

Hello From Your New Guidance Officer

Welcome Back to school for 2022! I hope you enjoyed a happy and restful holiday break. Although it has been a rather different start to the school year, I know that all the staff at Worongary State School are looking forward to having your wonderful children back at school, happy and healthy and safe.

As your new Guidance Officer, I want to let you know a little about me and my role at the school so that you can feel comfortable with the support I can provide you and your children.

My name is Astrid Gates. Students will know me as Miss Astrid.

About me:

I am a trained teacher and psychologist. I have worked as a School Counselor/ Guidance Officer for over twenty years in both high schools and primary schools, generally on a part time basis as I have 2 children (now young adults) of my own.

My Role: According to the Department of Education, the Guidance Officer's main role is to "provide professional expertise, leadership and support to school communities to assist students in achieving positive educational, developmental and lifelong learning outcomes". This may involve counselling, psychoeducational assessment, as well as advice to teachers and parents concerning educational, behavioural, mental health and family issues.

So, I am here to support you and your child in areas which may be beyond the scope of your child's classroom teacher due to time constraints and/or expertise. Of course, they are your first point of contact and provide day to day support for your child and I will always endeavour to work with them in the best interest of your child.

So what do I actually do?

I act as a mediator, facilitator and counsellor in both individual and group settings. I may assist students in a whole range of areas including learning difficulties, social skills and peer relationships as well as emotional issues which are affecting their learning. I work with teachers and parents to facilitate their involvement with students.

Generally, I tell students that my job is to make sure students are as happy and productive as they can be at school.

I do require parent permission before I can work with your child and you will be asked to complete a form for this purpose. It is important that you understand that my role requires a level of client privacy and confidentiality which may mean that I do not share all the details of what is said in a session with your child.

How do you contact me?

I will be at Worongary State School three days a week this year – usually Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays. If you feel that I can assist you with your child please discuss the issues with your class teacher and/or the Deputy Principal who can then put a referral in to the support team. If your issue is of a sensitive nature you may leave your details at the front desk for me to phone you when I am available. I would generally, however, prefer that referrals come through your child's teacher.