The Effectiveness of Chaplaincy

As Provided by the
National School Chaplaincy Association
to Government Schools in Australia

by
Dr Philip Hughes,
Edith Cowan University

and
Prof Margaret Sims
University of New England

September 2009

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. This report covers chaplaincies which have been arranged by the members of the National School Chaplaincy Association. The members of that Association are:

- ACCESS Ministries (provider of chaplaincies in Victoria)
- GenR8 (provider of chaplaincies in New South Wales)
- Scripture Union ACT
- Scripture Union Queensland
- Scripture Union Tasmania
- Schools Ministry Group (provider of chaplaincies in South Australia)
- YouthCARE - The Churches' Commission on Education Inc. (Western Australia)

All chaplains provided by the members of the Association are Christian Chaplains. The report does not cover:

- Chaplains who are not Christian
- Chaplains who are Christian but are provided by chaplaincy providers who are not members of the National School Chaplaincy Association
- Chaplains who do not work in government schools but who are working in Catholic or independent schools.

1915 government schools received funding for chaplaincy in the Federal government's National School Chaplaincy Program. Of these schools, 1624 (85%) have been served by chaplains arranged by members of the National School Chaplaincy Association.

2. The South Australian Department of Education has decreed that the word 'chaplain' should not be used for those appointed to its government schools. Instead, the term 'Christian pastoral support worker' has been declared the appropriate term. Because 'chaplain' is used in all other parts of Australia, 'chaplain' will be used in this report and including on those occasions when it refers to 'Christian pastoral support workers' in South Australia.

The Effectiveness of Christian Chaplaincy in Government Schools
Executive Summary

The Research

In 2006, the National School Chaplaincy Program was initiated by the Federal Government offering funding for chaplains. Approximately 2712 schools received funding of which 1915 were government schools and 797 were Catholic or independent schools. The tasks of chaplains were to support students in exploring their spirituality, providing guidance on religious, values and ethical matters, and facilitating access to helping agencies in the community. They were also to assist school counsellors and staff in the provision of welfare services, providing guidance on issues of human relationships and support in cases of bereavement, family breakdown and other crisis and loss situations, and to provide on-going support for individual students and staff where necessary.

In 2009, a national study of the effectiveness of chaplaincy in government schools was undertaken for the National School Chaplaincy Association by Dr Philip Hughes of Edith Cowan University and Prof Margaret Sims of the University of New England. The study was of the Christian chaplains in approximately 1626 schools for whom the members of the National School Chaplaincy Association were responsible, representing 85 per cent of government schools with chaplains. National surveys of principals and chaplains were undertaken, along with case studies of chaplaincy in 21 schools, selected to represent a wide range of urban and rural, primary and secondary schools across Australia.

The response rates were satisfactory with 688 principals (out of 1626) and 1031 chaplains (out of 1396) completing surveys. At the time of the survey, there were 1626 government schools served by 1396 chaplains arranged by the members of the National School Chaplaincy Association. The average number of hours a chaplain is employed in a school was 19 hours. Twenty-six per cent of chaplains served more than one school.

The Chaplains and Their Work

A high proportion of chaplains are male (41%) compared with teachers (26%) and health and welfare support workers (29%). Many chaplains are young with 28 per cent being under 30 years of age and only 23 per cent 50 years of age or older. Many bring to the job experience in youth or children's work or church associated work. Twenty-one per cent have been teachers and 15 per cent are professionally trained counsellors.

The major part of the work of chaplains is pastoral care of students. Much of this takes place in personal interactions with students, sometimes in casual contexts such as in the playground, but sometimes in a more structured way in the chaplain's office.

In terms of the division of time, the average proportion of time for all chaplains is as follows.

- 30% informal or structured pastoral care of students;
- 19% classroom activities and needs-based programs, for example behaviour management;
- 7% informal school activities such as breakfast programs;
- 9% the pastoral care of families and staff;
- 8% school events, camps and crises;
- 8% with welfare staff and connecting with agencies in the referral of students;

- 6% networking and fund-raising; and
- 11% professional development, administrative work and miscellaneous activities.

In the past year,

- 82% had run needs-based programs such as handling grief or behaviour management;
- 79% of chaplains said they had made off-site visits to parents and care-givers;
- 73% had led in school events or special ceremonies; and
- 49% had participated in school camps.

Chaplains deal with a wide range of issues, but most frequently with behaviour management and social relationship issues such as anger, peer relationships, loneliness and bullying. Family relationship issues are also commonly discussed with chaplains. A second group of issues has to do with the development of the self: sense of purpose, self-esteem, and mental health. A third group of issues is the involvement of students in the community: issues of social inclusion and racism. In many places, chaplains work to integrate Aboriginal students and immigrant groups into the school community. Many chaplains are involved in the support of students 'at risk'.

Chaplains also deal with 'big picture' and spiritual issues as students raise them. In the case studies, there were no occasions reported where chaplains had pushed their own beliefs, but they were willing to explain their own positions when asked. In some schools, chaplains provide support for students who have Christian convictions.

The Effectiveness of Chaplains

Principals were asked to assess on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being excellent, how effective chaplains were in various areas of their work. Averaged across all principals, chaplains were given the following assessments:

- 8.6 for providing an opportunity for students to talk through issues
- 8.6 for offering support to students with significant problems
- 8.5 for offering support to students in special risk categories
- 8.1 for encouraging moral values and responsibility
- 8.0 for contributing to the morale of the school community
- 7.9 for improving peer relationships
- 7.8 for building social inclusion and community in the school
- 7.3 for changing behaviour in relation to bullying and harassment
- 7.1 for linking the school with the wider community
- 7.0 for improving relationships between students and their families.

Asked about the most important contribution chaplains had made, most principals wrote of how they provided pastoral care in a non-judgemental way. Secondly, they spoke of modelling and teaching moral values and thirdly in creating and nurturing ties with the community. Many chaplains saw an important part of their work as building relationship skills. In many schools, there had been crises such as the death of a student and in such instances the chaplain had had a special and valued role.

In those schools where case studies were conducted, the researchers received oral or written feedback from 98 staff members, 41 parents and 190 students. All the feedback was positive except for one comment from a parent who thought that chaplains, as religious operatives, should not be present in government schools. Many staff said that they had been wary of chaplains as religious people, but they had changed their mind as they had seen the pastoral care chaplains had offered.

Many staff members said how grateful they were for the assistance of chaplains in dealing with pastoral needs, particularly at those times when they needed to be teaching! They noted how accessible and approachable chaplains were. Many staff said they had personally found the opportunity to discuss school or personal matters with chaplains most valuable.

Eighty-four per cent of principals indicated that feedback from parents about chaplaincy had been strongly positive or mostly positive. Ten per cent said they had received no feedback. Just 0.3 per cent of principals said that they had mostly negative feedback. In interviews, parents said they appreciated the pastoral care and good moral influence of the chaplains on their children.

Students were also very positive about chaplaincy, particularly as providing an opportunity to talk about things and to get help with problems. They said chaplains helped lonely students, helped students get on with other students and encouraged students to do the right thing and be responsible. Seventy-five per cent of students said that having a chaplain was very important (scoring the importance as 8 or more out of 10).

Overall, it was found that chaplains had undertaken the activities expected of them in terms of contributing to the provision of pastoral care very effectively. They had provided guidance on human relationships and provided support for students and staff in cases of bereavement, family breakdown and other crisis and loss situations. Their contribution was widely appreciated. Chaplains had also provided support for students in exploring their spirituality and had provided guidance on religious, values and ethical matters, although the extent to which this had occurred varied somewhat depending on the extent to which some support and guidance was requested.

The Special Contribution of Chaplaincy to Student Wellbeing

The research found the contribution of chaplains to school welfare was different from that of other school welfare staff in several ways. They worked proactively to build relationships with students as the basis for enhancing students' wellbeing, rather than simply responding to problems that arose. Chaplains were accessible and approachable and many students initiated consultation with chaplains. Students see them as different from other school staff, as 'neutral' or 'non-aligned', partly because they did not have teaching or disciplinary roles. Chaplains approached welfare holistically, working with families and communities, as well as individual students. They approached their task flexibly according to the needs they identified within the school. They had a strong commitment to their work, seeing it as a vocation in which they were fulfilling their Christian values and not just a job for earning an income. They brought with them into the school their personal connections with the churches and community contacts which provide valuable support for chaplaincy.

Ninety-eight per cent of principals said that chaplaincy is important and want government funding to continue. Many principals want the funding to be expanded to ensure all schools can access the program and that large schools, schools in low socio-economic areas and other schools with high needs can have greater access to the services of chaplains. Chaplaincy is a unique service that is proving to be of great value to students, staff, parents, and their schools. It is proving effective in offering care, building the social skills of students, and encouraging responsible behaviour. It is of great long-term value to the wellbeing of Australian communities.

1. The Chaplaincy Research

The National School Chaplaincy Program

The first chaplains in government schools were appointed in 1955. The Council for Christian Education in Schools, Victoria was responsible for this bold experiment in the Collingwood, Footscray and Brunswick Technical Colleges. Gradually, other schools adopted the idea and more chaplains were appointed (Venning, p.10).

The first school chaplains were appointed in Queensland in the 1970s, although arrangements were not formalised with the Education Department until 1993 (Pohlmann and Russell, p.31). In 1982, the first chaplains were appointed in Western Australia (Clements, p. 19; Beazley, p.277). In 1986 the Schools Ministry Group was formed in South Australia and chaplaincy was initiated. The first primary school chaplain was appointments there in 1996 (Rayner, Hawkins and Lush, p.25). In 2004, there were 555 chaplains around Australia (Hill, p.6). Most chaplains were funded by a mixture of funding from local churches and communities and the schools themselves. Many chaplains were involved in raising funds to maintain chaplaincy.

In 2006, the Australian Federal Government established the *National School Chaplaincy Program* (NSCP) to support the contribution chaplaincy provides to the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of school communities. A statement on the website of the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) explains the origins of the initiative.

> As one of society's key institutions, schools are in a strong position to support the wellbeing, values and spirituality of young people. Chaplains already play a significant role in supporting many schools throughout Australia, including government schools, and there have been calls for their services to be more broadly available to school communities ([/www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/ NationalSchoolChaplaincyProgram/](/www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSchoolChaplaincyProgram/)).

Under the NSCP, $165 million over three years (July 2006 to October 2009) was made available for government and non-government schools to establish school chaplaincy services, or expand existing services. These schools and their communities were able to apply for up to $20,000 per annum to a maximum of $60,000 over the life of the NSCP.

Schools had six months to find a suitable chaplain after their funding was approved. A number of schools reported difficulties finding a suitable chaplain. For this reason, the Government decided to allow these schools to use an alternative support worker to do the same job if they could not locate a chaplain by July 2008. The support workers could include non-denominational pastoral care workers, youth workers or other secular support staff. However, only eight such people were appointed.

The nature of chaplaincy services provided, including the religious affiliation of the school chaplain, was a matter to be decided by the local school and its community, following broad consultation. It was also made clear that students and their families had to be informed about the availability and the voluntary nature of the chaplaincy services provided.

Successful schools in the first round of funding were announced on 27th June 2007, and for the second round of funding on 12th October 2007. In the two funding rounds, 2,712 schools were successful. The deadline for funding was July 2008. Of these, 1915 were government schools. Of these schools, Christian chaplains have been provided by the members of the National School Chaplaincy Association in 1624 schools (85 per cent of all government schools successful in their application for funding). The remaining 797 schools which received funding were Catholic and independent schools.

The funding was for $20,000 per school per year with no differentiation between large and small schools, schools in high or low socio-economic areas, or schools in capital cities or in regional or remote areas.

Chaplains were seen as complementing existing services in schools provided by counsellors, youth workers and psychologists. They would give advice and support in relation to ethical and value issues and personal relationships. In particular, they would provide spiritual and religious advice, support, and guidance.

Chaplains were expected to respect the range of religious views and affiliations, and cultural traditions in the school and the community, and be approachable by all students irrespective of their belief systems.

School chaplains were not permitted to provide counselling services, psychological assessment, or medical assessment, even if they were qualified. Such tasks were seen as being outside their roles.

The activities undertaken by school chaplains could include, but were not limited to (www. deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSchoolChaplaincyProgram):

Spiritual guidance:

- supporting students in exploring their spirituality;
- providing guidance on religious, values and ethical matters; and
- facilitating access to the helping agencies in the community, both church-based and secular.

Greater pastoral care:

- providing guidance to students on issues concerning human relationships;
- assisting school counsellors and staff in the provision of student welfare services;
- providing support in cases of bereavement, family breakdown or other crisis and loss situations; and
- being readily available to provide continuity and on-going support for individual students and staff where this is necessary.

School chaplains delivering services to the school and its community are to abide by the *National School Chaplaincy Programme Code of Conduct* (see **Attachment A**); and operate within a strong ethical framework which supports and upholds the Values for Australian Schooling **(see Attachment B).**

As a result of the funding provided by the Federal government, the number of chaplains rose rapidly. The following table only includes the 85 per cent of chaplains placed by the members of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association. As such, it only includes Christian chaplains working in government schools, and does not include chaplains of other faiths nor non-religious support workers. While it is indicative of the take-up of the program in government schools, it does not show the full extent of it because it does not include chaplains and other support workers arranged with providers who are not part of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association. Note that this table represents the number of "arrangements" between schools and chaplains as mediated by the chaplaincy provider. Because some chaplains work in more than one school and some schools have more than one chaplain, it does not represent either the number of chaplains or the number of schools with chaplains.

Table 1. Number of Chaplaincy Arrangements in Government Schools Provided by the Members of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association by State

State	March, 2007	March, 2008	March, 2009	August, 2009
ACT	4	20	28	28
NSW	0	21	38	38
QLD	214	538	559	735
SA	193	318	354	362
TAS	21	67	90	90
VIC	79	113	247	298
WA	142	305	324	323
Total	653	1382	1674	1874

Source: Chaplaincy Providers in each State.

The number of chaplaincy arrangements in government schools as arranged by the major providers has almost trebled since March 2007. A large factor in the increase has been the funding made available through the Federal Government's National School Chaplaincy Program. However, the rise in the number of chaplaincies also indicates that schools believe that the program will contribute in a worthwhile way to their schools.

Research on Effectiveness of Chaplaincy

There have been several studies of school chaplaincy in Australia. In 2001, J. Salecich completed a doctoral dissertation, *Chaplaincy in Queensland state schools: An investigation.* In 2005, D. Pohlmann also completed a doctoral dissertation, *Measuring the effectiveness of chaplaincy services in Queensland state schools.* In 2008, an evaluation of chaplaincy was undertaken in Queensland with case studies in 20 schools representing a range of primary and secondary, urban and rural, small and large schools. These studies involved in-depth interviews with principals and surveys of close to 400 other stakeholders including chaplains, students, parents, teachers, support personnel and Local Chaplaincy Committee members,

In Victoria, a study commissioned by ACCESS Ministries in 2009 involved surveys of 231 students and 279 parents in 25 schools. It was conducted by Jehan Loza and Brad Warren and commented on the effectiveness of chaplaincy (ACCESS Ministries, 2009).

Both ACCESS ministries in Victoria and YouthCARE in Western Australia have gathered detailed reports from chaplains on a regular basis on the issues the chaplains are dealing with. This information has been analysed and used in annual reports on chaplaincy.

Up to this point, there have been no national studies of chaplaincy in government schools. Indeed, most of the studies have been small in scale, relying on feedback from relatively small samples of stakeholders in a few schools. The nature and roles of chaplaincy have developed rapidly. When chaplains were first appointed, religious education was a major role (Venning p.11). Chaplains were initially appointed as an extension of the arrangements for volunteers to undertake religious instruction in school which was permitted, under certain conditions, under the various education acts developed in the 1870s (Venning, p.9; Clements, p.19). However, the focus swung from religious education to pastoral care. The rapid increase in the number of chaplains across Australia, due, in part, to the Federal government's National School Chaplaincy Program, has increased the need for a larger-scale study of the effectiveness of chaplaincy.

In 2008, the National Schools Chaplaincy Association approached Dr Philip Hughes to lead a team in undertaking a review of the effectiveness of chaplaincy in those government schools where chaplains had been provided by members of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association. This study, then, is not of all chaplains funded under the Federal Government's National School Chaplaincy Program. It does not cover those chaplains in non-government schools, nor does it include those chaplains who were not placed by the organisations who are part of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association. This means also that the study does not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the few Islamic and Buddhist chaplains nor the eight non-religious support workers who were appointed when the criteria for the use of the money was broadened in the second round of Federal funding. The Association has no jurisdiction over chaplains in non-government schools and other support workers not placed by members of the Association, nor the right to evaluate their effectiveness. However, the study does cover 85 per cent of chaplains in government schools around Australia as the major providers in each State for government schools are members of the Association.

It should also be noted that the study did not include chaplains in schools in New South Wales. Government schools in New South Wales have been slow to take up the program, partly because it had not been previously permitted by the New South Wales Education Department. The largest of the chaplaincy providers in New South Wales, GenR8, has provided 38 chaplains to schools. However, the Department of Education in New South Wales did not allow the research to proceed in relation to these 38 chaplains. Following a process of appeal, the following response was received.

> I am still concerned that the study does not appear to be designed as a fair evaluation of the national program, since alternative means of achieving program objectives are not considered. In addition I am concerned that your study involves only Christian chaplains (Smith, DOC09/81709).

Because the project funders have no jurisdiction over chaplains employed through other sponsoring agencies or over schools which chose to employ workers other than chaplains, the NSW Department of Education was making a request that it was not possible to fulfil within the parameters of the funding for this project.

No provider of chaplaincy in the Northern Territory is a member of the National School Chaplaincy Association. Hence, chaplains placed in the Territory were also not included in this research. Sixteen government schools in the Northern Territory received funding from the Federal National Schools Chaplaincy Program for the appointment of chaplains.

The most efficient way of gathering material on the effectiveness of chaplains over the required short time frame was through reports from the principals to whom the chaplains are responsible. Principals are in the best position to evaluate the work of chaplains as they have an overview of their schools and have responsibility for the welfare as well as the educational development of the students. Direct measurements of changes in student wellbeing, whilst desirable in research terms, would be very difficult and would take a long period of time and intensive involvement of students. It would also be very difficult to assign any changes that were directly measured in student wellbeing specifically to the interventions of chaplains.

It was decided, then, to ask all principals in schools with chaplains to provide us with an evaluation of the effectiveness of those chaplains. That was done through an on-line questionnaire. Invitations were sent to all principals in schools with chaplains placed by members of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association at the end of July 2009. A reminder was sent to principals in mid August. As shown in the following table, 688 principals responded to the questionnaire giving a response rate of 42 per cent. We consider this to be in line with expectations and an adequate basis for providing a picture of the opinions of principals served by the members of the National School Chaplaincy Association.

Table 2. The Number of Principals Invited to Complete the Questionnaire on Chaplaincy and the Response Rate

State	Number of Principals Invited to Do the Survey	Number of Responses	Response Rate
ACT	28	14	50%
QLD	632	213	34%
SA	321	149	46%
TAS	90	47	52%
VIC	270	150	55%
WA	285	102	36%
State not indicated		12	
Total	1626	688	42%

In order to get a full and detailed picture of what the chaplains were doing, the sorts of issues with which they were dealing, and their own evaluation of the contribution they were making, we also asked all chaplains to complete a survey. The invitation to complete this survey was sent out in June 2009. At least two reminders were sent to chaplains in July and August to complete the survey. The response rate was higher than expected and provides an excellent picture of chaplaincy around Australia.

Table 3. The Number of Chaplains Invited to Complete the Questionnaire on Chaplaincy and the Response Rate

State	Number of Chaplains Invited to Do the Survey	Number of Responses	Response Rate
ACT	28	16	57%
QLD	505	441	87%
SA	309	257	83%
TAS	75	68	91%
VIC	220	88	40%
WA	259	151	58%
State not indicated		10	
Total	1396	1031	74%

It will be noted that in some States the numbers of principals invited to do the survey was not equal to the number of chaplains. Some chaplains work in more than one school and a few schools have more than one chaplain.

The surveys were complemented by qualitative data collected through case studies. Twenty-one case studies were conducted around the nation. Four case studies took place in each of Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. There are comparatively few chaplains in the Australian Capital Territory and one case study was conducted there.

In determining where case studies would take place, a range of selection criteria was used nationally to ensure a wide range of case studies. The selection criteria that we applied across the entire sample were:

1. Similar numbers of primary and secondary schools.
2. Similar numbers of rural (divided by regional city and rural) and metropolitan schools.
3. A variety of schools in terms of size.
4. A variety of schools in terms of the socio-economic level of the local area (which was checked by the use of the socio-economic index for local area (SEIFA) produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
5. A variety of schools in terms of the levels of multiculturalism and a variety in the particular ethnic communities involved.

How these criteria were fulfilled is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. The Range of Schools in Which Case Studies Were Held

Category	Numbers of Case Studies
Primary / Secondary Schools	11 Primary Schools, 10 Secondary Schools
Metropolitan / Regional / Rural Schools	10 Metropolitan, 4 Regional City (over 20,000 population), 7 Rural.
School Size	5 small (less than 250 students) 12 medium (250 to 650 students) 4 large (more than 650 students
Socio-Economic Level of Area	7 low socio-economic level (SEIFA below 900) 12 medium socio-economic level (SEIFA 900 to 1100) 2 high socio-economic level (SEIFA above 1100)
Levels of Multiculturalism	4 high levels of multiculturalism 17 low levels of multiculturalism Four schools had high numbers of Indigenous students

These selection criteria do not ensure a representative sample of schools; this was not the objective. Instead, we recruited a purposive sample in order to observe how chaplaincy was working in a wide variety of situations. Within every school, we expected to find a range of attitudes to chaplaincy among staff, parents and students. The case studies have been helpful in understanding the dynamics of chaplaincy in different contexts and how, on a daily basis, chaplains interact with staff, parents and students.

In each State, some of the schools approached were not able to fit the research into their agendas within the timeframe that was allowed for the research. We then approached other schools according to the selection criteria. The case studies were conducted in July, August and September 2009.

In each of the schools, the researcher spent a day interviewing the principal, the chaplain, staff who wished to talk about chaplaincy, parents who wished to make a contribution, and some students. Interviews followed schedules that had been prepared for each category of respondent. The researcher met with most people individually, apart from students who were mostly interviewed in small groups. In the student groups, there was a short discussion of chaplaincy and then students were invited to complete a response form which contained some closed questions in which students selected a number to indicate their response and some open-ended questions where students were invited to write a sentence or two.

To extend the opportunity for participation in the study for people who were not able to meet the researcher personally, staff, parents and students were also invited to respond by completing short questionnaires on a website. These questionnaires contained both open and closed questions so that there were some comparable evaluations of the chaplain's contribution along with some general comments on chaplaincy. Only staff, parents and students within the schools where case studies took place were invited to complete these surveys. Hence, the responses cannot be generalised to all staff, parents and students. Nevertheless, in this anonymous way they provided the opportunity for a wider range of responses in each of the case study sites.

2. Chaplains and Their Roles

The Background of the Chaplains

Chaplains who have been placed by the Chaplaincy Providers who are members of the National Schools Chaplaincy Association come from a range of backgrounds and bring to the job a variety of skills. Among the chaplains are young people who are interested in working with other young people. Some of them have been youth workers in churches or other contexts. Many chaplains are women or men who respond to the opportunity to play a caring and supportive role with young people. Many of them have children themselves. It is an attractive option for some women as they move back into the workforce after a period spent caring for a young family. Some chaplains also pastor churches.

Interviews with chaplains in the case studies indicated that chaplains have a deep commitment to this model of involvement with young people. They see chaplaincy as a significant way of making a difference among young people. This was the major reason for becoming a chaplain.

Overall, the data from our national survey of chaplains showed that:
- 59% of chaplains were female, and
- 41% of chaplains were male.

The proportion of male chaplains is very high compared with teachers and social workers. Only 26 per cent of teachers are male, and the majority of these work in secondary schools. Just 29 per cent of health and welfare support workers are male (ABS, Table 20680-c83c-Australia.xls). The proportion of female teachers is particularly high in primary schools. However, 39 per cent of primary schools served by chaplains had male chaplains. Several principals noted that their male chaplains were sometimes the only male members of staff in the school and were fulfilling important roles as male role-models.

The survey showed that there were similar proportions of male and female chaplains in the schools in the capital cities and in the rural service towns. There were slightly higher proportions of female chaplains in small schools in rural areas, and more male chaplains in the larger schools in provincial cities.

In terms of age,
- 28% of chaplains were under 30 years of age,
- 25% were between 30 and 39
- 23% were between 40 and 49,
- 19% were between 50 and 59, and
- 4% were 60 years of age or older.

Older people were more frequently found in the smaller schools and younger people in the larger schools. This is partly the choice of the schools themselves. Some larger schools with a greater variety of staff preferred young school chaplains who complemented existing welfare

staff. Small schools with few welfare staff prefer older chaplains who have the experience to undertake a greater range of pastoral responsibilities.

The educational background required of chaplains varies across the providers. In Victoria, all chaplains are required to have a degree either in education, counselling or theology. The national survey of chaplains found that 39 per cent of chaplains have a university degree and most others have diplomas. In all States, chaplains are required to do an induction course and to attend regular professional development courses. With the increase in the number of chaplains there has been an increase in the interest within tertiary institutions in providing training for chaplains.

However, the formal training chaplains bring to the occupation varies considerably. As shown in the following table, some have had some theological training. Some have done training in counselling, pastoral care, and/ or working with children or young people. Some have a background in education and others in psychology or community development.

Table 5. Areas of Education At Diploma Level or Above Which Chaplains Have Completed

Areas of Education (At Diploma Level or Above)	Proportion of Chaplains with This Level of Education
Chaplaincy	12
Counselling	20
Psychology	6
Education	17
Pastoral Care	19
Theology	30
Youth or Children's Work	20
Community Development	8

Source: National Survey of Chaplains (2009)

Table 6. The Professional Experience of Chaplains

Professional Experience	Proportion of Chaplains with This Experience
Church associated work	40
Counselling	14
Psychologist	1
Teaching	21
Youth or children's work	44

Source: National Survey of Chaplains (2009)

Chaplains come from a wide range of church backgrounds, from the mainstream Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox and Uniting denominations through to the congregationally-oriented Baptists and Churches of Christ to some of the newer Pentecostal and charismatic denominations. No one denomination was dominant in this mix.

What Chaplains Are Doing

The funding offered to schools for chaplaincy service support was $20,000 per school. Federal Government guidelines encouraged schools to complement this contribution so that a

chaplain could work for more than two days a week. There are schools where chaplains work full-time. Many schools have a chaplain for just two days a week.

Of the chaplains surveyed,
- 74% worked in just one school,
- 26% worked in two or more schools.

Consequently, the survey of 1031 chaplains covered a total of 1313 "arrangements" with schools. The average number of hours per week for these "arrangements" was 18.9 hours – a little more than the 2 days per week.

On average, chaplains were involved in activities related to chaplaincy about 26 hours per week. This is greater than the average time for "arrangements" partly because 26 per cent of chaplains are working in more than one "arrangement" and partly because the period of 26 hours includes personal time that is spent in professional development, extra-curricula school activities, such as camps and excursions, and in some voluntary activities associated with chaplaincy, such as presentations about chaplaincy in a church or community gathering. Chaplains who live in the same community as their schools (most often in rural areas) also spent some of their time informally building links with students, families and staff who lived locally.

We asked chaplains to give us some indication of the time they had spent in the two weeks prior to the completion of the survey in different areas of work. The following figure gives us some sense of the various categories of their work and time spent in them. It should be noted that the proportion of time in different activities may vary from one part of the school year to another. Our data was collected partly towards the end of term 2 and during the early weeks of term 3.

The following figure illustrates the average percentage of time by all chaplains surveyed in a variety of activities.

Figure 1. The Division of Time-Use Among Chaplains (Averaged Percent of Total Time in Chaplaincy Related Activities)
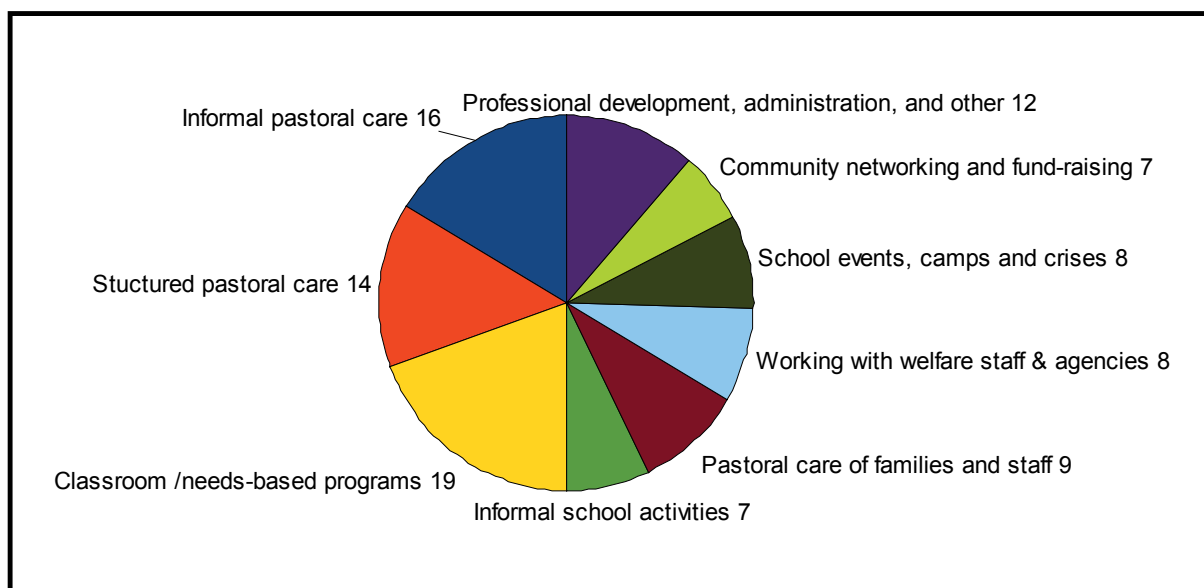
The largest portion of chaplains' time (about 30%) is spent in the pastoral care of individual students, much of it in an informal way, such as meeting students in the playground and talking with them. Some of the time is more structured, such as talking with students one-on-one in an office at pre-arranged times.

Another 34 per cent of the time is spent in group, classroom and school activities. Most chaplains run programs or activities in which they work with small groups of students. These may include groups related to handling grief, or groups aimed at building the self-esteem of students. Many chaplains run breakfast programs where children can have a good breakfast prior to starting the school day and where they may do some other activities, such as reading. Others run groups after school. In primary schools this may be an after-school care activity. At high school, this may involve some assistance with homework.

Chaplains commonly assist teachers in classroom activities. Such assistance may take the form of sitting with students who are having difficulties in learning. Alternatively it may take the form of having an input into the values or personal development classes at the school. Chaplains participate in all sorts of programs depending on their own abilities and capacities and on the needs at the school. Some are involved in art, drama and music, for example. Many chaplains take part in school sporting programs.

There are many activities which do not take up a high proportion of chaplains' time but which school staff see as very significant when the need arises. Chaplains are often called on first when there is a critical incident, such as the death of a student or a relative of a student.

Most chaplains also provide pastoral care for staff. Much of this occurs informally through casual interactions through the day. However, sometimes it involves structured time when teachers sit down with the chaplain to discuss school or personal issues.

The pastoral care also extends to families and to the parents of the students. Sometimes, this involves home visits. Some chaplains organise programs for parents. For example, one chaplain interviewed in the case studies ran a weekly parents' walking group. This provided an opportunity to get to know parents of students from the school and for the parents to get to know the chaplain. Another chaplain ran weekly classes for new migrant parents to help them with their English, to assist in their adjustment to the Australian culture, and to help the parents provide greater support for their children in their school work.

The activities covered by the 'other' category in figure 1 were many and varied. All chaplains undertake regular professional development courses. Some were up-grading their qualifications at the time of the survey. Administrative work is also necessary as the chaplains report to their schools and to the chaplaincy providers. Most chaplains meet regularly with support groups, such as area gatherings of chaplains.

There are many activities which occur from time to time but which may not have occurred for the chaplain in the last two weeks. Camps, for example, often take place at the beginning or end of a term. Hence, the data above may underestimate the involvement of chaplains in camps. In order to cover such activities, we asked chaplains whether they had been involved in the following activities in the past year.

Table 7: Activities Undertaken in the Past Year by Chaplains

Activity	Not at all (%)	Once or twice (%)	Several or many times (%)
Off-site visits to parents /care-givers	21.5	28.9	49.6
Provide needs-based groups	17.6	20.9	61.5
Led in school events or special ceremonies	26.7	34.5	38.7
Participated in school camps	39.6	34.4	15.0
Fund-raising activities	29.2	36.7	34.1
Representing chaplaincy or school in community events	17.7	36.6	45.8

Source: Chaplains' survey (2009)

While classroom activities and needs-based groups, such as groups for dealing with grief or behaviour management, occupy only 19 per cent of chaplains' time, more than 80 per cent of chaplains are involved in running such groups. They provide a valuable addition to the pastoral care programs of many schools. These programs have been found to be particularly useful when working with boys. One example is a gardening program involving boys with behavioural/emotional issues. While it is sometimes fruitless getting boys into one-on-one counselling sessions, doing some sort of engaging activity provides a relaxed atmosphere to get boys talking about what is troubling them.

Working with families occupies a relatively small proportion of most chaplains' time, but most chaplains do off-sites visits to parents and care-givers. This includes not just visiting the family home but also visits to hospitals when parents are ill. Half of all chaplains surveyed said they frequently made home visits. Chaplains interviewed in the case studies reported that home visits was one of the best ways of getting to know the background of students and of working sensitively with the situations from which students come. Providing support to families can be a significant extension of the work of the school. A chaplain described how she coached a lone parent in parenting skills, and how this had had a positive impact on the children.

Chaplains work to engage parents in the life of the school. Chaplains encouraged parents to attend working bees, help children with reading, give a hand at the school canteen, count money or become involved in a school programs. One school had a popular weekly family activities morning, where parents and other carers come along with their pre-school children. Many of these families did not yet have children at the school. This was an effective way of building good relationships for the future.

Most chaplains lead special events within the school. These may be regular events such as a Christmas activity or an ANZAC service, or they may be part of the response to critical incidents such as the death of a student.

Most chaplains represent chaplaincy or the school in community events. Often, chaplains are asked to speak at service clubs, churches and other organisations about their work. Sometimes they represent the school in community events such as ANZAC services. Through such events, chaplains contribute to the links between the schools and their communities.

In many places, chaplains are employed for more than the two days per week paid for by Federal funding and, often, this means that extra funds must be raised by the school or

through the community. Chaplains also assist in raising funds for other school activities or as part of charity projects. Chaplains often seek to raise awareness of the needs of others through organising social justice events.

In many schools, chaplains are involved in the care of students with special needs. For example, one school told how two families lost their houses in fires. The chaplain raised funds to assist the families, especially for the uniforms and other needs of the children. At another school, a single mother had abandoned her three school-aged children who were left with no one to care for them. The school's chaplain made sure the children were being looked after by a neighbour, that they had adequate food and clothing, and made contact with relevant welfare and church agencies for further support.

Chaplains in an area may work as a team in times of crisis. At one high school, there were two student deaths within a week of each other. Chaplains from neighbouring schools came to help support the school community. One principal involved pointed out: "They are *all* our children."

Sixty per cent of all chaplains are involved in school camps. Schools reported that the chaplains had a special role at the camps in that they were not usually one of the teachers responsible for organising events, but had the opportunity to focus on the pastoral needs of the students and to be available to simply talk with them. Schools reported that the chaplains were also more familiar with the school protocols than were parents who participated in the camps, and thus were able to reinforce those protocols as necessary. Sometimes the time taken to attend these camps is extra time chaplains contribute on a voluntary basis.

It has been suggested that there are several models of chaplaincy. In 1993, the Queensland government identified three major models:

1. Pastoral Care model in which chaplains provide care, support and a 'listening ear';
2. Peer Support model in which chaplains provide care largely in an extra-curricular way; and
3. Educational model in which chaplaincy primarily involves coordinating or teaching religious education (Pohlmann and Russell, p.33).

The second two of these models have largely disappeared and do not fit well under the present Federal government guidelines for chaplaincy. However, the case studies suggested three different emphases in the ways in which chaplaincy is conducted.

1. **Pastoral Care of individuals** emphasis, focussing on talking with individuals in either informal or structured ways;
2. **Pastoral Care of groups** emphasis, focussing on group activities such as sport, music, gardening, hobbies, or discussion groups; (in some cases this moved towards a 'Community Development' model);
3. **Educational** emphasis, focussing on educating students, often through group activities, about relationships, behaviour management, interpersonal values, and social justice.

In no case did one emphasis take over to the exclusion of others. However, the emphasis varied with the needs of the school and the skills and abilities of the chaplains.

Issues Chaplains Deal With

Chaplains address many different problems and issues in delivering pastoral care. The following table presents the proportion of chaplains who said that issues had been raised by students themselves, by staff in referring students to them, or by themselves in advising students.

In the two weeks prior to the survey,

- 95% of chaplains reported dealing with behaviour management issues, such as anger
- 92% with bullying and harassment
- 92% with peer relationships and loneliness
- 91% with student – family relationship issues
- 85% with sense of purpose and self-esteem
- 81% with grief and loss
- 77% with community involvement and social inclusion
- 76% with spirituality and 'big picture' issues of life
- 72% with mental health and depression
- 50% with alcohol and drug use, and
- 44% with self harm and suicide.

(For full details, see Appendix C.)

Most frequently, chaplains deal with behaviour management issues such as anger, peer relationships and loneliness, and bullying and harassment. Family relationships are also frequent issues addressed by chaplains in their pastoral care. In other words, the most common issues revolve around peer and family relationships. Many chaplains see one of their primary roles as that of helping students to develop relationship skills. Sometimes this involves issues of sexuality. One of the ways in which chaplains report that they do this is through helping students to think through the consequences of their actions and examining how their behaviour impacts the people around them. For example, in one case study, Grade 5 and 6 girls were described as forming small and exclusive cliques. They were excluding others through gossip. Through small group work, the chaplain helped the girls look at the consequences of their actions on other students and encouraged them to be more collaborative and inclusive.

Small group programs also encourage healthy social interaction through creative activities, such as cooking, art, music, gardening, building go-karts and so on. A group of primary school boys was asked to put together a 'recipe for friendship'.

A second group of issues has to do with the self: the sense of self-esteem, self-concept, sense of purpose and achievement. Less commonly, but not infrequently, this extends to issues of mental health, depression, alcohol and drug use and sometimes to self harm and suicide. While many chaplains talk with students about such issues, or run groups designed to assist them in relation to self-esteem, chaplains refer to other professionals those students who have severe mental health problems or who are suicidal.

A third group of issues is the involvement of students in the wider community: issues of social inclusion and of racism. In some schools, where there is a distinct minority group or several such groups, this may take the form of assisting such groups to feel included. In some schools chaplains work closely with Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers assisting in the integration of Aboriginal students. Others work with different migrant or refugee groups. Many chaplains run groups to encourage inclusiveness among students, especially where there are children who find it difficult to make friends.

In one school, for example, a great deal of the chaplain's work involved working with a variety of refugee groups, assisting students with traumatic backgrounds, and helping students from different ethnic backgrounds to understand each other and to resolve differences. The example was given of a student who aggressively pushed to the front of every queue. The chaplain discovered that this behaviour had developed in refugee camps where getting to the front of the queue for food or water could be a matter of life or death. Better able to understand the behaviour, the school was able to address it effectively. The chaplain at this school took the lead in developing a program for Harmony Week, not just within the school but also in the wider community.

Sometimes, the issue of community and inclusion finds expression in how the student relates to the school community. It was frequently mentioned that chaplains have a special place in a school. They are generally not seen as part of the 'school structure' and do not have the disciplinary responsibilities of principals, deputy principals, or year coordinators. Seeing them as outside school authority structures, students often feel they can talk to chaplains in a way that they cannot talk to other school staff. In some cases, chaplains have a role mediating between students and the school.

Chaplains also deal with spiritual issues. Usually, this will only occur when students raise such issues themselves. While chaplains are known to have religious convictions, in all the schools where case studies were conducted, school staff, students and parents reported that chaplains never pushed their convictions onto others and showed respect for belief systems different from their own. Chaplains were willing to explain their personal views if asked and encouraged students to think about the 'big picture' issues of life for themselves.

The case studies showed that the amount of explicit attention to the area of spirituality varied from school to school. For example, a chaplain in one school conducted simple Easter and Christmas celebrations and engaged the school in linking with local church activities. In another school, a chaplain mentored a small group of students undertaking Christian Ministry, a VET certificate subject.

While many chaplains were not involved in any specifically religious activities, some provided support for students who had Christian convictions themselves or, for that matter, students with other religious convictions. For example, they would assist by advertising and attending a voluntary student Christian group that met at lunch-time. In two places visited, the chaplain held a prayer meeting for staff who wished to attend. However, in general, the spiritual aspect of chaplains' work was conducted in a low key way.

'At Risk' Students

From the case studies, the role of chaplains with regard to 'at risk' students was usually very clear, both to chaplains and principals. Where chaplains encountered 'at risk' situations, they brought the matter to the attention of the principal. However, often the chaplain's role was to then help support the student or family involved while they were receiving assistance from a professional agency.

Table 8: Involvement of chaplains with 'At Risk' Students

Group of Students	Not Involved (%)	Once or Twice Involved (%)	Often Involved (%)
Students of lower than average ability	10.4	39.6	50.0
Students facing mental health problems	27.5	44.7	27.8
Students differently abled	35.4	37.0	27.6
Indigenous students	41.0	32.0	27.0
Students facing physical health problems	41.2	42.4	16.4
Refugees	77.3	13.5	9.2
Students involved with juvenile justice system	83.7	14.0	2.3

Source: Chaplaincy Survey (2009)

The nature of chaplaincy varies considerably from one school to another in relation to the particular groups of students that need assistance. As is shown in the table above, there are many schools where there are no refugees, while in a few schools, this group has become a major focus for chaplaincy. In some schools, there are no or few Indigenous students, but in other schools, chaplains spend much of their time working with them.

The challenges facing students in a declining rural community and those facing students in a middle-class suburb in a capital city are, in some respects, very different. One of the challenges for chaplains is identifying the groups of students who are on the edge of the school community and of finding ways to get alongside those students and offer support.

3. The Effectiveness of Chaplains

The Importance of Various Chaplaincy Roles

This is the critical question for this research project, but also the most difficult one to measure. Many of the chaplains' contributions focus on small groups of students with high levels of need and few people are in a position to evaluate their effectiveness. It was very evident when interviewing staff and parents in schools that some were well aware of the chaplain's work, while others only had a vague idea. Some teachers used the services of the chaplain a great deal, while others only rarely referred a student to their help. Some parents were more involved in the activities of the school and had sought the help of the chaplain, for themselves or their children. Those most involved with the chaplain were the most aware of the chaplain's effectiveness. Some students hardly knew the chaplain while others had had intensive contact. Thus, studies of the whole school would not accurately pick up the influence of chaplains.

Students are cared for and influenced by a whole range of people, including family members, members of the wider community and members of the school community. To identify the particular contribution of chaplains to changes in attitudes, values and behaviour in students is impossible.

Further, the focus of this research was the general impact of chaplaincy nationally. In order to make an assessment of this it was necessary to rely on subjective assessments of the impact. We considered that principals were generally in the best position to assess the impact of the work of the chaplains. In many schools, although not all, they act as line managers for the chaplains. Hence, we asked the principals to make such subjective assessments. In addition, we also asked the chaplains for their perspectives on their effectiveness.

They survey of principals contained questions about the importance of the various components of the chaplain's role and how satisfactory was the chaplain's performance. Principals were asked to score these items on scales ranging from 1 to 10 with 10 indicating great importance and a high level of performance. The responses of principals are shown in Table 9.

For principals, the role scored most highly for importance was the pastoral care of students. This takes several forms:

- care of individual students;
- participation in the life of the school, particularly in critical incidents;
- provision of needs-based programs (e.g. on behaviour management or grief and loss);
- provision of informal school activities at lunch-times, or before and after school (such as school breakfasts).

For the principals, it is important that this pastoral care occurs in the context of a team approach shared with other welfare staff, such as school psychologists and counsellors, youth workers, Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers, and year coordinators.

Among the secondary roles for chaplains are the pastoral care of families and of staff. As some principals noted in interviews, working with families is often key to the happiness of the students and to their performance at school. A happy school staff makes for a happier school and contributes to the school's functioning.

Table 9. Average Scores (out of 10) of the Importance and Satisfactory Performance of Chaplains' Roles according to Principals (n=688)

Component of the Role	Importance of Role (according to Principals)	Score on Performance (as given by Principals)
Pastoral care of students	9.4	8.9
Participation in school events and critical incidents	8.6	8.5
Provision of needs-based programs	8.6	8.4
Organisation of informal school activities	8.5	8.4
Meeting with welfare staff at school	8.5	8.2
Pastoral care of families	8.2	8.3
Participation in school camps and retreats	8.1	8.5
Networking in community and churches	7.9	8.1
Pastoral care of staff	7.7	8.0
Contacting agencies for referrals	7.3	7.7
Assisting school leadership	7.1	7.8
Assisting in classroom activities	7.1	8.1
Involvement in fund-raising activities	4.9	7.0

Source: Survey of Principals, 2009.

Principals' Level of Satisfaction with the Performance of Various Roles

In general, the principals consider that the chaplains are performing their most important roles in a very satisfactory way. In each of the activities contributing to the pastoral care of students, principals give the chaplains a score of 8 or above.

The overall score in terms of the pastoral care of students was 8.9 out of 10. Out of 688 school principals, 17 (2.5%) indicated that the chaplain was not doing a good job in the pastoral care of students. Another 99 principals (15%) gave a moderate score (between 5 and 7) for the general performance of chaplains in the pastoral care of students. The remaining 83 per cent of principals gave the chaplains a high score of between 8 and 10.

In some minor areas, there was room for improvement in the chaplains' activities. According to the principals, in general, chaplains could do better in:

- assisting school leadership (9% say 'not performing well');
- referring students to outside agencies for assistance (10% 'not performing well'); and
- fund-raising (15% 'not performing well').

Note that involvement in fund-raising is not necessary in all schools. Thirty-one percent of principals did not respond to this question as this was not a task for their chaplains. These non-responses were excluded from the above statistics on satisfaction of performance.

Another way of looking at the effectiveness of the chaplains is to ask about the outcomes of their work. In what ways are the chaplains' activities making a difference to the students and the school?

We asked a range of questions of both chaplains and principals regarding these outcomes, asking them to assess how large the contribution the chaplains were making in a variety of areas. It should be noted that these outcomes are not of equal importance.

Table 10. Comparing assessment by chaplains and principals of chaplains' effectiveness (average scores on a scale of 1 to 10 in which 10 represents making a major contribution)

Chaplaincy roles	Chaplains' assessments	Principals' assessments
Providing an opportunity for students to talk through issues	7.8	8.6
Encouraging moral values and responsibility	7.6	8.1
Contributing to the morale of the school community	7.5	8.0
Offering support to students with significant problems	7.3	8.6
Building social inclusion and community in the school	7.1	7.8
Improving peer relationships	6.8	7.9
Linking the school with the wider community	6.0	7.1
Helping students think about the 'big picture' issues of life	6.0	6.8
Changing behaviour in relation to bullying and harassment	5.9	7.3
Improving relationships between students and families	5.8	7.0
Offering support to students in special risk categories	5.4	8.5
Referring students to specialist assistance	4.6	6.5

Source: Surveys of chaplains and principals, 2009.

It is interesting to note that the principals' evaluation of the outcome is higher than that of the chaplains in every area. This difference is related to expectations. While the expectations of principals in most areas are being fulfilled, most chaplains have high ideals in what they would like to achieve.

This was reflected in the case studies. Chaplains were often more hesitant to say that their expectations of what they wanted to achieve were being met than were other members of staff. It is indicative of the fact that chaplains are constantly striving to optimise their impact, while other school staff are pleased with what is being achieved.

As previously noted, the area in which principals believed chaplains were making the greatest contribution was the pastoral care of students, particularly in relation to students with high levels of need. They gave chaplains a score for their effectiveness of 8.5 or more out of 10 in:

- providing opportunities for students to talk through issues,
- offering support to students with significant problems, and
- offering support to students in special risk categories.

Particularly in the area of students in special risk categories, chaplains believed they could do much more in providing assistance.

In relation to changing behaviour, principals are most affirming of what chaplains are doing to nurture moral values and responsible behaviour. They are also regarded them as having a significant impact in building peer relationships. Several chaplains indicated that one of their major tasks was teaching social skills, in particular working through with students the consequences of behaviours so that they would act more responsibly in relation to others.

Principals affirmed that chaplains were having a moderate impact on the relationships of students with their families, and on bullying and harassment.

According to the principals, chaplains also had an impact on the general morale of the schools in which they worked. They helped to build the sense of community in the school and supported the school ethos. In their focus on the wellbeing of the students, they made the school a more caring place. In some case studies, it was noted that the chaplains kept the values of the school before staff and students. One chaplain wrote and recorded songs to illustrate a primary school's key values, and these were played over the school's PA system.

Many chaplains have well developed networks in a number of areas, such as church, community groups, art, music and welfare agencies. Chaplains are, therefore, often able to make an important contribution in linking the schools with the wider community. Chaplains are sometimes able to draw on the resources of the community to contribute to the life of the school and sometimes they develop support within the school for community projects.

One of the least strong areas in terms of the contribution of chaplaincy is in referral. Sometimes this is not a major issue as problems in need of referral are picked up by such people as the school psychologist or the school nurse within the school. However, it does appear to be an area in which both chaplains and principals feel chaplains could perform more satisfactorily. Some school counsellors also noted the importance of chaplains being able to evaluate when they should refer a student for more specialised assistance. On the other hand, the case studies showed that most principals and teaching staff were confident that their chaplains were wise enough to know when referrals should occur. Working closely with a welfare team assisted that process.

The levels of principals' satisfaction with the work of the chaplains varied little from one State to another. There was no difference in the level of satisfaction in schools in rural or urban locations. The size of the school and the ethnic diversity of its students also made no difference to the level of satisfaction.

However, satisfaction was higher where chaplains had been in the school longer. More than 80 per cent of chaplains had been in their schools just 2 years or less. The average satisfaction score for these chaplains was 105 out of 130. Where chaplains had been in the school for more than 2 years, the average satisfaction score was 112. Chaplains grow into the job over time and, as they find their role, so the level of satisfaction of principals rises a little.

The major factors in the levels of satisfaction were whether principals saw chaplains as providing good opportunities for students to talk about issues, whether chaplains were contributing well to the morale of the school, whether they were doing a good job in linking the school with the wider community, and whether they were contributing to better peer relationships among the students.

Chaplains' Most Important Contributions

Principals and chaplains were asked to write about what they saw as *the* most important contribution chaplains had made to their schools. A few principals and chaplains did not respond to this question. Two or three principals made negative comments. One principal, for example, commented that there had been some challenges in the chaplain finding their role. However, 99 per cent of the responses were positive, picking up a range of contributions they saw chaplains making. We have categorised the responses and listed the proportions of principals and chaplains making a response that fell into the category. Some responses fell into more than one category.

Table 11. Chaplains' Most Important Contributions as Categorised from Responses to Open-Ended Questions in Surveys of Principals and Chaplains

Category of Response	Percentage of Principals Mentioning This	Percentage of Chaplains Mentioning This
Provision of pastoral care through non-judgemental listening	42	55
Modelling and teaching moral values	10	23
Creating and nurturing ties with the community	9	18
Relationship building	8	27
Crisis and trauma management	6	21
Contributing to the team of staff	5	16
Resolving home and parenting issues	4	1
Providing Christian and/or spiritual counsel	2	1

Source: Survey of Principals (2009)

Provision of Pastoral Care

The responses reflect the evaluations in the closed questions about the performance of chaplains but provided an opportunity for principals to describe ways in which the contribution was made.

The most common response of principals was that the chaplains provided pastoral care in a way which complemented what was being provided by other members of the school staff. The fact that the chaplain was not a teacher, nor a psychologist, but a 'neutral' person was noted quite frequently in their comments. Part of this 'neutrality' was related to the fact that chaplains did not have a disciplinary responsibility and could listen 'non-judgementally'. Principals also mentioned the fact that the chaplain was there for all and was a ready listener for the students.

Chaplains echoed these ideas, often focussing on the qualities of the pastoral care they offered. Chaplains saw their primary contribution as creating a safe haven in which both students and staff felt secure to offload and seek support. They saw themselves as providing the space in which students could build their self-esteem. They noted the importance of confidentiality and that offering this care could only occur when trust had been earned within the school community.

The following comments from principals, for example, express their feelings about the nature of the pastoral care chaplains offer.

The most important contribution of the chaplain is …

> Providing impartial, unbiased support in an ongoing manner.

> Being present, caring, non-judgemental and supportive of all.

> Reliable, responsible and incredibly caring.

> Being a contact that students can go to for discussion about a range of issues and knowing they will be listened to without condemnation.

> Working with students in a way that helps them deal with issues - be it home or peer related. Our chaplain gives them his time, a range of strategies and an opportunity to participate in lunchtime activities. He is a wonderful asset to the school.

Several principals noted that chaplains provided pastoral care in an on-going way and through building trusting relationships with the students. Chaplain did not deal with behavioural problems but worked over the long-term to building relationships through which pastoral care could be provided. It was also noted by a few principals that pastoral relationships were built with staff and parents as well as students. This is exemplified in the following comments.

> Our chaplain provides continuity and on going support to students and families who would not be able to access it otherwise. Our Chaplain has provided the teachers, staff and parents with the time to listen and provided a way forward.

> Providing pastoral care to all levels of the school community and being an 'ear and shoulder' when needed. Having a school chaplain at the school has enabled people to have a point of contact to discuss issues that may not be directly linked to the school.

> Building relationships with staff and students best described as 'fragile' - a shoulder to cry on - someone to confide in.

Many respondents saw the ability to listen and encourage open sharing as the critical dynamic in the chaplain personality. The building of empathy will not readily happen if the 'expert' keeps on saying how something should be, without taking care to find out the whole picture from the child or parent. Some chaplains are better at the art of listening than others, and maybe it is here that the level of experience makes a difference. Yet, the case studies suggested that many younger and less experienced chaplains were able to share well through their more recent younger and, sometimes, more relevant, life experiences.

Several principals mentioned the particular contribution that the chaplain had made was with students 'at risk' as among their most important.

> Dealing effectively with a number of 'at risk' students with regards to attendance, relationships and aspirations.

> Fantastic support for troubled kids and helping them function in the real world.

Several principals commented that the pastoral care provided for students had contributed to the social and emotional wellbeing of the whole community.

> The fact that we have a Christian Pastoral Support Worker has had a significant impact on our focus on wellbeing for all of our school community.

> The chaplain is a vital contributor in maintaining social and emotional wellbeing in the whole school community. This has made a positive difference in student learning as well.

Others referred to specific contributions. One principal wrote:

> The chaplain has averted student suicide on more than one occasion.

Another principal summed up the contribution of the chaplain in the following way.

> Just being here providing support to all. He is the ears, eyes and heart of our welfare program.

Relationship Building

Many chaplains see their primary contribution as helping to build the social skills of students, assisting them to relate positively towards each other. Sometimes this occurs as chaplains seek to counter bullying. At other times, the issue is loneliness and exclusion. Sometimes relationship building is the focus of one-on-one pastoral care as students are encouraged to think about the consequences of their behaviour towards others. At other times, chaplains seek to develop appropriate behaviours through small group activities, for example, by providing activities at lunchtime or before or after school, where such groups of students come together and relationships can be built. In one school, for example, a chaplain was using a program with pets to help students who had difficulties in relating to their peers develop their social skills and sensitivities.

Principals also mentioned this area as one to which chaplains made significant contributions. For example, one principal summarised the most important contribution of the chaplain as:

> Relationship building between students having difficulties with social issues around friends.

One principal described the chaplain's major contribution as 'supporting students who struggle interpersonally', while another summarised it as 'improving peer relationships, changing behaviour in regards to bullying and building social inclusion'.

Teaching and Modelling Values

Closely associated with the building of relationships is the teaching and modelling of values. A number of principals mentioned how chaplains encouraged moral values, both through teaching and through modelling. Many chaplains were involved in specific school, national,

or state values building programs. The following quotations exemplify the importance some principals gave to the chaplains' contribution to values education.

> Our chaplain is much-loved by our students and provides a wonderful role model, invariably and genuinely displaying the moral and social values, skills and attitudes we want our kids to make a daily part of their current and future lives.

> His presence and contribution is terrific and the morality and values he brings are just superb!!

The fact that a high proportion of chaplains are male was picked up by several principals. For these principals, the most important contribution that their chaplains made was the provision of a *male* role model, particularly in primary schools where there may be very few, if any, male teachers.

> As a young male in an all female staff, the chaplain has provided a good male role model for our boys in particular.

> Male role model for our students. Providing students with someone they can talk to and have FUN with.

From the point of view of the students, the younger chaplains, in particular, were often seen as 'cool' and so were credible as role models.

Some chaplains were active in social justice and human rights programs and develop programs and activities through which students are encouraged to think about such issues. In one school, for example, a chaplain, in conjunction with a group of students, had developed a 'Poverty Dinner' and a 'Slum Sleepover' as events through which the problems of poverty might be highlighted. A few principals noted the chaplains' contribution in this area as being their most important contribution.

> Our chaplain has been very effective in getting some human rights and social justice programs off the ground.

Creating and nurturing ties with the community

A number of principals noted that the chaplains had been able to build some helpful ties between the school and the wider community. The chaplain was sometimes seen as the bridge to active community building for the benefit of the school. Because chaplains are directly supported by local churches, both principals and chaplains noted that chaplains often had unique opportunities to build links between school and community.

An example of these links are the breakfast programs run by many chaplains. Part of the reason for these programs is that there are many students who come to school on an empty stomach. Another reason is that breakfast provides an informal time when chaplains can get alongside students, build trusting relationships and provide support, and where students can informally support each other. In many places, the cost of these meals is met by people in the local churches or other service organisations.

One principal, for example, noted that the most important contribution of the chaplain was …

> build[ing] strong links with the church community and also garner[ing] funding for activities for the school, ie breakfast program.

Another principal noted:

> The Chaplain started a breakfast club which a local church group now runs once a week.

The links can take a variety of forms including some where the school is involved in providing support for the local community. One principal spoke of the link that a chaplain had made with a local aged care community and the relationships that had developed between the students and the residents.

Crisis management

Chaplains have a special role in times of crises within the school or the local community. One principal referred to the contribution of the chaplain in supporting families in stress following bushfires. ACCESS Ministries, in Victoria, organised for a number of school chaplains to go into the areas burnt by bushfires in February 2009 and provide special support to the students, their families and the schools.

In other cases, the crisis occurs through an accident, a death within the school or in a school family, or through suicide. Several principals referred to the role of chaplains at such times.

> The most important contribution of chaplains was …

> Supporting families and staff in grief. Unfortunately we have had a number of tragic incidents over the last few years and our Chaplain has been significant player in supporting the families.

> A steady and calming hand when a student suicided.

Contributing to the team of staff

Chaplains frequently contribute to activities in the classroom, such as helping with special needs programs. They also frequently participate in co- and extra-curricula programs, such as music, visual arts and the school camping. Many principals noted that the chaplains were valuable additions to the school staff. They noted that they added to the variety of people within the staff contributing to the wellbeing of the students.

> The most important contribution of chaplains was …

> Providing an alternative means of helping students with a range of emotional and social problems and helping them to engage with others and their learning.

They also noted that the chaplains were flexible, able to respond to the specific needs that they identified with the school community. One principal, for example, summarised the chaplain's major contribution as "her willingness to tackle a range of tasks, both inside and outside the classroom".

Spirituality

Not many principals nor chaplains mentioned the spiritual aspect of chaplaincy as the most important contribution the chaplains brought. It is perhaps implicit, for example, in the comment of the principal who noted that the chaplain had been able to build *hope* into the lives of many students. Several chaplains also described their contribution as building hope. However, a few principals did noted the spiritual dimension explicitly.

> The chaplain's most important contribution was …

> Just his presence. We are a government school, but it is still important to offer a spirituality opportunity for the community to participate in.

> Giving students an understanding of the concept of spirituality. The Chaplain has encouraged tolerance and compassion in others.

Conclusions

Principals did not always find it easy to name a 'major' contribution that the chaplain had made to the school. One principal wrote:

> Where do I start? His [the chaplain's] position has become such an integral part that I don't know what we'd do without the role. He has added immense value and purpose to our school and community. Every school should have a funded chaplain.

4. The Effectiveness of Chaplaincy: Feedback from Staff, Parents and Students

Responses of School Staff

Through the case studies, we spoke to a wide range of staff. They held various positions in the school and interacted in a variety of ways with the chaplains. Most interviews were conducted one-on-one. Occasionally, a couple of staff were interviewed together.

Table 12. Number of School Staff (Not Including Principals) Interviewed or Who Provided Feedback via Survey by State

State / Territory	Number of Primary School Staff	Number of Secondary School Staff
ACT	0	11
QLD	9	10
SA	12	5
TAS	9	9
VIC	10	6
WA	12	5
Total	52	46

Table 13. Number of School Staff Interviewed by Position

Position	In Primary Schools	In Secondary Schools
Deputy Principals	5	6
Welfare Coordinators	0	2
Year Coordinators	0	11
Teachers	34	21
Teaching Aides	5	1
Counsellors / Psychologists	1	3
Administrative Staff	4	1
Others	3	2

While we spoke to a wide range of staff, the involvement of staff in interviews was voluntary. Most of the staff who spoke to us had worked with the chaplains in one way or another. Their views were not necessarily representative of all staff. However, the interviews did provide good insights into the various ways that chaplains are working and how staff, in various positions within the school, saw the effectiveness of the chaplains.

Many staff, especially year coordinators and classroom teachers, said they valued the fact that they could ask the chaplain to take responsibility for the care for a student who had a special need. Staff explained that there were often situations when a student would come to them in a distressed state when they had teaching duties to perform. On such occasions they would ask

the chaplain to take over from them in caring for the student. As one staff member put it, the most important contribution of the chaplain was "being able to work with students in a crisis immediately". Having someone they could trust to deal with the situation reduced the amount of stress for the teacher and was less disruptive of the class. The chaplain's flexibility was often referred to by staff as a significant and unique factor in the role of the chaplain.

The examples they gave were various. One staff member spoke of a student who had to be rushed to hospital. The parents were not immediately available. The chaplain was able to accompany the student. More commonly, when there was a fight in the playground the chaplain would assist in sorting out the situation and encouraging more responsible behaviour.

Many of the teachers noted various positive attributes the chaplains had in dealing with such problems. First, chaplains were able to dig a little deeper than they had time to do. They could find out the cause of the problem and advise the school how to manage the issue as well as advise the student(s). A second point is related to the first. In many instances, chaplains were able to visit homes and meet the families. This gave them special insights into the background of the students and a better understanding of the needs and situations from which they came. One simple example was the case of a child who had not paid late fines due for a library book. The chaplain was able to inform the school that the family was having some financial difficulties. This put a different perspective on the situation and the school was able to handle it more sensitively.

Thirdly, staff noted that in many instances students took the initiative to seek out the chaplain. They contrasted discussions with the chaplain with going to see the school psychologist. There was a stigma attached to seeing the psychologist. There was no stigma attached to seeing the chaplain. Indeed, many students regarded time with the chaplain as a pleasure. While psychologists provided a technical, clinical approach, which was helpful in dealing with specific behavioural problems, staff did see them as contributing to the general welfare of the students as did the chaplain.

Part of the reason why students were comfortable in approaching the chaplain was that chaplains were not seen as part of the 'authority' system. One staff member mentioned that this having a chaplain gave the students a certain measure of control in their own welfare. They could seek assistance when and as they needed it and felt comfortable doing so.

Staff often mentioned that they valued the chaplain's good sense. Most chaplains came with considerable life experience. They were able to explain simply to students the consequences of certain actions. They could give simple clues about behaving appropriately in relating to others. Through modelling and mentoring, listening and advising, they were able to assist students to behave more appropriately and more responsibly. Their approach was often more about guiding students towards the right answers by, for example, by asking them questions for which the students themselves were able to come up with answers. One staff member wrote:

> [The chaplain] provides a calm, thoughtful approach in times of stress. She is always approachable. She needs to be here more often!

> People are a lot nicer when he [the chaplain] is around.

Many staff spoke not only of the pastoral care, but of the ways in which chaplains encouraged responsible behaviour. Without appearing to be judgemental, most chaplains were able to encourage students to push themselves a little harder, to aim a little higher, and to live a little more according to their principles, they said. As one staff member put it:

> I love watching the chaplain working with the students: kids shine!

Many staff volunteered the information of how the chaplain had been helpful to them personally. They had been able to talk to the chaplain about their issues. The discussion had been of practical and emotional assistance. It had helped them through a difficult time. One principal noted that the chaplain was the one person who asked, seriously, how they were going. They appreciated the chaplain's support. In some schools, chaplains helped to boost staff morale by sending notes or cards at the end of the term, acknowledged staff members' birthdays, or placing inspirational notes in their pigeon holes. Sometimes a card would go to a staff member's family: condolences for the death of a mother, for example. That chaplains were at the school to benefit everyone's welfare and not 'climbing ladders', was considered a great advantage.

One teacher said:

> The chaplain helps you feel good about yourself as a teacher.

Apart from the area of pastoral care, a number of staff mentioned the contribution of chaplains in the classroom. Some staff had invited chaplains into their classrooms to assist with the presentation of particular materials. A school nurse, for example, taught sex education with a chaplain. While the nurse was comfortable focussing on the physical side of sex education, the chaplain covered some of the social and emotional issues, she explained. In a primary school, a teacher had invited the chaplain into the classroom to talk about issues of interpersonal behaviour and indicated how she valued that additional input.

Some staff also mentioned that chaplains often had a 'good eye for trouble' in the playground. They were often able to diffuse a situation before students came to blows or were able to ward off a bullying episode. The importance of being proactive was as important as being responsive to situations, a number of staff noted.

In several schools, the contribution of chaplains to values education was mentioned. In one school, for example, the contribution made to the understanding of cultural difference through events organised for Harmony Week was noted as outstanding. In another school, a number of events had been organised to raise the awareness of such issues as poverty and child slavery. In another, teaching students to care for our environment was taken on by the chaplain. The staff pointed out how the chaplain contributed to the building of key school values of respect for others and compassion.

Some of the staff noted that the chaplain had a religious background. In every case, however, staff went on to say that the religious side had never been pushed. Students (and staff) had the opportunity to explore it if they wished to do so. Care had been offered to all students and staff, whatever their background, and whatever their personal feelings about religion. One staff member wrote:

I am not a Christian, however I very much value the guidance of the chaplain at this school as a staff member.

Another said:

I hope this service continues as it is not about the religion, it is about the care.

In one school two staff members who identified themselves as practising Christians mentioned that they had valued the chaplain's support as they attempted to express their faith through their vocation as teachers. In this school, staff were invited to attend a regular prayer meeting organised by the chaplain. A number of staff had taken the opportunity to do so and appreciated the support that it gave them.

The chaplain can also make a contribution to the overall perception of the school. One staff member suggested that because the chaplain was very visible and proactive with, not just the students and teachers, but the parents, it had raised the image of the school in the community:

[The Chaplain] has lifted the profile of the school, because it has now given the school another dimension. Parents and families do talk with parents from other schools, and I imagine most of it would be positive.... which is sending a good signal about [the school].

While it is difficult to quantify the impact, the staff we interviewed were convinced that chaplains had had a significant impact on behaviour in their schools particularly in areas such as peer interaction. One welfare coordinator in a school with high levels of multiculturalism said that the chaplain had reduced significantly the level of disruption in both the school and the local community by helping students to fit in and to work with each other. He suggested that the work of the chaplain had led to a decrease in violence.

A number of staff said they did not know how they could manage without chaplains. Certainly, it would put a much greater load on the year coordinators and other welfare staff. Chaplains were a great resource for schools, not just in terms of filling gaps but also bringing new skills, perspectives and ways of doing some things differently. Some senior staff suggested that they would not be willing to work at a school which did not have a chaplain!

Parents' Attitudes to Chaplaincy

The questionnaire asked principals what sort of feedback they had received from parents about the chaplain's activities. The results are presented in the table below. In just two schools, the principals said they had received mostly negative feedback. In another 39 schools (6%) there had been a balance of negative and positive feedback. In some schools, there had been no feedback, in some cases because the chaplains had not been there for long. However, in the vast majority of schools, the feedback had been mostly positive or strongly positive.

Table 14: Feedback received about chaplains

Sort of Feedback Received	Percentage of Schools
No feedback	10.3
Mostly negative feedback	0.3
Neutral or a balance of negative & positive feedback	5.7
Mostly positive feedback	38.0
Strong positive feedback	45.7

Source: Principal's survey (2009)

In the case studies, schools invited parents to make an appointment for an interview with the researcher or to fill in a survey on a website. Few parents responded to the invitation. Altogether, we spoke to 41 parents. Eight parents completed the web survey.

There are several reasons for the low levels of response. One was that many parents do not have much to do personally with chaplains. While chaplains visit some homes, they tend to work extensively with a few families where special help is needed, rather than working broadly with the parent body. This pattern of involvement with parents is different from the pattern of involvement with students. Chaplains will work hard to get to know many if not all the students in the school, but will engage with parents only when there are specific needs or problems which need to be tackled.

However, some chaplains, particularly in primary schools do work at getting to know the parents. For example, one chaplain went to the school gate to meet parents when children were being picked up or dropped off. Another chaplain had a weekly walking group for parents.

Several schools indicated that they sometimes had to explain chaplaincy to parents. Some parents and school councils were wary of chaplaincy because they viewed it as a 'religious' role. One school secretary described how parents often began telling her their problems. She would recommend that they see the chaplain, but would need to explain to them that the chaplain would not be pushing religion. She suggested that personal experience of chaplaincy soon reassured the parents.

A second reason for the lack of response arises from the first. Many parents who have a higher level of interaction with the chaplain are parents finding it hard to cope with the challenges of life. Many are not people who feel comfortable volunteering for interviews or completing surveys.

A third factor was that the researchers were only available during one day to meet parents. Hence, the opportunities for interviews were limited. In order that the research did not become a catalyst for starting rumours about what chaplains had done or not done, we were advised to meet with parents individually rather than in groups. This may have also discouraged parents from contributing to the study.

Nevertheless, we did meet a range of parents through the case studies. All the feedback we received directly from parents was strongly positive of chaplaincy. Several parents said that, initially, they had misgivings about having a chaplain at the school. However, these misgivings were reversed when they got to know the chaplain.

A couple of parents noted that not all families have money to spend on counselling services. Having a school chaplain provided an alternative form of assistance.

Most of the parents who wanted to say something about chaplaincy were those who had directly benefited from the assistance that the chaplain had provided. One described how the chaplain had helped her in many ways, not least in getting a job. Another described how her relationship with her daughter had broken down completely and the chaplain had found other accommodation for her daughter. Another spoke of how grateful she was that the chaplain was going on a camp with her son. Her son had severe allergy problems which did, in fact, erupt during the camp. However, the chaplain knew what to do and was able to deal effectively with the problem. This parent described the chaplain as being like "a second parent when I am not around".

Attitudes to chaplaincy among parents revolved much more around attitudes to religion than they did for either the school staff or students. For some parents, the religious dimension of chaplaincy was very positive. One parent described the most important aspects of chaplaincy in the following way.

> Being there. Being someone with high moral standards and being a Christian.
> Someone that the students can go to and talk to if needed. Someone who is not
> going to give humanistic platitudes as an answer to the students' concerns, but will
> show that he cares.

The importance of having the availability of pastoral care and having someone who set high moral standards was echoed in other comments.

> I believe [chaplaincy] is a very good thing to have. Something that may not be
> utilised by every student, but important to have a chaplain there if the need arises.
> Meanwhile, the chaplain can be a good influence, just by his/her example at school.

On the other hand, one parent wrote:

> Chaplaincy should not be in schools. If I wanted my child to receive this
> experience, I would send them to a private school. The money would be better spent
> on a non-denominational Child care worker or computers.

A similar comment was made in an email to us, perhaps from the same parent. These were the *only* negative comments we received directly from any parent, staff member or student about chaplaincy. They were comments about the philosophy of chaplaincy rather than the effectiveness of its functioning.

One school visited had a number of Islamic families. The researcher was told that some of these families had been concerned about the assistance that a Christian chaplain could provide. Again, experience led many of them to accept the assistance of the chaplain. The chaplain was active in inter-faith dialogue and had played a significant role in the inclusion of the Muslim students in the school. Students reported that it did not matter whether one was Muslim or Christian or nothing as far as the chaplain was concerned.

Responses from Students Regarding the Effectiveness of Chaplaincy

In the 21 case studies in schools around Australia the researchers spoke with 190 students. In general, there were greater opportunities to talk with students in primary schools than in secondary schools. However, in most schools we talked with some students at various levels in the school.

Table 15. Students Interviewed in the case studies by Year Level

Year Level of Students	Percent of Students With Whom We Spoke
Year 4	5
Year 5	17
Year 6	28
Year 7	23
Year 8	4
Year 9	3
Year 10	8
Year 11	8
Year 12	4

Student participants had varying levels of interaction with the chaplain in the past year as shown in the following table. The students were not necessarily representative of the whole student body. The ethics requirements meant that talking with us was a voluntary activity to which both they and their parents had to give approval. In many cases, particularly in the secondary schools, the students who volunteered were students who knew the chaplain well and had some regular interaction with the chaplain.

Table 16. Level of Interaction with Chaplains Among Students Interviewed

Level of Interaction	Percentage of Students
Had nothing much to do with the chaplain in the past year	21
Had very little to do with the chaplain	16
Had met with the chaplain several times	25
Had a lot to do with the chaplain through group activities run by the chaplain	20
Had a lot to do with the chaplain on an individual basis	18

We asked students to score on a sheet of paper whether they felt that chaplains had helped students in the school in a variety of ways. The following table shows the responses.

Table 17. Students' Views on How Helpful the Chaplain Had Been in a Range of Ways (Percentage of Students Responding)

Ways of Assisting Students	Students Did Not Know	Chaplain Not Done This	Chaplain Helped A Little This Way	Chaplain Helped A Lot This Way
Providing an opportunity for students to talk about things they are worried about	12	1	18	70
Helped students who have problems	14	1	11	75
Helped stop bullying in the school	17	7	36	40
Helped students get on well with other students	13	1	27	59
Helped students get on well with their families	33	10	20	38
Make the school feel a better place	13	2	23	62
Encouraged students to do the right thing and be responsible	12	1	23	65
Helped students who felt lonely at school	15	3	14	68
Helped students to think about the 'big picture' issues of life	33	8	24	35
Built relationships with students of other faiths or no faith	36	5	17	42

Source: Student feedback sheets (2009)

Some students did not have much idea about what the chaplain did. However, most knew and affirmed that the chaplain helped students with problems or who were lonely and provided an opportunity for students to talk about the things that worried them. In other words, the essence of pastoral care was recognised and affirmed by most students.

Close to two-thirds of the students also affirmed that the chaplain helped a lot in encouraging students to do the right thing and be responsible. More than half said that the chaplain helped a lot in assisting students to get on with other students and making the school a better place.

Students were more divided as to whether the chaplain helped to some extent or helped a lot to stop bullying in the school.

Many students did not know whether the chaplain had helped students to get on well with their families. Of those who did know, more than half said that the chaplain had helped a lot. Similarly, many did not know whether the chaplain helped students to think about the 'big picture' issues of life and spirituality. Of those who did, a high proportion said the chaplain helped a lot and another large group said the chaplain helped to some extent.

More than one-third of the students found it difficult to answer whether the chaplain was relating to students of other faiths or no faith. Of those who felt they could answer the question, the large majority said that the chaplain helped a lot in building relationships with students of other faiths or no faith. In most schools, students indicated that in their own dealings with the chaplain, it did not matter what religious faith they had, or whether they had any at all. Most students felt that the chaplain was there to assist students whatever their background.

When students were asked to rate how important it was to have a chaplain at the school on a scale of 1 to 10, the average score was 8. Overall,

- 8% of students felt it was not very important (score of less than 5),
- 16% felt it was of moderate importance (score of 5 to 7), and
- 76% felt it was of high importance (scoring the level of importance 8, 9 or 10 out of 10).

In talking about what was most important about the chaplain, many students referred to the chaplain's accessibility. The chaplain was 'always there' for them. One student, for example, said:

> If we didn't have him [the chaplain], everyone would be lost because we need someone to talk to.

One student wrote:

> They give you a sense of security as I have experienced feeling sad, sick and alone and chappy [the chaplain] was there for me, told me the positive aspects of my situation and made me feel like a better person.

Another theme was the fact that the chaplains were 'neutral'. They were not there to judge. This reflects the fact that the chaplain is not seen as simply another member of the school staff. Chaplains do not have a punitive or disciplinary role. Another student who had some difficult times at home and at school explained how important it was to have someone other than a parent or teacher to whom she or he could talk. In responding to the question about the most important ways chaplains help students, a secondary student wrote:

> A neutral person where a student can pour their heart out and not feel intimidated and judged upon. Where you can be your real self.

A primary student put it more simply.

> They make us feel happier and safer at school.

Another student wrote:

> They help me a lot if I have problems and they keep secrets!

Another student added the fact that they kept secrets as long as they did not *have* to tell anyone else. Most chaplains had a notice in their rooms explaining that they would need to tell someone else if someone was getting hurt.

The idea of feeling safe in the context of the chaplain was raised quite a few times. So also was the idea of the chaplain contributing to peer relationships and to self esteem. In this regard, the contribution of chaplains through small needs-based programs is acknowledged. One primary student wrote:

> They [chaplains] help kids not to feel so small and pointless and help them to make good decisions that will help them in the future.

A secondary student wrote:

> Chaplains help build students' self esteem and confidence. By having programs such as 'Building Bridges', students are able to work on team building and friendships amongst students. Chaplains help make life at school enjoyable.

Most students interviewed felt at ease about initiating a conversation with the chaplain. They could do that in a way they could not do it with a school counsellor. Most students were referred to school counsellors or psychologists by teachers or members of the welfare staff at school, but students would often self-refer to chaplains. One student who had experience of both the chaplain and the school counsellor wrote:

> It is great to have a chaplain at school, because it is similar to counselling but more relaxing. It's like talking to a friend, but very helpful!

One student commented:

> Before I came to this school I have the counsellors at [name of school], but I didn't talk to them. But when I came here I talked to the chaplain.

Another student wrote:

> [The Chaplain] is a great listener and has helped me and friends work through some heavy issues. She is a great encourager.

A few students referred to things the chaplains did to develop concern for others. One primary student spoke of visiting an aged care home with the chaplain to help her learn to care for others. Another spoke of the most important ways the chaplain helped was:

> To think better of life and what to do in situations. Make people feel happy about themselves; and get more involved in problems around the world.

Another said:

> Support, help and grow groups that are passionate about bigger things than themselves.

The religious dimension did not come up very often in the comments by the students. For most students, the chaplain was simply a friendly person they could talk to. However, some students were aware of the religious dimension of their role. One student wrote:

> They are very religious and people might find it hard to talk to him about problems
> because of it, but they are very willing and kind people!

In one of the case studies, there was a group of students who were encouraged by the chaplain to undertake social justice activities. One of the group wrote:

> [The chaplain] has helped me with my Extension Studies on World Poverty in
> which I ran a major fundraiser and educational slum simulation. She was very
> supportive and has helped me with my passions that will impact my future. Also
> means I can serve my faith whilst in school without needing to go to a Christian
> private school. … Helps with the school and church life balance.

Within this school, several students commented about how the chaplain had helped them to develop their passions and to become passionate about things. These students noted that they had found great fulfilment in that.

When asked whether they had further comments about chaplains, one student wrote:

> The chaplain has had a huge impact in our school. Not only has she helped me get
> on track with my life, the chaplain has provided me with an outlet for my emotions.

5. The Special Contribution of Chaplaincy

How Chaplaincy Contributes to School Welfare

This research project has examined the secondary evidence relating to the effectiveness of chaplaincy through national surveys and through case studies. It has found that chaplains are making a very significant contribution to the welfare work of schools by providing pastoral care for students. It is doing this through:

1. providing an opportunity for students to talk about issues and concerns in a 'safe' environment;
2. being a place of referral by teachers for students who have practical, emotional or other problems;
3. conducting activities, such as needs-based programs and voluntary group events, through which social skills, coping skills and behaviour management is taught.

Chaplains have not replaced school counsellors or psychologists. Most are not equipped, and their role does not allow them to deal with extreme behavioural problems that are deeply rooted in the personality or in past experiences. Nor are they equipped to deal with mental illness.

However, their methods of working mean that they make a unique contribution to school welfare teams and to the development of emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing in the school. The uniqueness of the contribution was apparent in the study in the following ways.

1. Proactive. Through involvement in many aspects of school life, they seek to build relationships proactively. Many chaplains go on school camps. They take part in school sports days. They play football with the students at lunchtimes. They participate in classroom activities from time to time. They may participate in school assemblies.

This means that they get to know the student body and students get to know them outside of the context of particular problems. Through their involvement they build trusting relationships with the students so that students feel comfortable in dropping into their offices for a conversation, or talking about issues in their lives while out in the playground. While most students are referred by teachers to other members of the welfare team, many students self-refer to the chaplains.

It also means that chaplains can become aware of problems within the school at an early stage. They pick up on the child who is not feeling happy or is not being included in the school's activities. They often pick up on antagonism between groups of students in the school and see the signs of inappropriate social behaviour. To that extent, chaplains are often proactive in addressing issues. Students themselves noted that chaplains will seek out the student who is lonely or has a problem and invite them to become involved or to talk about what is on his/her mind. They are able to address issues of social relationships as they evolve.

Most other members of the school welfare staff react to problems referred to them rather than being proactive in contributing to the wellbeing of the students and school.

2. Accessible. Chaplains were seen as accessible. While some time by chaplains was spent in arranged consultations, other time was free. Staff, such as year coordinators and deputy principals, spoke about how valuable it was to be able to refer a student with a problem to the chaplain when they had to go off to teach. Students described how they could drop into the chaplain's office at lunchtime. In general, chaplains were able to work out priorities so that they could be available to meet immediate needs as well as dealing with longer term issues as appropriate.

3. Unaligned. Chaplains have a distinct position in the school with responsibility for wellbeing but not for discipline. One of the roots of this distinct position is that the chaplains are not paid by the Education Department. They are not teachers and students will often go to them when they are not relating well to teachers or to the school as a whole. A number of cases were reported to us where the chaplain was able to sort out conflicts between students and teachers because they were seen as being 'different' from the school staff. Students knew they would not be judged or punished if they went to the chaplain. The chaplain would seek to understand the problem and find ways of dealing appropriately with it.

Some of the chaplains were described as being 'neutral' people. They were not seen as being on a particular side. They were not part of the authority structures of the school, or, for that matter, of the family. Hence, chaplains were in a good position to mediate, and, sometimes, to be advocates for students.

A few comments were made about chaplains having a religious alignment. This discouraged some parents from seeing them and/or from persuading their children to talk with the chaplains. However, in practice, in every case, it was reported to us that this was not found to be a barrier when parents, staff or students met the chaplains.

4. Holistic. Staff referred to the fact that chaplains were able to cross some of the boundaries of school life that they were unable to cross themselves, either because of time, or because of the way they saw their roles and responsibilities. Few, if any, teachers have time or opportunity for home calls. Yet, home calls were an important part of the work of many chaplains. It was through such visits, chaplains reported, that they were able to understand the background of students, were able to dialogue with parents and assist in the relationship between students and families.

Chaplains were also able to work in the community, encouraging young people to participate in community groups and activities.

5. Flexible. There is a built-in flexibility in the role of chaplaincy. In each of the case studies, it was evident that the role had been developed partly according to the skills and personality of the chaplain, and partly according to the needs of the school. Chaplaincy took quite different forms in different places. This is illustrated in the vignettes of chaplaincy in Appendix D. In one place, for example, it involved a high level of community development work among ethnic groups. In another place, it was primarily much more of a service providing a friendly listening ear to the problems of students. In a third place, the chaplain spent a lot of time offering needs-based programs for small groups of students. In a fourth

school, the work of the chaplain was dominated by crisis needs, offering assistance to the whole school community as they came to grips with grief and the loss of members of the school community.

Chaplaincy provides many opportunities for chaplains to use their special skills and interests. One chaplain was running cooking classes for new migrant parents through the school. Another conducted the school band. A third developed gardens at the school as a group activity through which support could be offered informally and unobtrusively. A fourth coached the school football team.

We found chaplains working in a variety of ways with other school welfare staff. Some schools have a school psychologist or counsellor readily available, but particularly in rural schools such resources are available only in a very limited way. A few schools have youth workers. Some schools have specialists who provide assistance in relation to specific groups such as Aboriginal students. In each case, we found that the chaplain complemented the work of the other welfare staff. Usually, the welfare staff would meet regularly and each member of the staff would take on specific cases or issues. The chaplains were able to complement the work of other welfare workers partly because of the lack of specificity in the role and partly because chaplains were happy to fit in to the overall welfare programs of the schools in which they worked.

6. Values-based. All chaplains bring to their work a specific set of values. At the heart of these, as the chaplains have described them, is the high value placed on each individual student, parent and staff member. Chaplains interviewed spoke of their commitment to seeing the best in each person and providing support and care for them. Many noted that these values were rooted in their Christian faith.

Most chaplains interviewed indicated that this values-based approach also affected the ways in which they undertook their work. Chaplaincy was not just a job through which they earned money for their own wellbeing. It was a vocation through which they were expressing the values which were important in their lives.

Because of this commitment, chaplains were generally willing to accept a level of pay which did not reflect their training, experience or their contribution. Many chaplains worked additional hours above those for which they were paid. This was not just a few extra hours of 'overtime'. Some chaplains contributed voluntary days each week to their schools. A number of principals expressed concern about the inappropriateness of the pay their chaplains were receiving. Some principals noted that they could certainly not replace the chaplain with anyone else for the same level of payment.

While chaplains approached their work on the basis of their Christian values, there was no evidence in any of the case studies that people felt that the chaplains were proselytising, were using their positions for undue influence, or were 'pushing' their beliefs on others. Most chaplains explained that, if asked for their opinion on something, they would give it. They would explain their beliefs if requested. They would certainly encourage students to be respectful and caring of others and to consider the needs of the people around the world who are poor, disadvantaged and excluded.

7. Church-connected. Chaplains bring to their schools a network of support from the churches. This occurs in several ways. In many places, the chaplains are supported by a local committee which has usually been established by the churches and on which there is representation from the churches. Many churches directly support chaplaincy financially and support the chaplain's programs.

The church connections are important at the State level too. The churches make the whole program work. The Chaplaincy Providers themselves are church-run organisations and receive substantial funding directly from donating churches. Much of the training of chaplains is done in colleges which are church run, and hence the training is subsidised by the churches. The chaplains themselves are commissioned by church organisations.

Throughout Australia a large proportion of welfare programs are administered by church-related organisations (Hughes and Reid, p.79). This is true for non-profit childcare through to aged care. Many welfare programs for people with disabilities and/or mental illnesses, for children needing special care, for people who are unemployed, refugees, and for many others, are run by denominational or local church groups. In these programs, the care is offered to all, irrespective of belief. Chaplaincy is another such program. Through additional Federal funding, this church-based welfare program has been extended significantly.

No other program in schools has this degree of community-based support or financial funding. Nor are any other school programs so reliant of the sense of vocation of those who are employed within it.

Overall, the evidence is that chaplains have fulfilled a special role within schools. In a flexible way, they have offered holistic care to their school communities. They have done so in a unique way because they have been accessible, but 'unaligned'. They have done so because of a Christian value system which they have not attempted to impose on others. They have been supported by a network of Christian-based organisations which have provided the selection, training and accreditation of chaplains and which continue to provide support in many practical ways.

Chaplains have had a significant impact on schools in providing opportunities for students to talk about problems, in caring for the needs of students, their families and staff, and in encouraging responsible and caring behaviour.

Principals' Conclusions

Principals were asked in the survey to indicate how important it was to continue to have a chaplain serving the school on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 indicating that it was very important. The mean score for the principals was 9.4 out of 10 (n=688).

Seventy-two per cent of principals gave a score of 10 out of 10 for the importance of having a chaplain. Another 14 per cent gave a score of 9 out of 10. To summarise the results of this question:

- 92 per cent of principals gave a high score of 8 or above
- 6 per cent of principals gave it a moderate score of between 5 and 7, and

- 2 per cent of principals scored the importance of having a chaplain at less than 5 out of 10.

In other words, the vast majority of principals believe it is very important to have chaplains serving their schools.

Principals were also asked if they would like to see the present Federal Government funding of chaplaincy continue. The responses are presented in the following table.

Table 18: Response of Principals Regarding Government Funding

Principals' response	Principals %
Yes, definitely	89.5
Yes, probably	4.0
Not sure / neutral	1.6
No, probably not	0.6
No, definitely not	0.9
Yes, but would like to see a change in the way it works	3.4

Source: Principals' survey (2009)

In other words, the vast majority of principals who have experienced chaplaincy are highly in favour of having a chaplain and a continuation of government funding for that position.

In making comments about the ways the National School Chaplaincy Program works and general comments about chaplaincy, the comments fell into several categories. Most of the comments were affirmations of chaplaincy. Many principals noted how it had become a vital part of the school program and they did not see how the school could manage without it.

> With the chaplaincy program embedded in schools, it becomes critical to maintain funding. This program underpins the school focus on student wellbeing as a prerequisite for student engagement in learning.

> The chaplaincy program gives me a small amount of hope that Australian governments do understand what is needed for our children's education and thus what helps improve the social fabrication of our communities.

> Essential part of our school. Student welfare is of utmost importance as well adjusted, happy students are more likely to learn effectively.

> An extremely worthwhile program that would leave a huge hole if the funding support was withdrawn.

> This is my first experience with the Chaplaincy in Schools program. When we applied for funding, I had not truly anticipated what an enormous difference having a skilled and caring chaplain in our school, even for one day a week, would make to our students.

> We are most appreciative of the extra support the Chaplaincy program provides to students staff and parents. It has made a major contribution to the whole school community health and wellness.

> Having established a role and continued that through the National Chaplaincy initiative, we see this support role as highly significant in keeping the school and its community well supported in maintaining best possible wellbeing.
>
> I don't know how we managed before we had a Chaplain.
>
> I think this is an essential service that needs to be continued.
>
> Chaplaincy has become a major and integral support mechanism in schools especially in the area of supporting students at risk either as individuals or as target groups. The spiritual and pastoral care is making a difference with identified students who demonstrate behavioural and emotional needs.
>
> This has been a MOST worthwhile program for our school and community. The students have gotten so much as have the staff from having our chaplain. A neutral person is also great for parents with problems.
>
> An inspired program that needs to continue and be expanded. It would be highly advantageous to have our chaplain full time.
>
> This is a fantastic service and has made a huge difference to the support we can offer our students and their families.

The major caveat to this affirmation was the reminder from some principals that the success of the program depended on the personality of the chaplain. Some principals noted that they had had people who were not suitable for the task as in the following comments. However, of the 688 principals, only three or four made comments about such bad experiences.

> It is about the right person for the job. Despite interviewing and selecting the chaplain, it was not the right choice.
>
> The Chaplaincy program provides our primary school with another pastoral care staff member to assist in providing a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment. The quality of the Chaplaincy program, like any school based program is highly dependent on attracting the best Chaplain to your school who suits the context of your school community.
>
> I greatly believe in Chaplaincy in schools, but the success of Chaplaincy is very dependent on the quality of the Chaplain. I have experienced this first hand.

The most frequently made comment was a request that the funding be increased in order to increase the time for which the chaplain is employed. Seventy-nine principals (11%) volunteered comments about increasing the time for which the chaplain was available to them. In a number of cases, principals argued the case on the basis of the size of the school or the extent of the needs. Others noted the increased need for attention to welfare within schools.

> We are a school of 500 + students. Two days a week is not enough to adequately meet the needs of our school. Increased time available even by one day would make a huge difference to the effectiveness of delivery.

> We are most appreciative of the funding we receive and could easily employ the chaplain for double their current time fraction.

> We need more than two days a week for our sized school (385 students) The funding was per school not based on numbers. We fund an extra day and our chaplain attends 5 days out of the goodness of his heart. The pay is very low.

> Our chaplain works two days a week, but more would be fantastic as he provides such a wonderful support and contribution to our school.

In some cases, the school was funding additional time but commented on how difficult it was to find the funding for it within the local area.

> Schools don't need added pressure to find extra funds. Government needs to prioritise and provide on-going funding. Chaplaincy Program provides welfare support that has a direct impact on how students learn and their behaviour and connection to school.

> My school is funded two days for the chaplaincy program and I have topped this up using school funds to 4 days. Most schools would not be able to do this, so I would say funding to have full time chaplain for schools is absolutely essential. I cannot emphasise enough the need to increase this resource in all schools. There is so much research now that clearly states investing in young children rather than pouring money into programs later in life is what is effective.

Several principals said that they totally funded the chaplain themselves as they thought they were not eligible for funding from the Federal government because they already had a chaplain. Several of these people mentioned that finding the funding locally was difficult and time-consuming.

> Our school has a chaplain because of deep need. We employed the chaplain prior to the Government funding. We thus did not fit the criteria for Chaplaincy funding. I have requested that this be examined prior to the next round of funding.

> Our P & C find it difficult to raise the money for their wages. If chaplaincy could be fully funded by the government it would free up funds so they could be used in the school for other worthwhile projects.

> We currently have to rely on TOTAL community funding for a Chaplain in our high school that has 563 students and approximately 80 staff. We live in a small country town with limited access to outside agencies and a chaplain is vital for the health and welfare of the school.

> Since we now contribute over $5000 ourselves this is a large impost on a smaller school. Would like to see an increase in commitment to the program from external sources to assist us in continuing to provide a service which the school community is not only comfortable with but recognises the importance of.

> It would be nice for all funds to come from 'out-of-town'. A small town/school supports everything/all programs from cancer to sports clubs.

Fifteen principals made comments about the need to increase the availability of chaplains. The following are typical of those comments.

> Essential, vital. Every school should have a funded position.

> Full time chaplains should be funded in each school.

> All schools should be funded for this crucial service in this day and age.

Twelve principals said that they thought that chaplains should be paid more. Some simply felt that they were worth more than they are currently paid. Others, however, suggested that more highly qualified and capable people might be attracted to the role by increasing the pay.

> I think our chaplain deserves a pay rise!

> I think that chaplains are not properly remunerated for the brilliant work that they do in schools. I would like to see the govt or private business properly fund school chaplains so that we can retain these great services. I would like a chaplain full-time in my school and feel that they service would be fully utilised with the increase in time. Our chaplain is invaluable to school operations and the health and well being of all members of the school community.

> As chaplains become more qualified through training and take on more responsibility and complex duties, they should be remunerated appropriately.

> The funding needs to be increased to help attract even better people to the role of a Chaplain. Guidelines need to be broadened to permit funds to be expended on associated activities, resources and Professional Development.

Another set of comments had to do with the funding period. Several principals asked that the funding period should be increased, or, ideally, on-going funding should be guaranteed.

> I would like the Federal Government to provide funding over a longer period of time, say five years or so.

> More definite continuity – currently very difficult with lack of certainty about funding beyond 2010.

> Remove the spectre of "when the funding runs out", how will we raise the money to keep chaplaincy going? A firm government commitment to the chaplaincy program funding would put this to bed.

Among the comments of principals about the funding of chaplaincy, there were fourteen (2%) who said they would prefer the funding to be flexible and permit the employment of a non-religious person.

> I would love the money to be diverted to employ qualified professionals to deal with the social and emotional needs of children from complex backgrounds. The chaplains are lovely, kind-hearted, well-meaning people, as are the local SU staff, but the program has been problematic throughout, due to the inability of these people to separate themselves from their deep evangelical beliefs.

> There needs to be an avenue to employ a youth worker, rather than a chaplain; however, I would prefer to have a chaplain.

> Slightly more flexibility to be able to have the option of employing trained youth / social workers rather than chaplains.

Eight principals said they would prefer that the money was paid directly to them. Some of these felt that the chaplaincy provider was not sufficiently transparent in taking some of the money for professional development and other administrative costs. Others wanted to be able to use the money to employ the staff they wanted as in the following comments about how they would like the way the funding works to be changed.

> Funded as part of the school's staffing budget or increase the Guidance Officer entitlement to schools.

> Greater autonomy given to the school to utilise the resource flexibly.

> Whilst Chaplaincy has some benefits, the money tied to this program could be much better used if schools could respond to their individually identified needs.

On the other hand, a number of principals said they liked the arrangement with the management provided by the chaplaincy provider.

> The way that SU handles the admin. side of the chaplaincy program is wonderful!

> It is working very well through ACCESS Ministries [chaplaincy provider in Victoria].

In the course of the case-studies, many principals mentioned the advantage of having someone who was 'unaligned' in terms of not being part of the school staff. Payment by the chaplaincy provider or by the local chaplaincy committee was often seen as contributing to that 'unaligned' status.

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the principals, 97 per cent of chaplains have been effective in performing the major role of providing pastoral care for students as described in the National Schools Chaplaincy Program (see p.24 of this report). The surveys and case studies have shown that chaplaincy is having a positive impact on students, staff, families, and schools, by providing pastoral care, support and guidance. Further, it is having a positive impact on the development of young people's interpersonal relationships and on the moral foundations of these, and on the development of moral values and, to a lesser extent, a commitment to social justice.

Chaplaincy is a unique program in that it is proactive in building the relationships that underlie effective pastoral care. Chaplains are experienced as accessible and flexible in the ways they fit into school life. Chaplaincy is unique in that chaplains are 'unaligned', not being employed by the Education Department and not having a disciplinary role in their schools. They are holistic in the ways in which they seek to address the needs of students, staff and families, visiting families in homes and working with communities.

Chaplaincy provides an opportunity for young people to consider the 'big issues' of life. The spiritual development of young people is important, alongside their cognitive, emotional, social and physical development. Chaplains are able to assist in programs relating to spiritual development, although this is currently a minor part of their work.

Chaplaincy is providing a way of managing crises that occur in schools and communities from time to time. Chaplains assist students, families and staff cope with the challenges that such crises bring.

Chaplaincy enhances the linkages between communities and schools. In particular, it enhances the relationships between churches and schools. In many instances, such relationships lead to community support for school activities.

Chaplaincy is also unique in that is supported and subsidised by a vast network of churches, community agencies and businesses throughout the nation.

Federal funding has enabled this service to be used by many more schools than could access it in the past. Previously, it was dependent in most cases on some local funding being raised which meant that some high needs communities were unable to access the service. While schools have seen the value of the service, many communities would not be able to raise funding locally. On this basis and in accord with the preferences of most principals, we recommend to the Federal Government:

1. that funding for National Schools Chaplaincy Program be expanded to enable all schools to access the services of a chaplain;

2. that the funding formula be more flexible allowing schools with high welfare needs and large schools to have access to chaplains for longer periods of time per week, for example, schools with more than 500 students and students in low socio-economic areas be funded for full-time chaplains;

3. that, given the advantages of the values orientation and the community and church networks that chaplains bring to the position, this funding should be retained for chaplains rather than used for youth workers, social workers or school counsellors.

We recommend to the Chaplaincy Providers that:

1. continued attention should be given to the selection of suitable people for chaplaincy, ensuring that applicants fully understand the guidelines that have been laid down for chaplaincy and are willing to work within them; and

2. continued attention should be given to increasing the effectiveness of chaplaincy through the provision of training programs and professional development in pastoral care.

References

ACCESS Ministries, (2009) *We Are There: The Value of Chaplains in Victorian Schools*, ACCESS Ministries, Melbourne.

Beazley, K. E. (2009) *Father of the House: the Memoirs of Kim E. Beazley*, Freemantle Press, Freemantle.

Clements, J. (2005), 'Chaplaincy in the State Schools of Western Australia', *Journal of Christian Education,* Vol. 48, no.1.

DEEWR, (undated) National School Chaplaincy Program, accessed on the website: /www. deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSchoolChaplaincyProgram/ accessed on 15 September 2009.

Hill, B. (2005), Editorial, *Journal of Christian Education,* Vol. 48, no.1.

Hughes, P. and S. Reid, (2009), *All Melbourne Matters: Research of Church in Melbourne for the Future of the Church and City*, Transforming Melbourne, Melbourne.

Pohlmann, D. (2005) *Measuring the effectiveness of chaplaincy services in Queensland state schools.* Unpublished doctoral research, Griffith University, Queensland.

Pohlmann, D. and N. Russell, 'Queensland State School Chaplaincy: A Brave New Paradigm of Youth Ministry', *Journal of Christian Education,* Vol. 48, no.1.

Raynor, W., S. Hawkins and H. Lush, (2005) 'Chaplaincy in South Australian State Schools', *Journal of Christian Education,* Vol. 48, no.1.

Salecich, J. (2005), *Chaplaincy in Queensland state schools: An investigation.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Queensland.

Scripture Union Queensland, *Chaplaincy Evaluation Project: Report – September 2008,* Scripture Union Queensland, Brisbane.

Venning, C. (2005), 'Chaplaincy in the State Schools of Victoria', *Journal of Christian Education,* Vol. 48, no.1.

Appendix A:

Code of Conduct for school chaplains under the *National School Chaplaincy Programme*

Following is a Code of Conduct for school chaplains engaged under the Programme. This document must be signed by the school chaplain before the school chaplain commences any chaplaincy services under the Programme. School chaplains who refuse to sign the code will not be permitted to be part of the Programme.

Code of Conduct

For the provision of chaplaincy services at …......................................(school name)

The school chaplain will provide pastoral care, general religious and personal advice, and comfort and support to all students and staff, irrespective of their religious beliefs.

The school chaplain's role is to support school students and the wider school community in a range of ways, such as assisting students in exploring their spirituality; providing guidance on religious, values and ethical matters; helping school counsellors and staff in offering welfare services and support in cases of bereavement, family breakdown or other crisis and loss situations.

In providing these services, the school chaplain must sign and observe the following *Code of Conduct*.

The school chaplain will:

1. Recognise, respect and affirm the authority of the school principal and/or school governing body, and will work in consultation with them.

2. Respect the rights of parents/guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children is in line with their own convictions.

3. Adhere to all relevant Commonwealth, state or territory policy and legislation, including that concerning privacy and confidentiality.

4. Contribute to a supportive, inclusive and caring learning environment within the school.

5. Chaplains should avoid unnecessary physical contact with a student, recognising, however, that there may be some circumstances where physical contact may be appropriate such as where the student is injured or distraught.

6. Not put him or herself, or allow him or herself, to be placed in a compromising situation, recognising that there are circumstances where confidentiality may be sought by the child.

7. Where information is provided about the support and services available in community groups, including religious groups and in the broader community, this information must be accurate and impartial.

8. Act as a reference point for students, staff and other members of the school community on religious, spiritual issues, values, human relationships and wellbeing issues. This includes

providing support for grief, family breakdown and other crisis situations. In doing this, a school chaplain will:

a) respect, accept and be sensitive to other people's views, values and beliefs that may be different from his or her own;

b) uphold a parent/guardian and individual's right to choose their beliefs and values;

(Updated 19 January 2007)

c) actively discourage any form of harassment or discrimination on the grounds of religious ideology or doctrine; and

d) under certain circumstances, refer a child to a chaplain who is in accordance with their own beliefs and values.

9. While recognising that an individual chaplain will in good faith express views and articulate values consistent with his or her denomination or religious beliefs, a chaplain should not take advantage of his or her privileged position to proselytise for that denomination or religious belief.

10. Will not perform professional or religious services for which they are not qualified.

11. Adhere to the Guidelines of the *National School Chaplaincy Programme.*

Use of Information on this form and privacy

"Information on this form is collected in order to [INSERT DETAILS]. Information collected about you on this form can be provided, in certain circumstances, to [INSERT DETAILS -EG IF IT MAY BE PROVIDED TO DEST]. In other instances information on this form can be disclosed without your consent where authorised or required by law."

Acknowledgement by school chaplain

I understand and agree to the terms of this Code of Conduct.

………………………………….

Signature of school chaplain

……………………………………………………………..

Witness (should be the school principal or his/her delegate)

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

As school chaplains hold special positions of trust, they must be accountable for their actions.

In addition, the funding recipient and the school principal must take all reasonable steps to ensure that school chaplains comply with the *Code of Conduct*. In the funding application the

school principal should outline the measures they will put in place to ensure compliance with the code by the school chaplain.

If there is an actual or perceived breach of the *Code of Conduct*, the school chaplain must immediately cease providing chaplaincy services. The funding recipient is required to notify the Department immediately it becomes aware of such a situation. In such circumstances, school chaplains must not continue to provide any services under the Programme unless the Department gives its written agreement for the chaplaincy services to continue.

In the event of breach of the code of conduct by the school chaplain, the Department may require some or all of the funding provided for the chaplaincy services to be repaid to the Commonwealth as set out in the funding agreement.

(Updated 19 January 2007)

Appendix B

Values for Australian Schooling

The list below is a summary resulting from the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools. This framework was agreed to by all education Ministers nationally through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

This framework should form the context for any interpretation of values resulting from this Programme. A full version of this document is available online at:
http://www.valueseducation.edu.au

Values for Australian Schools:

Care and Compassion

Care for self and others

Doing Your Best

Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence

Fair Go

Pursue and protect the common good where all people are fairly treated for a just society

Freedom

Enjoy all rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

Honesty and Trustworthiness

Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

Integrity

Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds

Respect

Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view

Responsibility

Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment

Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion

Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others

Appendix C. Details of the Issues with Which Chaplains Deal

The following table provides the details of the various issues with which chaplains deal and on which Figure 1 is based.

Table 19. The Frequency With Which Chaplains Have Dealt with Various Issues in the Two Weeks Prior to Completing the Questionnaire

Issue	Chaplains Indicating 'Not at all' (%)	Chaplains Indicating 'Occasionally' (%)	Chaplains Indicating 'Several or Many Times' (%)
Behaviour management including anger	5.1	25.6	69.3
Peer relationships and loneliness	8.2	28.2	63.7
Bullying and harassment	7.4	28.9	63.7
Family relationships	8.9	32.7	58.5
Sense of purpose and self-esteem	14.9	39.8	45.4
Self concept and image	17.6	38.0	44.4
Academic and personal achievement	13.4	42.9	43.8
Grief and loss	19.3	44.7	35.9
Community involvement and social inclusion	22.7	44.2	33.1
Mental health and depression	27.9	46.0	26.2
Spirituality / big picture issues	24.7	50.1	25.7
Developmental issues	28.9	46.3	24.8
Violence	36.8	41.0	22.2
School authority	38.9	39.2	22.0
Alcohol and drug use	50.0	30.8	19.2
Physical and emotional abuse and neglect	34.2	43.2	18.5
Self harm and suicide	55.7	32.7	11.7
Sexuality	59.8	29.3	10.8
Racism	69.6	25.0	5.4
Legal issues	61.2	34.0	4.8

Appendix D. Some Vignettes of Chaplaincy

The follow sketches provide vignettes of chaplaincy in a range of contexts. They are taken from the case studies that were conducted around the country and include examples from most States. They have been written in a way which will not permit readers to identify the people involved to protect the anonymity of the participants in the research.

The issues that chaplaincy address vary considerably from one context to another and something of this variety is illustrated in these sketches. Some chaplains work a lot with families. In other cases, there is a focus on the variety of ethnic groups within the school. A few chaplains play a significant role as advisers for the school, contributing to the policies of the school and its general directions. Others are seen as confidants of the staff.

Chaplaincy also varies according to the age and the abilities of the chaplain. The young chaplain working in a secondary school may be seen as a friend, almost a peer, or perhaps an older brother or sister. The older chaplain in a primary school can often taken on the image of a parental figure, or even that of a grandparent, for the young students.

These sketches also demonstrate some of the different ways of working. While some chaplains focus on one-on-one relationships, others work more with small groups. Some chaplains are highly involved in classroom activities and needs-based programs while others do very little in the classroom. Some chaplains focus on sport or outdoor education programs as ways of getting alongside students while others run breakfast programs and lunch-time activities.

While there are differences in the activities and the ways in which chaplains relate to the students and staff, there are also similarities. In many instances, staff spoke of the calm personality of the chaplain. In every case, the students and staff commented on the way that chaplains offered care in a non-judgemental way.

Chaplain as a Pastoral Carer

The Context

Two hours drive from the nearest large town, this rural high school was quite isolated. The school served a substantial area, but a declining population. A local industry had closed two years ago and the results of that closure had a continuing impact on the area. Some of the men were flying out of the town for two or three week stints in the mines. Their work brought money back to their families, but the way of life was disruptive and the disruptions were evident in the behaviour of some of the students at the school. Further, with cheap housing becoming available in the town, the Housing Commission had moved people into the area: mostly people who did not want to be there and for whom there was very little work or other activities. There were a lot of lone parent families in the area.

The services in the town were poor. There was a five week waiting list to see the local doctor. The only alternative was to sit in the emergency department of the hospital for half a day. This lack of facilities meant that there were few services readily available to which students with special needs could be referred.

The Chaplain

The chaplain had been working in the school for ten years. Her own children went to the school. She was full-time at the school. While the Federal government funding covered two days a week, the other three days a week was funded by locally-raised funds.

She worked hard at getting alongside the students and families, particularly those who were finding it hard to fit in. She did a lot of home visits and said that this helped her greatly in getting to know people. Some did a lot of work out of hours assisting families. There were a number of students with whom she had worked intensively over several years. One student, for example, had had problems with drugs and alcohol. The student and her mother did not get along, and the chaplain had found other accommodation for her. Through that intensive activity, however, that student had worked through many of the problems. She was hoping to become a primary school teacher and the chaplain had arranged work experience for her at a local primary school.

The chaplain's office was known as a 'safe place'. A group of students would hang out in the office at recess times and lunch times. The chaplain worked a lot, especially with the girls, to raise their levels of confidence and self-esteem. She would often take a student out to lunch to provide a better opportunity to talk with them one to one.

The chaplain worked alongside several other people in the school including the school nurse and the Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer. She was involved in quite a few needs-based programs on anger management, bullying and peer relationships. She collaborated with the school nurse in sex education.

The chaplain was involved in school camps. One of the parents told the story about her son who had severe problems with allergies. The parent explained to the chaplain what should happen if her son had a severe allergic reaction. It happened on the camp, and the chaplain was able to deal with the problem immediately and effectively. The parent was so grateful that the chaplain was there, a 'second parent' when she, herself, was not able to be present.

The chaplain was also involved as a leader in a leadership program which was focussed on environmental action for students. This program was run after school once a week and, while it built the leadership skills of students involved, it also taught them about the environmental needs in the area.

The Chaplain's Contribution

The chaplain was very flexible in her work. When she saw the office staff being swamped with work, she would go in and help them. She was available not only to the students but also to the staff. Several of the staff members said how grateful they were for the chaplain's wise counsel.

The chaplain said that she did not regard her chaplaincy as a job. It was a life-style. She was certainly not involved in chaplaincy for the pay or the career prospects! She was there to serve the school, the staff, the students and their families.

The principal regarded her as an 'outstanding operator'. He said that she worked at the 'pointy end' of the school needs, working with many students who were 'at risk'. He said that she was often able to assist in resolving conflicts between the school and students. Her contribution to the welfare of students had had a positive impact not only on general wellbeing, but also on the academic performance of students. The principal also noted the chaplain's role in values education and how, through example and through personal discussion with students and her work in needs-based programs, she encouraged responsible behaviour.

Chaplain as Family Worker

The Context

A large primary school serves the children in the poorer suburbs of one of our capital cities. Nearly 20 per cent of the children at the school come from homes where English is not the first language. Ten per cent of the children are from an Aboriginal background and a number of children have physical disabilities.

The Chaplain

The chaplain has worked in this school for 10 years. She is currently working four days per week. The principal took me to meet the chaplain. At first glance, she appeared to be standing in front of her class. But her class was not of students. It was of mothers. About fifteen mothers were present in the room, along with several young children crawling on the floor. The chaplain was teaching them cooking, and within that context, also helping them with English.

The mothers came from a great variety of ethnic backgrounds. One, for example, had recently come from Papua New Guinea. She had begun to find a place in the community through the group that the chaplain ran. Another had come recently to Australia from a distant part of China. She had arrived in Australia without any English skills and with almost no understanding of Australian culture. The chaplain had taken her under her wing. She had taught her some English and helped her understand how to buy and cook food in the Australian culture. She had helped her find a community to which to belong and even found her work in an Aged Care home.

The chaplain spent a lot of time with the families of the students. She visited homes. On weekends she would travel around the neighbourhood giving out bread that she was given by a local baker.

In the week, she would often go visiting with the young Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer. Together, they would visit homes and offer support to the families. The Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer said that she could not have done her job without the support and practical help the chaplain offered.

The chaplain organised a special morning tea for new mothers each year and organised morning tea for parents of the class performing at the assembly each fortnight. She had also organised a monthly forum for parents for which she arranged guest speakers.

The Chaplain's Contribution

The chaplain herself was a little cautious about what she was able to achieve with the parents. She would love to see parenting patterns change, but such changes did not occur easily. Nevertheless, the support that she provided the families was valued greatly.

The chaplain was more up-beat about what she felt she had achieved with the students. In this regard, she was also very much involved in providing for their practical needs. She ran a twice weekly Breakfast Club where she ensured children had a good breakfast as well as supporting them in their reading skills.

She would contribute to classes through singing. In addition, she had helped develop a Drumming Group within the school. Through her easy manner, she was able to get alongside students who often saw her as a 'mother' figure, someone who was supportive and ready to listen.

The chaplain took a number of needs-based programs. For the girls, there was an 'Aspire' program to raise their self-esteem. This was especially important as the girls prepared to move from primary to high school.

In order to reduce the level of bullying, there was a 'Rock and Water' program. To assist students with special needs, such as grief and family breakdown, there was a Rainbows Group. Two families had experienced the traumatic event of losing everything in a house fire. The chaplain gave counselling and also practical assistance. Through local churches, she organised some financial assistance to pay for school uniforms and other necessities.

The focus was not just on support and care. The chaplain was keen to assist students in making their own wise decisions about life. She explained that sometimes she would offer to students the ways that she would handle things. She would encourage students to think through the consequences of their actions. She would encourage kindness and respect for others. As a practical gesture, she organised an Annual Christmas Shoe Box Appeal in which children filled shoe boxes with practical goods to be sent overseas as aid.

Staff suggested that the chaplain had had a marked influence on the ethos of the school. In a quiet way, the chaplain had contributed to an ethos of respect and care that had permeated the life of the school.

Chaplain as a Christian Youth Worker

The Context

A high school in an outer suburb of one of our State capital cities has a large population of more than 1000 students. The school is well placed, surrounded by trees, but not far from a large shopping centre. Many of the families live with high levels of mortgage debt, which places them under a lot of pressure. Many of the students come from split or blended families.

The Chaplain

The chaplain at this school is young and loves outdoor activities. Her background is in running camping programs for young people. She has not been at the school long and has put all her efforts in getting to know the students. She knows that she must build up credibility with the students if she is to have much impact on their lives and hence, she has to be 'out there', at lunchtimes, in their sporting activities, and in visiting their pastoral care groups. She works at the school three days a week.

The chaplain looks for the gaps in the school's pastoral care system, for the challenges and opportunities. One small group of students she identified were finding it hard to relate socially. The chaplain has encouraged these students to be involved in a pets' program where they are encouraged to develop sensitivity and social skills through relating to dogs.

The chaplains at this school have had a long history of getting alongside students who are lonely and those students who are not fitting in well. They have also provided support for the staff. There are two counsellors employed at the school. The chaplains have worked closely with them and have referred students to them as needed. However, because the chaplains are involved widely in the life of the school, they have often been the first people to whom students have turned when they have needed help. The counsellors were strongly affirming of their role. They have all been very sensitive in working with students, they said. Their greatest concern was that the chaplains were so willing to help that they could be vulnerable to staff who might 'use them'. It is important that they care for themselves too, they said.

The Chaplain's Contribution

There is a group of students in the school who are actively involved in local churches. As one of their school subjects, they are studying a recognised program of Christian ministry. This program was started at the High School by a previous chaplain who returned to the school for a few hours each week to mentor the group. These students were greatly enjoying the subject.

These students had also been involved in developing social justice activities. They had organised several major events for the school. One was a 'Poverty Dinner' to which members of the local community were invited. Just four were given a good meal. Another twenty had some rice and good water. The remaining 75 per cent had just some scrapings to eat and some dirty water to drink. In reflecting the global reality, the meal brought home what poverty is really about.

Another event that captured the imagination of the school was a 'Slum Simulation'. Students and some staff slept out one night with just a small bowl of rice to eat and some cardboard with which to make a bed.

Through the social justice program, the chaplains were seen by staff and students as fostering the core school values of care, compassion and respect for others. The school had developed a strong ethos in this area over time. Thousands of dollars were collected for special appeals, such as the overseas aid. One former student we interviewed was preparing himself for working in overseas aid project, partly because of the influence of the school.

The chaplain had started a prayer meeting for staff. Several staff who attended, said they found these weekly events most helpful.

While the chaplains, past and present, have supported students and staff involved in local Christian churches, they have also worked in an inclusive way within the school. Staff who said they were not church-goers affirmed the chaplaincy for the quality of the pastoral care it offered to every student. They noted that the chaplains had good interpersonal skills and were good listeners. The chaplains play a unique role in the wellbeing of students which had immense value for the whole school.

Chaplain as Community Development Worker

The Context

A high school in a capital city has students from more than 56 different ethnic groups. Among the students are many recent refugees including some from various tribal groups from the Horn of Africa. There are also students from Asian and European backgrounds as well as a sizable Aboriginal population. Apart from the main school, there is an Education Support Centre for students who need special support close by.

This school has a Student Services Department with a range of specialist staff including a school psychologist. Two chaplains work here. One male chaplain works three days a week. A female chaplain works two days a week. The chaplains are directly responsible to the Student Services Manager. They have regular service meetings where issues are discussed and cases are assigned. The chaplains work closely with the school psychologist.

The Chaplains

Many students call in on the chaplains. The chaplain does not have a disciplinary role and there is no stigma attached to seeing the chaplain as there is to seeing some of the other members of the team.

However, the chaplains are also proactive in building relationships with the students. They run camps during the holidays, for example. One of the chaplains has a bus driver's licence and finds that taking a group of students away on a camp is an excellent way of getting to know them. He took away some students from 'rival' ethnic groups one time and was delighted that, by the end of the week-end, they had come to trust each other.

One of the major events in the school calendar is Harmony Week. The chaplains take the lead in organising activities for this week. One year, the activities were focussed in the school with multicultural dances, food and workshops. However, the next year, the school took the events into the local shopping hub. The chaplain drove a group of Aboriginal students to their homelands in order to get some appropriate coloured sands. This sand was spread in the shopping centre and a group of Aboriginal students danced there. The students were a little anxious about this public performance of their ancient rites, but, having done it, they were immensely proud.

There are many African students at the school who have seen violence and suffering in their home countries that no one should ever see. The chaplains work a lot with these students who are traumatised and collaborate with a local organisation which focusses on helping refugees in such situations. They hold a weekly discussion forum which often deals with issues of racism and human rights.

Many of these students come from a Muslim background. The chaplains work with the local Islamic community and are also involved in inter-faith activities, partly through the local Council. Some of the families were a little suspicious of the Christian chaplains at first. But seeing the chaplains at work, many of them have come to appreciate what they have to offer. One of the chaplains noted how the fact that the Muslim students were so willing to talk about spiritual matters had raised the profile of spirituality through the school. The chaplains had been able to help the school understand the needs of the Islamic community, for example in relation to diet.

The chaplains had also been able to interpret special needs of students to the school. For example, one African student was always fighting to get to the front of the line of students. His behaviour had become a problem. The chaplain discovered that the behaviour originated in refugee camps where being in the front of the line could mean the difference between having food or not getting any. Understanding the behaviour, the school was able to resolve with the problem sensitively.

The chaplains have assisted in developing a mentoring program with business leaders from the community to help students. Part of the idea is that students have a taste of the wider world and a different picture of what life could be like.

Another group of students did not fit well into the mainstream and found it difficult to discuss their problems. One of the chaplains did gardening with these students in order to get alongside them. Within the context of doing things with their hands, some of these students found it much easier to begin to talk about the things on their minds.

The Chaplains' Contribution

One senior staff member suggested that without the chaplains the level of disruption from students who did not fit readily within the school would be much greater. Indeed, he claimed that the chaplains had been able to 'turn around' some students who had been quite violent. Ultimately, he suggested, the work of the chaplains meant less work later on for the police.

The principal noted how the chaplains are a 'special breed'. They are passionate about their work and involved because they want to make a difference. They click with the kids. The principal said that students who are having problems often tell him 'I just want to see the chaplain'.

Chaplain as Pastoral Care Worker and Mother Figure

The Context

This small primary school is located in a small rural town of around 2,200 people. The area is relatively disadvantaged, with farming being the main industry, and some tourism adding to the local economy. Many of the shops in the main street are vacant. The school is the only government school in town, with older students travelling about 20 minutes by bus to the nearest secondary school.

The Chaplain

The chaplain at the school is a mother of school aged children who attend the school. She works three days per week, though, from most accounts, she is there most days. Prior to commencing her chaplaincy position 18 months earlier, she was involved in a number of youth activities and leadership roles through a local church. The school has had a chaplain in some capacity for almost 10 years. The chaplain works with the student wellbeing team, which includes a male part-time school counsellor.

Since commencing in her position as chaplain she has started many formal and informal activities with students. Some of these activities include: taking children with behavioural problems out of the classroom to do cooking or gardening; running a "youth leaders" conference and camp for older Year 7 students; taking students to visit dementia and aged patients in the local nursing home; taking students to the local church to assist with a free lunch program (soup kitchen). In a more formal capacity the chaplain coordinates the school's Student Representative Council and usually attends school camps and excursions.

Not long after commencing as chaplain she became aware of the high number of students who were being cared for by their grand-parents. So she started a grandparents' support group. As well as being able to support families informally, she often refers many to outside services and resources for extra practical assistance.

The Chaplain's Contribution

According to the school principal the chaplain is the linchpin in the school. She is an important part of the student wellbeing team, though much of her contribution also extends to families and staff. The chaplain supports every student to varying degrees and has been able to address general and specific issues within the school, such as bullying, peer pressure, grief, and self-esteem. In practical ways she has been able to assist families going through crises such as abuse or neglect, family break-ups, serious illness and death.

The students know that someone cares about them. She provides a different 'branch' of learning for the students. She has the welfare of the school at heart, but has added insight from outside of the structures of education. According to one staff member, without the chaplain in the school, "there would be a lot more kids with lots more problems".

The chaplain has had an impact on the moral values in the extended school from the simple things, like teaching students good manners, through to helping the school community to be more aware of things that happen outside of the 'school world'. As one staff member stated,

the contribution that she makes "could be the only chance some kids get to hear or witness positive values in their lives".

Chaplain as Teacher and Carer

The Context

This large suburban secondary college is located in one of the most advantaged areas in the state. Its students come from very diverse backgrounds, including many Jewish and Muslim students. About 10 per cent are Asian immigrants there are also some international fee paying students. Though the area is a quite affluent, there are many families in difficult financial circumstances.

The Chaplain

The school's chaplain has been full-time for more than ten years. He has a teaching background and teaches some subjects at the school. Through his teaching, he is able to engage the students in ways which complement his work in pastoral care.

The chaplain does a lot of group work with students in the school. He runs a 'grief' workshop and 'Beliefs and Values' workshop each year, and also does some grief counselling, for which he is qualified. He coordinates Year 7 transition activities, part of which is a camp. He runs a 'Chaplain's Camp', a leadership development camp which students apply to go on, and is also involved in coaching school sporting teams.

Some of the chaplain's time is spent getting students involved in the wider community through activities such as a child sponsorship aid program.

His activities extend to the staff. He organises the Friday night 'drinks' and the footy tipping competition. He also writes regularly for the school newsletter.

The Chaplain's Contribution

The chaplain is a key member of the student wellbeing team at the school. He influences the direction the school takes in all areas. "When issues come to a head, that is when the chaplain is approached", said a senior staff member. Because he works closely with Year 7 and 8 students he gets to know the students and builds a relationship with them as they first come into the secondary school. The association he has with them in those early years allows connection with them right throughout their secondary schooling.

Through his connections and relationship building with students in the school he subsequently connects with the families and the wider community.

The chaplain challenges the students' values. He brings an understanding and compassion about the whole world, not just the self. According to one parent, the way he counsels is completely different to anyone else in the school: "He offers other views on things, and sees things through different eyes. He comes from a different perspective." Compassion and caring are the attributes that makes the chaplain's role special in the school: "He shows compassion

more than the school would without him. He adds another dimension to the school welfare team. He is a consistent carer, who is always there."

The school principal sees the chaplain's pastoral support role as specific and unique: "He might have the sign 'chaplain' on the door, but he is a member of staff who cares for people, and thereby he is a person that offers enormous support for kids when they're not coping at *every* level".

Chaplain as Peer Support Worker & Community Networker

The Context

This secondary school is located in a rural setting on the outskirts of the town of a few thousand people. The rural area is on the edge of one of the capital cities. While there is some agriculture in the area, the town is home to a number of artists and craft-workers. The school currently has around 600 students.

The Chaplain

The school has had a chaplain for more than 12 years, and the current long-serving chaplain has been there for half of that time. Prior to this role he spent six years as chaplain at another secondary school in the state. He commenced at the school two days per week, but support for the role quickly built up and he now works full time. He trained in secondary teaching, and taught for a number of years before moving into chaplaincy. He has also been a mentor to other chaplains 'in training'. He sees chaplaincy as a life-long role, and though a humorous and down-to-earth person, takes his role very seriously.

The chaplain coordinates a 'Building Bridges' program – a student 'self-development and discovery' program which is based around a number of adventure-type activities, and culminates in a three day 45 kilometre self-supported bush trek. He also goes on a lot of school camps and excursions, and coaches and assists with the school sporting teams. He coordinates some social justice programs each year, as well as getting the school involved in 'Relay for Life'. Other activities and programs he organises are: a driver education program for older students; motivational workshops for students with invited speakers; a program to counter bullying; and incoming Year 7 integration visits. The chaplain also allows time for practical support to students and families in need, such as distributing food vouchers, or providing breakfast for students.

The chaplain also spends time building up relationships with people, businesses and service clubs in the local community. He sees this as instrumental for building support for chaplaincy, but also important for building social capital for the programs he runs in the school. There is considerable support for chaplaincy from the local community, with many businesses, community groups and individuals supporting the program financially.

The Chaplain's Contribution

The chaplain provides a safe and supportive environment at the school, and because of this he can build up and encourage students. He promotes high standards of citizenship within the

school community, and helps students achieve these standards by the activities he organises. He leads by example, and both students and staff described him as 'walking the talk'. By his example and the activities he does he is able to help students to think of others, and stands beside them in their involvement in service activities.

On one occasion the chaplain was called – in the early hours of the morning – to go to help some older students at 'Schoolies Week'. A female student in the group had been hospitalised after attempting suicide, and the whole group needed the support of a 'significant adult', someone who would listen and offer advice, but would not make judgement upon them. One parent suggested that because of the chaplain's contribution to the wellbeing of students at the school others have been saved from suicide.

The chaplain really concentrates on the whole being of the students. He has a unique relationship with students in that he can be a friend to them, but also a father-figure. He fills the void of students who may not have anyone else to turn to. He can deal with unique issues because he is seen as someone who is removed from the normal authority structures in the school. He is very much a part of the school, but not of the system.

The chaplaincy program is religion-based, but the chaplain is not overtly Christian – or religious. He provides an understanding of faith and supports people regardless of their beliefs. The chaplain offers hope in many situations. The chaplain usually says the prayer at the school's formal events, but this has been a tradition at the school rather than an initiative of the chaplain.

Chaplain as the Life Coach

The Context

A medium sized school is situated in a poorer suburb of one of the capital cities. The school serves a number of indigenous families who live in the area as well as immigrants from a range of backgrounds. There has been quite a lot of crime in the area. Many of the public buildings are marked by graffiti.

The Chaplain

The chaplain was employed three days a week and had been in the school a little over two years. In a range of ways, the chaplain at this school had found ways to get alongside the students. One way was through coaching the footy team. It was not just an opportunity to get to know the students. Through footy he was able to begin to shape their behaviour, to challenge some of the bullying tactics and to offer another picture of masculinity. He also ran a footy camp for both students and their families. In this way, he could help the families in supporting their children.

The students noted how the chaplain found different things for different groups of students to do. He ran a basketball competition. He made a trophy and the students had fun competing for it. He also ran a breakfast club twice a week. Some of the students really appreciated that.

Some students had been charged with serious criminal offences. The chaplain spent a lot of time with those students and their families. He visited their homes and gave them a lot of support. He mediated between the families and the authorities.

The chaplain shared the ethnic heritage of some of the students. This helped in several ways. He related well with those students and also to their community. He encouraged several of the senior people in that community to become involved in the school. He ran a multicultural festival in the school and arranged performances from the various ethic groups. He also played the guitar and related to some of the students through his music.

There is a group of Aboriginal staff at the school. The chaplain met with them on a weekly basis. They greatly appreciated his support and the fact that he cared about their spiritual connections to the land. Other staff noted the fact that the chaplain was always ready to stop and chat in a supportive way. The chaplain worked closely with a range of other welfare staff who worked at the school.

The Chaplain's Contribution

Some of the students have seen a lot of violence in their homes and have grown up accepting violence as a way to behave. One of the students explained that, in the past, one had to watch one's back. Other students would punch you and start a fight. But they noted that the school had changed.

The students were quite clear that the reason for the change in the school was the chaplain and the principal. 'He's a real person," a student said of the chaplain. "He doesn't act like a teacher or parent, but will pull kids into line when mucking up. He puts you in a guilt trip, 'come on man you know you shouldn't do that'."

The students saw the chaplain as someone who cared about them and was willing to give them a second chance. He was laid back and easy to talk to. He was unflappable, gentle and had a good sense of humour. They respected him.

The students were well aware of the chaplain's Christian commitments. He had invited some of them to Christian youth groups and camps. However, they did not feel that he pushed his religious beliefs on them.

He did help them, however, to think beyond themselves. In particular, he had encouraged the students to become involved in some justice and overseas aid projects.

The principal described this chaplain as having excellent mentoring skills. In a calm and patient way, he not only coached the students in footy, he was coaching them for life.