National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program

The National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program is a Federal Government initiative that, in late 2006, began offering grants to any school in Australia who wished to incorporate this extra aspect into the life of their school.

The Program is voluntary with the aim to assist school communities in the support and spiritual wellbeing of their students. Each school community wishing to apply for the grant had a detailed application to complete.

Cootamundra Public School was notified in June of 2007 that they had been successful in their application and after all the paperwork was finalised, the chaplaincy program was able to commence at the beginning of the final term of 2007.

The grant is administered by GenR8 Ministries from their Sydney office and covers two hours each day from Monday to Friday.

Our Chaplain

Mrs Sue Masters has been a part of our school for ten years as a parent and volunteer Scripture teacher. She is endorsed in her role as Chaplain by the Cootamundra Ministers’ Fellowship. Sue regularly attends Cootamundra Presbyterian Church with her family - husband Dean and sons, Ben, Tim and Sam.

Sue has qualifications in nursing and midwifery as well as Bible College training and plenty of hands on experience in children's ministry. She has taken advantage of courses offered through the school and has attended Child Protection Workshops. In 2012, Sue completed compulsory units through the Australian College of Theology as required by the Federal Government and in 2013 began working towards a Diploma in Ministry.

Sue is excited to be our school Chaplain and feels very blessed to be able to do something that she has always loved to do - and get paid! Her belief is that each and every child has the same potential to make a positive impact on our world in their own unique way. Each child is equally precious and deserving of care and attention. She loves the opportunity to support the dedicated and caring staff of CPS as they encourage the children in their care to always strive to be the best that they can be in every aspect of their lives.
What Does the Chaplain do?

Sue is at school every day. She is out in the playground during most recess and lunchtimes to chat to students and encourage them in their interactions with one another. At lunchtime she coordinates the Playground Pals program. This is a very successful program which had already been established whereby a quiet play area in the Hall is offered as an alternative to the playground. It is well utilized each day. Here, children practice sharing and cooperating with one another and being responsible in setting up and clearing away games and toys.

In 2012, Sue was pleased to introduce the Kids Hope mentoring program. An initiative of World Vision, Kids Hope matches trained adults with children in our school who it is felt would benefit from having another caring adult in their lives.

Children can come and speak with Sue if they wish. Her role is also to encourage and reinforce school rules and expectations of behaviour. She is always available to talk with parents and any other members of the school community.

Our school Counsellor meets regularly with Sue. Sue is also a part of the Student Wellbeing and Support Team at school who meet fortnightly. She is accountable to our Principal and also to the Cootamundra Ministers Fellowship. She is bound by Child Protection Guidelines and rules of confidentiality.

Caring for our students can take different forms. One successful innovation begun in 2008 was our breakfast program. We are very proud that we are one of only a few schools in our region with a program like it.

Parents and members of the wider community have joined Sue to provide this popular service. For a small charge, children of all ages can enjoy each other’s company and practice important values such as sharing and helping one another as well as getting a healthy start to their day.

Munchtime in the Morning
Munchtime in the Morning is open to any child from our school and operates each morning from 8.30 am until 9.00 am.

We do ask for a small donation from the children to help cover some costs but are immensely grateful for the support of individuals, school families, business owners and community groups who help to provide a healthy and varied start to every day.

Our major community supporters are: The Outback Bakery, Woolworths and Campbell Paige Youth Connections.

**Kids Hope Aus**

Kid’s Hope Aus has been a part of our school since October 2012.

It is a program enabled by World Vision and a local church (Scot’s Presbyterian) that places trained adults in primary schools as mentors. The mentor is matched with a child who, with parental permission, the school has recognised might benefit from having another caring adult in their life.

It is a non-religious program and the mentor and child spend one hour per week together playing games, doing craft, finishing classwork as set by the teacher and developing social skills. There are nine children currently participating in the program.

**To Contact Us**

Any queries about the chaplaincy program can be directed to our Principal, Mr Bill Godman on 6942 1402.

Sue Masters can be contacted at the school each school day.

Call the school office on: 6942 1402