Student Support Policy

General

- PAL International aims to provide students with multiple opportunities to access a range of individuals who may become significant people in their school lives.

- Creating situations where students come into contact with a range of fellow students and teachers in a non-threatening environment encourages individual students to access at least one significant person.

- The PAL International School Support Program is integrated into our goals and the quality of the relationship between our staff and students. We aim to provide an environment filled with positive relationships that correlate closely to the quality of our learning programs and course delivery.

- A significant person:
  - Will develop a relationship with a student whereby the significant person is able to monitor the safety and well-being of the student.
  - Is one who can assist our students with problems and changes as they arise.
  - Will inform the relevant staff member regarding concerns with the safety and well-being of any individual in the school.

Peer Support

On arrival at the School, each Year 7 will be assigned a Peer Support Student from Year 10, who will act as friend and mentor throughout the remainder of their school careers. This is a two-way relationship, as the younger student will also be expected to be aware of a need for support of the elder during examinations and stressful periods. The Peer Supporter is expected to guide his/her Year 7 through the initial settling-in period, explaining the rules, written and unwritten, of the school, and generally delivering reassurance and support when needed. It is hoped that the Peer Supporter is someone a young student will be able to approach, without the fear and stigma of “dobbing”, in cases of bullying or perceived victimisation/misunderstanding by teaching staff. In such cases, it is anticipated that the Peer Supporter will consult immediately with the student’s Year Advisor.

Counsellor Support

PAL International School is as yet too small to be able to provide in-house professional counselling services. However, in cases where the Pastoral Care system appears insufficient, students and their can be referred to qualified and fully registered (New South Wales) psychologists in the South-Western Sydney Area to provide these counselling services.
The school peer support system functions primarily to support the student in the school environment. Serious, ongoing mental health issues and family based problems are referred to appropriate outside professionals/agencies for full assessment and ongoing support.

There are a number of ways that counselling services can be accessed:

1. **Self-referral:**
   - Students/parents can access counselling referrals by approaching the school directly (visiting the Deputy Headmaster via email, telephonically, letter). The School will probably attempt to set up a liaison between the family, their family doctor, and a recommended professional counselling service.
   - Counselling appointments can be set up confidentially through the school secretary.

2. **Referral by a school staff member**

   Staff members may refer a student of concern by completing a counsellor referral form and discussing matters with the Deputy Headmaster. In all such cases, the initial approach to the student's family **MAY ONLY BE MADE BY THE DEPUTY HEADMASTER OR HEADMASTER** on these occasions, the services of an interpreter will be made available.

**Support for Students with Special Academic Needs**

PAL International School provides a specific range of services and support to students with special needs.

- The teacher role in relation to special needs students includes the early identification and initial assessment of specific special needs.

- Within the School, extra help and remediation are offered with literacy and numeracy difficulties, and extra ESL specialist teaching is available for those students from Non-English –Speaking-Backgrounds.

- When appropriate, students are referred for specialist assessment and remediation/treatment to relevant outside professionals and agencies. Outside professionals include speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, remedial therapists, developmental paediatricians, psychiatrists and neurologists.

- Regular liaison and collaboration between relevant class teachers and outside professionals is encouraged. Multi-disciplinary meetings about how best to meet the needs of individual special needs students in the school setting are facilitated by school staff.
• Students with special needs are permitted time away from school to attend sessions with outside professionals.

• Teachers differentiate the curriculum within the classroom, whenever possible, to accommodate students with special learning needs. These students are also offered additional individual time with teachers to facilitate their successful classroom integration.

• Ongoing support and education are provided to staff in relation to relevant special need topics/issues. Staff development days may provide a forum for guest speakers and staff are encouraged to attend in-service training and workshops.

• Regular monitoring and review of students with special needs is undertaken by the classroom teacher, year coordinator and school counsellor.

• Appropriate government funding is sought by the school for eligible students with special needs.