

# DOMINIC COLLEGE

*A Catholic School in the Salesian Tradition*



## STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICE POLICY

<b>Date</b>	<b>November 2018</b>
<b>Version No</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Director of Pastoral Care</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>College Leadership Team</b>
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<b>Related Documents</b>	<b>Pastoral Care Policies and Procedures</b>

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## 1. Source of Obligation

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The College Counsellor has professional registration with the Psychotherapy and Counsellors Federation of Australia (PACFA) and the Counselling Service provided complies with the PACFA Code of Ethics, which is the ethical framework for best practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Code of Ethics 2017 - <http://www.pacfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/PACFA-Code-of-Ethics-2017.pdf>

## 2. Pastoral Care Policy

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The Counselling Service is a member of the Pastoral Care Team K-10 and follows the guidelines of the Pastoral Care Policy at Dominic College. The Pastoral Care Policy provides the framework for the development of the individual student within the ethos of a Catholic School in the Salesian tradition. Pastoral Care at Dominic College is based on St John Bosco's Preventive System and the Charter of Salesian Schools. In keeping with the spirit of St John Bosco, the founder of the Salesians, whereby "education is largely a matter of the heart" that leads young people to "know that they are loved".

Pastoral Care is the overall climate of care that exists within Dominic College. It includes the policies, processes, programs and practices delivered at school level with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of the students based on understandings of human dignity. Pastoral Care provides a foundation for relationships between students and staff based on mutual respect. Pastoral Care is founded in community and a commitment to developing a deep sense of belonging and connection to and within community. Pastoral Care is an authentic expression of the vision and mission of the school as faith community. All staff have a role in the development of Pastoral Care at the College.

Parent support for, and involvement in their children's education is a critical factor in student engagement, achievement and wellbeing and the foundation of partnership and a view that the parent is the primary educator.

Dominic College promotes Pastoral Care through a framework of Academic Care by:

- Providing opportunities to develop an understanding of the strong links between learning, wellbeing and resilience;
- Believing that all students can succeed in their learning;
- Monitoring student connectedness to the learning environment;
- Stimulating student engagement with learning;
- Providing learning experiences that are relevant to their lives fostering high expectations of all students as learners;
- Engaging staff and students in dialogue about understanding learning;
- Utilising a range of support networks and resources;
- Implementing structures and programs in response to diverse student needs.

## 3. Adoption of Legislative and Authority Guidance

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The Counselling Service follows the guidance of the PACFA Code of Ethics, which includes all current Tasmanian and Federal Laws and the procedures for unlawful behaviours relating to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

### 3.1 Mandated Reporting

Mandatory reporting is a term used to describe the legislative requirement for selected groups of people to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to government authorities (Child Safety Services). All

Dominic College Staff including the College Counsellor are required to abide by the Tasmanian mandated reporting requirements. For further details around requirements and procedures please refer to the Dominic College Child Safety Mandatory Reporting Policy.

The definition of Tasmanian Law around mandated reporting:

Jurisdiction	State of mind	Extent of harm
Tasmania Law	Believes, or suspects, on reasonable grounds, or knows	Any sexual abuse; physical or emotional injury or other abuse, or neglect, to extent that the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the child's wellbeing; or the child's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy

The Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2017, <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>

### 3.2 Confidentiality

The College Counsellor protects clients' privacy and confidentiality in order to maintain a safe and trusting environment. The Counsellor informs clients at the beginning of the first counselling session of the nature of counselling and explains the limits to confidentiality according to Tasmanian law.

PACFA Code of Ethics section 5a & 5b

### 3.3 Parent Support

At Dominic College "parental support and involvement in, their children's education is a critical factor in student engagement, achievement and wellbeing and the foundation of partnership and a view that the parent is the primary educator." (Pastoral Care Policy, 2018)

The College Counsellor engages with parents, when the need arises and only after the student grants permission to do so, unless the student is of high risk of harm to themselves, to others or by others as defined by Tasmanian Law.

The Counsellor will only disclose necessary information to parents to encourage their involvement with their child at home and with external professional supports (General Practitioner, Psychologists, Counsellors, Paediatricians, Psychiatrists, Police, Hospital, Specialised Treatment Centres and Government Agencies).

## 4. Counselling Service Practice Guideline

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The College Counsellor requires support for the health of their professional practice and personal wellbeing including external and external supervision, professional development and self-care practices.

### 4.1 Supervision

The College Counsellors' supervision includes:

- External professionally qualified supervisor offering one hour supervision sessions once a month;
- Internal supervisor (Deputy Principal) offering weekly supervision sessions and debriefing opportunities are required;
- Group Peer Supervision with the Catholic Schools Counsellors offering one hour sessions 2-3 times a year.

## 4.2 Professional Development

The College Counsellor will engage in the equivalent of two full days of professional development every year to comply with PACFA registration requirements and to strengthen skills that support the Counselling role at Dominic College.

## 5. High Risk Student Guideline

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The term 'high risk' correlates to students identified as a "Student of Concern" who have specific characteristics that are likely to increase the risk of serious psychological, emotional and physical harm. Those characteristics include and are not limited to:

- Exposure (past and present) to abuse (physical, emotional, sexual and neglect);
- Risk taking and criminal behaviour;
- Suicidal ideation and attempts;
- Chronic depression and anxiety;
- Self-harm;
- Eating disorders;
- Psychological disorders that severely impact wellbeing and safety.

Student deemed at high risk are assessed and managed on an individual basis by the College Counsellor or the Pastoral Care team or a combination of both, and with consultation with the Principal/Deputy Principal. The management of the student may include mandated reporting, direct contact with parents/guardian, police and ambulance as required.

### 5.1 Suicidal Student

In the case of specific students who are assessed internally (College Counsellor/Senior Dominic College Staff) as being at a high risk of suicide the following procedure will occur:

- Students parents will be immediately informed;
- Parents will be asked to come and collect the student from the school;
- Immediate further assessment by medical professionals will be requested by the College;
- A mental health plan will be created at a joint meeting between parents and Pastoral Care Staff and implemented using advice provided from medical professionals.

In the case of specific students who are assessed externally (professionally qualified persons) as being at a high risk of suicide the following procedure will occur:

- Parents will immediately inform the school
- Mental Health Plan to be created and implemented by external services and shared with the College.

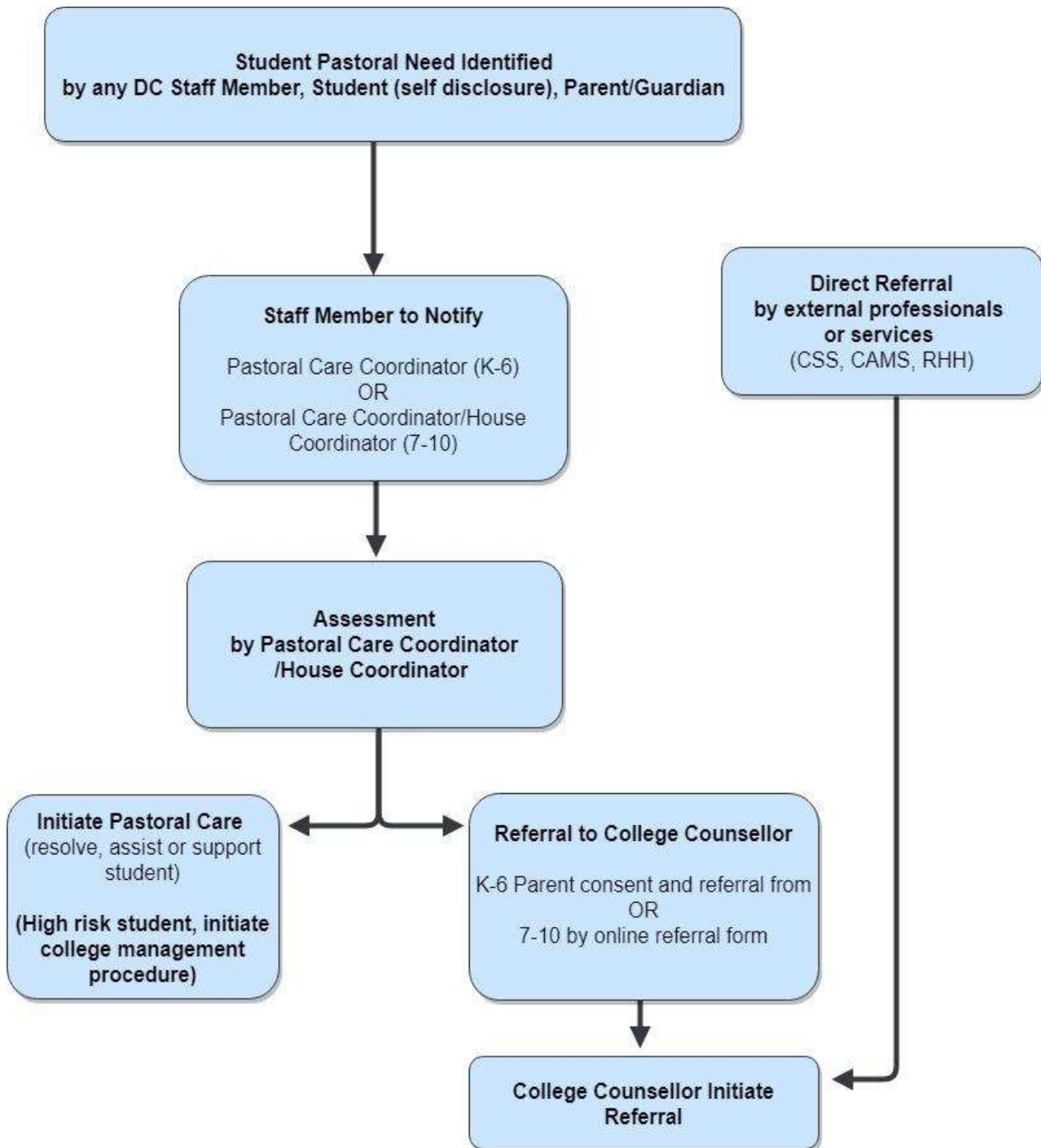
Students that are high risk and are having consistent and ongoing external support are still able to attend all school activities, however, students may be withdrawn from certain events and activities if the risk to themselves and others is deemed too high.

If these students are unable to attend classes due to their mental health issues, they are required to stay away from school until they can successfully undertake a normal school day.

## 6. Counselling Service Referral Process

All referrals to the counsellor (parent, staff, student) are initially sent to the Pastoral Care Coordinator K-6 or Pastoral Care Coordinator 7-10. They provide an initial assessment of the referral before passing on to the College Counsellor.

K-6 students require parental permission before accessing counselling services at the College.

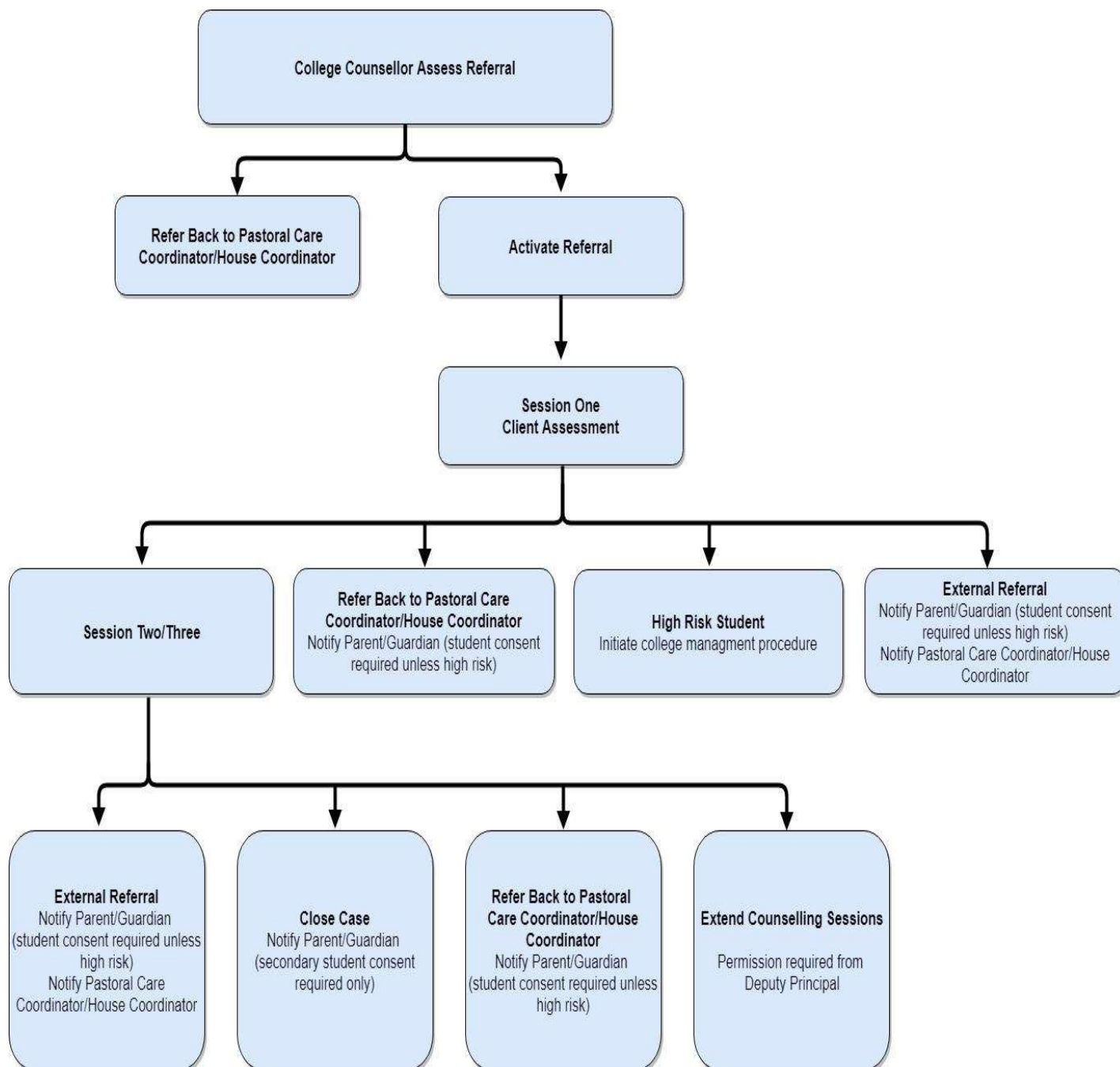


## 7. Counselling Service Pathway

Dominic College's Counselling Service is based around the concept of advocacy and triage, with a strong referral approach. All referrals are made through the Pastoral Care Coordinators K-6 or 7-10. Where required, counselling may be provided up to three sessions to students, before either being referred back to pastoral care staff, being referred externally or having the case closed.

**Ongoing counselling is not provided by the College.**

Supervision approval is required to proceed with further sessions after the **3<sup>rd</sup> session** has been completed.



## APPENDIX A: External Service Providers

There are different ways to access psychological support and this will depend if you or your child prefers to see a counsellor or a psychologist. Some of the different options are below:

### GP Referral:

Take your child to your General Practitioner (GP), explain the issues/stressors and they will create a Mental Health Plan which will give you access to Medicare funded psychological support (with only a small gap of \$20-\$40 to pay per session). Once the Mental Health Plan is established, the GP can write a referral to a child/adolescent psychologist that they feel is appropriate. If your GP doesn't have a psychologist in mind, the following list of contacts is available:

<b>Lydia Black</b> , Psychologist 44a Lincoln Street, Lindisfarne Phone: 03 62 438715
<b>Donna Shepherd</b> , Psychologist (Works from two different clinics) 11 Burnett St, New Norfolk Phone: 62611399 10 Bayfield Street Rosny Park Phone: 62447222
<b>Psychology Works</b> 8th Floor, 39 Murray St, Hobart Phone: 03 6234 3555
<b>Macquarie Psychology</b> 277 Macquarie St, HOBART Phone: 03 6224 8448
<b>Archer Street Health</b> Phone: 03 6124 2222 16 Archer Street, New Town TAS

### Direct Contact with Counselling Services:

Make direct contact with one of the counselling services below to arrange an appointment with a child or family counsellor. This is a paid service of around \$50-\$70 per session but this will give you access to qualified counsellors who may do individual or family therapy. These services can be a good option, as some families and individuals prefer to work with a counsellor rather than a psychologist.

<b>Anglicare</b> Phone: 1800 243 232
<b>CatholicCare</b> Phone: 03 6278 1660
<b>Relationships Australia</b> Phone: (03) 6231 0044

### Free Government funded services:

<b>Gateway Services</b> (Various family support) Phone: 1800 171 233
<b>Child and Adolescent Mental health Services (CAMHS)</b> Phone 1800 332 388 <b>CAMHS South</b> located at Clare House, 26 Clare Street, New Town. Phone 03 6166 0588
<b>Headspace</b> (Individual counselling for youth 12-24 years old) Phone: 62312927 or <a href="https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/hobart/">https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/hobart/</a>
<b>Pulse</b> located at 2 Terry Street, Glenorchy (Drop-in centre, no appointment required)



**Online youth counselling** at eheadspace, <https://www.eheadspace.org.au/>

**Kids Help Line** - 24 hour counselling phone service - 1800 551 800