

## Defence School Mentor – Roles and Responsibilities

Within the school community the DSM provides assistance to Defence students and their families, and raises awareness of the unique needs of these families due to the military lifestyle. The role of the DSM is not one of a teacher or counsellor, but as a conduit between these professional services to facilitate information sharing and appropriate referral to support services as required.

The Program aims to assist Defence students and their families in four key areas throughout the student's education and as they move from one school to another. The key areas are;

- Welcoming,
- Integrating,
- Parental Absence Support, and
- Farewelling

By accepting funding under the DSM Program it is expected that the DSM would undertake the following;

- Provide assistance to Defence students and their families and raise awareness of unique needs of these families due to the military lifestyle within the school community;
- Attend term network meetings conducted by the local DCO Education Liaison Officer;
- Provide data for end of term and end of year reports; and
- Deliver support and programs in line with the DSM Program aims of welcoming, integrating, absence support and farewelling. Duties include but are not limited to;
  - Assist Defence parents and students to become familiar with the school and its facilities;
  - Coordinate appropriate welcoming activities for Defence students and their family involving the school community;
  - Be a contact for Defence students and their families when they join the school;
  - Monitor Defence students social issues such as friendship, peer groups and classroom difficulties;
  - Provide opportunities for Defence families to meet other Defence families within the school community;
  - Maintain regular contact with Defence families who are enrolled in the school;
  - Support students with planning, balancing of academic requirements, and facilitating referrals for education support;
  - Coordinate appropriate farewell activities for Defence students involving the school community;
  - Be a support for Defence students and their families as they leave the school;
  - Support students at school during times of parental absence from home for service requirements;
  - Support Defence students to develop their self-confidence and resilience;
  - Refer students where necessary to appropriate student support services;
  - Develop and implement programs and resources that support Defence student needs;
  - Facilitate participation in cultural, sporting, academic and personal development programs;
  - Link Defence students to school and community programs;
  - Raise school community awareness of the DSM Program and Defence related issues facing these students such as parental absence due to service requirements; and
  - Ensure visibility of the DSM Program within the school (i.e. school website, regular newsletter articles) and contribute items of interest to relevant school community correspondence.