPORTS TO	Principal via Deputy Principal
LIAISON WITH:	1. Deputy Principal 2. Heads of School 3. Wellbeing, Stage or Year Heads 4. Head of Diverse Learning 5. School nursing staff 6. Parents/Guardians
HOURS:	8am - 4pm

Philosophy

The care of and interest in each individual student is one of the defining features of Pittwater House. Understanding the needs, strengths and potential of every student, while recognising the distinctive needs of boys and girls, remains central to the Pittwater House approach.

Pittwater House is committed to providing a rigorous and engaging education built on strong relationships, high expectations and excellent teaching. Our approach is informed by evidence about how students learn, with a focus on developing secure knowledge and understanding that enables students to think deeply, solve problems, create and learn with increasing independence. Technology is used purposefully where it enhances teaching and learning, rather than as an end in itself.

Honesty and integrity are the first of the Pittwater House Core Values and need to be reflected in staff attitude towards all areas of the school. Confidentiality of records and information, both personal and corporate, is of paramount importance. In all dealings with parents, students, staff and members of the public, your approach needs to reflect the high standard and reputation of the School and your actions need to be in accordance with relevant laws.

Child Protection

Pittwater House is a child safe environment. The safety, protection and well-being of all students and other children and young persons involved in activities at the School are of

fundamental importance. The School actively promotes the safety and well-being of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The School's Child Protection Policy is available to all existing staff via the policy handbook or upon request.

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Head of Counselling and Student Health leads and manages the School's counselling team and Health Centre, including the school nurses and other counsellors. The role coordinates a responsive, safe and integrated approach to student wellbeing and health, while providing counselling services within the Head's qualifications and professional scope of practice. The role's primary focus is to:

- Lead and coordinate the delivery of counselling and student health services, including individual and group-based counselling and, where supported by qualifications and experience, screening and mental health assessment.
- Work collaboratively with the whole school community to create a safe and supportive learning environment, recognising the links between pastoral care, student wellbeing, health and learning.

Essential Criteria

- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in working with children and young people in a counselling role
- High level of interpersonal and communication skills
- Appropriate qualification in Psychology, Counselling, or Social Work
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Demonstrated ability to lead and manage a multidisciplinary team, including staff supervision, workload coordination and professional development.
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate counselling and student health services, with an understanding of clinical governance, confidentiality and the distinct professional responsibilities and scope of practice of counsellors and nurses.
- Strong understanding of the legislative requirements of Mandatory Reporting and the ChildSafe Standards
- A current NSW Working with Children Check
- A current First Aid Certificate
- Experience in either a primary or secondary educational setting is desirable.

Specific Responsibilities

Team leadership and Health Centre coordination

- Provide day-to-day leadership and line management of the school nurses and other counsellors, establishing clear responsibilities, service priorities and expectations for professional conduct.
- Coordinate case allocation across the counselling team and Health Centre to maintain continuity of student support.
- Lead regular team meetings and coordinate referral, triage and case allocation processes, ensuring timely responses to student needs and appropriate escalation of urgent concerns.
- Support staff induction, professional learning and development, and ensure counsellors and nurses have access to appropriate clinical supervision or professional support relevant to their roles.
- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the Health Centre, including resources, supplies, equipment and procedures for first aid, medication management and student health care plans, in collaboration with the school nurses and in accordance with School policies and applicable professional requirements.
- Ensure counselling and nursing services operate within each practitioner's qualifications, registration requirements and scope of practice. Coordinate service delivery without directing clinical decisions beyond the Head's own professional competence.
- Coordinate communication and care planning with Heads of School, wellbeing leaders, the Head of Diverse Learning, families and external practitioners, observing consent, confidentiality, child protection and information-sharing requirements.
- Oversee secure and accurate service records, review service demand and emerging needs, and report operational priorities, risks and resource requirements to the Deputy Principal without unnecessary disclosure of confidential clinical information.
- Meet regularly with members of the school executive to discuss operational issues.

Counselling

- Identifying, advising and providing counselling and consultancy services to students from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12 on issues affecting their wellbeing and engagement at school
- Conducting individual or group counselling sessions upon request or referral
- Providing students or parents/guardians with appropriate information and resources based on the presenting issue
- Referring cases to appropriate external agencies and services as appropriate
- Being available to the Executive Team in supporting specific issues and strategies, including the response to critical incidents
- Developing and maintaining confidential and accurate records to support interventions and initiatives.

Resource and program development for students, families and staff

- Work with Heads of School and Pastoral Team to develop positive school programs to foster the wellbeing of all students
- Liaising with Pastoral staff to ensure a coordinated approach to student care
- Provide resources and consultancy services to staff to assist them in their role of supporting the individual needs of students
- Provide professional development to staff on relevant issues
- Being alert to emerging needs and trends within the school and the community at large and suggesting appropriate responses
- Provide support, information, and resources to parents/guardians about their child's wellbeing
- Facilitating external referrals where appropriate
- Being involved in Parent Information Evenings as required.

Other

- The role may also extend into submission writing, policy development, or other counselling-related areas
- Such other duties may be required from time to time.

Performance:

There will be a review of the role at the end of the initial term of employment where the incumbent meets with the Executive team.