

Psychologists

The College Psychologists are employed to apply their psychological and educational expertise to provide a range of direct and indirect services to the College community, designed to enhance the educational and personal wellbeing of students.

Referrals to the College Psychologists:

Students who wish to make an appointment with a College Psychologist must first see their Head of Year, who will offer interim assistance and refer to the College Psychologists and/or other support staff as appropriate. Students can request an appointment with their Head of Year by completing a form at Student Services. The student will receive a note during homeroom with their appointment time and directions.

Parents wishing to discuss matters with a College Psychologist are asked to make contact with their daughter's Head of Year in the first instance. Sometimes a parent may like their daughter to have an appointment with the College Psychologists. The student must also be willing for this appointment to occur, as counselling is unlikely to be of benefit if the student is unwilling.

Those who refer students for assistance have a responsibility to work together with the College Psychologist to implement recommended intervention strategies. Information for students on seeking support at school can be found in the Wellbeing section at the front of the Student Diary. This section also contains a list of helpful websites and apps that students can access, as well as general information to support their wellbeing.

Counselling

The Mercedes College Psychologists work closely with the Heads of Year to provide support and resources to address many common student concerns. These include stress, friendship issues, difficulties with sleep, or ways to study more effectively. If a concern cannot be resolved at the Head of Year level or is more serious in nature, the Psychologists may assist through supportive counselling, with the aim of helping the young person to cope and to solve problems more effectively. It is the students' choice to access counselling sessions, and they may at any time choose to no longer attend.

The College Psychologists follow the Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics. This includes the assurance of confidentiality for all referrals to the College Psychologist. When young people seek help, confidentiality is very important to them. Therefore, parents are not routinely contacted. However, in those unusual circumstances where failure to disclose may result in clear risk to the student or to others, the College Psychologist may disclose minimal information necessary to avert risk.

At times it may be appropriate for the College Psychologists to refer students to outside professionals or agencies that may better assist with the presenting issues. In addition, if a presenting issue is a family concern and is not seen to be impacting on the student's school life, the College Psychologists will suggest that families seek help from outside agencies.

Counselling services at Mercedes College involve no additional cost to students or their families.