

Our DSM understands the issues Defence students and their families face and uses skills, knowledge and experience to help them feel welcome and identify support needs during their time at Claver and as they depart on new adventures.



Contact the DSM

Sheree Webb

Defence School Mentor

Tuesday and Wednesday

Sheree.Webb@bne.catholic.edu.au



10 Old Ipswich Rd
(PO Box 6016)
Riverview Q 4303

(07) 3810 5900
www.spcc.qld.edu.au

Defence School Mentor Program.

**Supporting Defence
Force Families**

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Defence School Mentor (DSM) Program

There are approximately 200,000 current and past Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel in Australia.

St Peter Claver College is passionate about supporting our Defence Force families and proudly participates in the Defence School Mentor (DSM) Program.

Our DSM understands the issues Defence students and their families face and uses skills, knowledge and experience to help them feel welcome and identify support needs during their time at Claver and as they depart on new adventures.

The Defence School Mentor is an employee of the College, with funding provided annually by the Department of Defence to facilitate the best possible educational outcome for children of Defence members.

Together, we can help young people be the best they can be.



How Does The Program Work?



Moving to a new school can be exciting, but it can also disrupt well-built relationships and routines. The DSM will:

- Use shared experiences and understanding to reassure young people that they are not alone.
- Welcome new students and introduce them to the College community.
- Support students whilst they transition and adapt to new routines, expectations, rules and curriculums.
- Provide support during parental absence.
- Meet up regularly, initiating non-curriculum focused chats and showing interest to discover unique strengths and challenges.
- Monitor social and emotional wellbeing and personal issues.
- Refer students to services, College, and community programs which support their needs.
- Help young people establish a sense of belonging; both in friendships and peer groups, and in ensuring that contributions to the College are recognised.
- Arrange welcome and farewell activities.



How does the DSM support families?



- Assist with enrolments and resources to ensure students arrive at school with the correct uniform, books and stationery.
- Enhance awareness and understanding of the unique lifestyle of Defence students and families.
- Use personal experience to show an understanding of frequent moves, periods of separation, isolation from extended family and deployments.
- Assist the College to find innovative ways to support students and families.
- Establish a relationship and continue as an ongoing point of contact between home and school.
- Liaise with teachers and staff to provide feedback to parents when new students are settling in.
- Share resources, support networks and local events available to ADF families.
- Develop positive relationships between families and educators.
- Keep families informed.

