What if my child is seeing the chaplain?

Contact with the chaplain is always voluntary. If the school thinks it might be helpful for your child to spend extended time with the chaplain, the school will send a permission form to the child’s designated parent or caregiver. This will include a general comment about the issue being discussed.

Some children will self-refer, that is they will individually or as a group seek the chaplain’s assistance.

Confidentiality

Mansfield PS and ACCESS Ministries have clear guidelines about confidentiality and privacy. Personal information collected by the chaplain is securely stored and will be passed on to another person only with consent, or if it is deemed a person is at risk of injury.

There is a full statement about confidentiality on the notice board near the school office.

Brochure design by Travis Dyball and Jamie Carns
Who is our chaplain?

Sue McDonald is currently the chaplain at Mansfield primary school. She was ordained as a Baptist minister in 2001, and now attends the Uniting Church in Mansfield. Prior to coming to Mansfield she was the minister at the Surrey Hills Baptist Children’s Centre in Melbourne. At Surrey Hills there were about 150 preschool children from 100 families coming to the centre each week for kindergarten and long day children care, so Sue is well used to young people.

She is available to talk to interested groups, churches, local businesses and organizations.

In 2006 Sue married a local person and now lives a bit out of town.

You might see Sue working occasionally at Buckland house as she is also a registered nurse.

Who can be a chaplain?

Chaplains are often accredited with ACCESS Ministries (website: www.accessministries.org.au). They must have a current Police Check and a Working with Children Check.

They are people with a special concern for children, helping them become the best they can be as people.

Chaplains come from a variety of backgrounds including teaching, youth work and church ministry.

What does a chaplain do?

The detail of what a chaplain does varies with the school situation, the needs of the children, and the experience and interests of the chaplain.

Generally she is available to assist the school and its community in the areas of learning and communication, and social, spiritual and emotional development; she can give personal and group advice, help with grief and loss in death and divorce, and enhance social justice activities in the local community. She comes to the school not as a formal teacher, but as a friend to students, families and staff alike.

The chaplain offers care to all regardless of race, gender, religion or culture, and does not seek to impose her own views on anyone.

At Mansfield PS the service is provided free of charge, is voluntary, and respects the confidential nature of both school and students.

Parents of the school are welcome to contact the chaplain during school hours.

Currently, funding for the chaplain is from the Federal Government, for the equivalent...