



## TE AKA ORA CHARITABLE TRUST

### Social Worker in Schools Position Description<sup>1</sup>

**Position Title:** Social Worker in Schools  
**Reports to:** Chief Executive Officer through Practice Leader  
**Location:** 9 Temple Street, Gisborne and Partner Schools  
**Accountability:** Chief Executive

**Vision:** In everything we do, we strive to embody the qualities of Mihingaretanga – the love, faith and hope modelled by Te Karaiti

**Mission:** To support whanau to identify their strengths and aspirations to meet their own needs, and to work with other to mobilise resources that may realise the inherent potential in the communities we serve.

**Functional Relationships:** TAO colleagues; staff/students of schools serviced by the position; whanau; Police; Oranga Tamariki Services; Social, health and community agencies and other child/youth services.

#### **Working Hours:**

Contact with clients will be both during school hours and after school. Planning, preparation, meetings, training and networking will usually take place during the normal working week.

#### **Primary Purpose of the Position:**

1. To enhance life outcomes for children whose social and family circumstances place at risk their chances of achieving positive education, social and health outcomes.
2. To provide early intervention service delivery to children and their families/whānau.
3. To provide and facilitate the delivery of preventative programmes within the cluster of schools.

The social worker will work collaboratively work with school staff within the agreed protocols and student care systems, but remain independent of the school's student disciplinary process

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<sup>1</sup> Reviewed JD 090519

in order to maintain professional autonomy and ensure a relationship of trust is maintained with students and their families/whanau.

Area	Key Tasks
<b>General</b>	<p>The social worker will assess referrals and make appropriate decisions about any actions required. Where the family/whanau has agreed to work with the Social Workers in Schools service, the social worker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop and manage a service delivery plan in partnership with the child and parent/guardian or family/whanau and other appropriate agencies</li> <li>● Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the needs and strengths of the child and their family/whanau</li> <li>● Deliver and/or coordinate the delivery of services agreed to in the plan</li> <li>● Work directly with the child and family/whanau in a therapeutic relationship to achieve the goals outlined in the plan</li> <li>● Monitor and review the effectiveness of any interventions in individual cases to ensure that services are appropriately coordinated and focused, and that goals set are achieved.</li> </ul> <p>The social worker will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain records of the processes and outcomes of their work</li> <li>● Where appropriate, work with Family Start, Children’s Team local coordination groups to ensure there is a coordinated approach to managing individual cases</li> <li>● Work with others in the school and/or other education, health and social agencies and community providers to develop and provide preventative initiatives/programmes for the school and local community that promote the well-being of children and families</li> <li>● Contribute to any evaluation of the service required by the service provider, Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki</li> </ul>
<b>Child well-being and development</b>	<p>With regard to child well-being, and development, the role of the social worker is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Maintain a clear focus on a child’s well-being, the adequacy of their physical and emotional care, their cultural and spiritual health, and child development</li> <li>b. Develop a relationship of trust with the child to ensure they feel safe in discussing sensitive issues and personal problems</li> <li>c. Assist and foster positive parent/guardian relationships with the child</li> <li>d. Model positive parent/guardian/child interaction and activities</li> <li>e. Refer to and access the services of other appropriate agencies to address child needs</li> <li>f. Advocate for the child within the school</li> <li>g. Work with school staff to achieve the aims of the service delivery plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Working with whanau</b>	<p>The social worker will assist the parents/guardians/families/whanau of referred children to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Overcome difficulties that have been identified as jeopardising the well-being of their children</li> <li>b. Obtain information on matters affecting the well-being of their children</li> <li>c. Maintain positive relationships with their children</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Maintain positive links with the school and advocate on behalf of the family/whanau to facilitate the resolution of any difficulties or misunderstandings arising in their (or their children's) relationships with the school</li> <li>e. Access support for their care-giving role from within their own family/whanau or social and community networks</li> <li>f. Build on their individual and family/whanau strengths, and their capacity to increase their resilience and ability to meet their children's needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Working with schools</b>	<p>The social worker will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide relevant information to school staff, with the consent of the family/whanau, to enhance their work with the child</li> <li>b. Establish positive working relationships with other professionals working within the school</li> <li>c. Advocate to the school on behalf of students' issues and concerns, with a view to improving the school's and individual teachers' ability to support learning, and removing barriers to positive outcomes</li> <li>d. Educate and inform school staff about the role of a social worker and about positive behaviours that will reduce problems for students within the school environment</li> <li>e. Understand the role of the school and how to support its focus on student engagement and achievement.</li> </ul>
<b>Working with other agencies</b>	<p>The Social Workers in Schools programme emphasises a partnership approach. It is envisaged that the social worker will be part of the wider Strengthening Families strategy, which focuses on co-ordinating services to children in need and their families.</p> <p>The social worker's role is therefore to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify children whose safety and well-being is at risk and comply with <i>An Interagency Guide for Breaking the Cycle</i> (Protocols developed in 1995, by Child, Youth and Family and revised in 2001) for the notification of child abuse and neglect</li> <li>b. Develop links with and work within the integrated case management framework provided by the Strengthening Families local coordinating committee when children with complex needs require a multi-agency approach</li> <li>c. Develop an active relationship with and understanding between Oranga Tamariki local offices and schools for the reporting of child abuse and neglect, and have systems in place to ensure a notification is made within 24 hours of becoming aware of a child whose safety is at risk</li> <li>d. Work in partnership with other professionals – in particular, school support services and public health nurses – to identify and refer appropriately when specific problems affect a child's well-being</li> <li>e. Ensure that, where appropriate, other agencies have input into individual child or family/whanau plans, and that these plans are delivered and monitored in a coordinated and effective way</li> <li>f. Support and participate in delivery of services when another agency/service is the lead provider for the family, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Preventative programmes</b>	<p>International research shows that preventative and early intervention programmes offer significant opportunities to improve life outcomes for children and families at</p>

	<p>risk. Preventative group programmes could include both child-focused programmes and those that are parent and family/whanau centred.</p> <p>A key role for the social worker is undertaking preventative programmes for groups of children within the cluster of schools and, to an extent, their families/whanau.</p> <p>The social worker will need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the school community to identify existing good quality early intervention and/or preventative initiatives or programmes within the community and ensure these are made available to students and families/whanau who would benefit from them</li> <li>Work with community groups, other agencies and the school to facilitate the development of preventative initiatives or programmes within the community and/or school where there is an identified need</li> <li>Where practicable and desirable, work with the school community and other agencies to develop and deliver preventative initiatives within the school to meet the needs of individual children.</li> </ol> <p>The range of preventative programmes the social worker delivers and/or provides access to will be determined by the service provider, social worker and school cluster, taking into consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The needs of children and families/whanau in the school cluster</li> <li>The availability of other services and programmes</li> <li>The social worker's workload priorities.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Prioritising workloads</b></p>	<p>A key skill for social workers and their supervisors is the effective management and prioritising of work. Services will be delivered on the basis of the following priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary and intermediate school-aged children within the allocated school cluster</li> <li>Any pre-school, or other school-aged siblings within the same family/whanau</li> <li>The assessed level of client need that is, the greater the need, the greater the priority</li> <li>The availability of alternative sources of support/intervention that is, if there is another appropriate place for the family to get assistance, the social worker could refer the client on and the case would come off their priority list.</li> </ol> <p>The social worker should also consider their role in the use of preventative and early intervention programmes and determines the most effective use of their time to meet both requirements.</p> <p>Where the social worker is receiving too many new referrals to manage effectively, they will need to consider how best to manage the workload, in consultation with their supervisor, service provider and the schools.</p>
<p><b>Professional Support &amp; Personal Development</b></p>	<p>The social worker will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in agreed periodic professional and personal development opportunities provided by the employer and other entities;</li> <li>Participate in regular internal and external supervision with agreed supervisors;</li> <li>Participate in regular social work team meetings with colleagues from the provider organisation.</li> </ol>

**Ideal Person & Core Competencies- SWIS Tool Kit Provide more detail**

<b>Vision and Strategy</b>	Has a clear vision for helping people achieve their full potential. Able to develop effective strategies to achieve this.
<b>Learning, Knowledge and Expertise</b>	Initiates and looks for training opportunities for self and other staff. Keeps up current knowledge and expertise in dealing with people who have high and complex needs. Shares knowledge and skill with other team members
<b>Reasoning and Problem Solving</b>	Analyses crisis situations quickly and accurately, weighs available options and takes appropriate course of action.
<b>Communication</b>	Communicates and relates effectively with colleagues, whanau, community groups and government agencies. Presents facts or arguments convincingly to people from different levels and cultural backgrounds. Strong written and oral communication and presentation skills for report writing, case plans, file notes etc
<b>Leadership and Direction</b>	Leads willingly, visible model of high standard of behaviour and values; provides vision; makes sound decisions based on facts and uses legitimate authority internally and externally to achieve win-win outcomes; maintains high standards on ethical issues.
<b>Teamwork</b>	Operates as a team player. Knows team goals and principles of teamwork; constructive team member; sets example in teamwork, shares information freely and encourages mutual support within the team; removes barriers and resolves conflict; networks actively within the team. Able to develop strong professional relationships with others.
<b>Understanding, Encouraging and Supports People</b>	Shows and promotes understanding and fairness in all circumstances; deals honestly and straightforwardly; takes account of others' capabilities, well-being, potential and limitation, gives right appreciation, support and recognition; ensures others' opinions count; counsels, negotiates and/or arbitrates on behalf of the "underdog".
<b>Delegating and Authorising</b>	Seeks and correctly identifies staff potential, delegates to develop that potential; promotes self management; coaches others and actively encourages continual learning and growth.
<b>Efficiency and Effectiveness</b>	Makes efficient use of available resources - time, money, equipment, facilities and services. Effective in developing programmes and services that produce positive outcomes with participants. Good organisational and coordinating skills for preparing and running programmes, services and special events.
<b>Safety and Compliance</b>	Applies relevant HSE regulations with common sense; assesses risk accurately; monitors others' activity and takes preventative action when necessary; puts controls in place to ensure compliance.  Requirement of Full Covid Vaccination is a must due to the nature of the role working in both the community and schools are places of high risk for transmission.
<b>Innovation</b>	Looks for better ways of doing things; networks with other groups to exchange new ideas, willing to try out different options to see what works best; able to adapt ideas to fit the local scene; removes barriers to change; promotes and rewards creativity and innovation.
<b>Cultural Safety</b>	Knowledge of whanau functions. Knowledge of tikanga me ona reo Maori, me nga tikanga Pakeha. Knowledge of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its application in contemporary contexts.

<b>Networking</b>	Has knowledge of and ability to develop relevant links with local communities, iwi, hapu and marae. Maintain and develop relevant links in the community with agencies whose services may be appropriate to the needs of the clients.
<b>Personal Development</b>	Actively participates in performance appraisal attestation and professional development planning and procedures. Undertakes training that is relevant to the position and negotiated as part of personal development.
<b>Whole organisation Participation</b>	Contributes, where appropriate, to the well-being of colleagues and their whanau. Contributes to the sustainability and development of employing organisation and partner organisations.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	Respects and maintains confidentiality and dignity of others at all times

Reviewed May 9, 2019

**Role Authority:**

Signed

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*Staff Member*

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*Date*

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*Service Delivery Manager*

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*Date*