



JOB DESCRIPTION School Social Worker

Reports to: Deputy Principal

Hours of work: Fixed-term, part-time (10 hours per week term time only)
Terms 1 - 3 2026

Terms of Employment:

This position is covered by an individual employment agreement between Wellington High School and the employee.

Delegations and Authorities:

You will be working closely with the Deputy Principal in charge of attendance, and working with the school attendance officer

Purpose of position:

The School Social Worker is a vital role focused on supporting ākonga and their whānau to enhance wellbeing, strengthen relationships, and overcome barriers to education.

A primary and explicit focus of this position is to lead and implement social work interventions that directly support the school's strategic goal of improving student attendance. This will be achieved by addressing the complex underlying factors contributing to non-attendance, bridging the gap between home and school, and working as part of a multi-disciplinary team to ensure every child is present, participating, and thriving.

This role operates in alignment with the principles of the **Social Workers in Schools (SWiS)** model and the Ministry of Education's **Attendance and Engagement Strategy**.

Relationships:

Internal	External
Deputy Principal i/c Pastoral care Counselling department Attendance Officer and Student Services Officer Staff Students	Oranga Tamariki NZ Police Ministry of Education Local community/iwi social services

Person specification

Essential

- **Qualification:** Working towards a qualification in Social Work.
- **Registration:** Must be a registered Social Worker with the **Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB)** and hold a current Practising Certificate.
- **Experience:** Proven experience in a social work role, preferably working with tamariki (children), rangatahi (youth), and their whānau.
- **Cultural Competency:** A deep understanding of and commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and proven experience in applying tikanga Māori and Pacific models of practice.
- **Communication:** Exceptional interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills, with the ability to build rapport and trust with diverse audiences.
- **Safeguarding:** A clear understanding of child protection legislation and procedures in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- **Vetting:** Must pass a New Zealand Police vet as required by the Children's Act 2014.

Desirable

- Previous experience working within a New Zealand school environment or with the SWiS service.
- Experience in crisis intervention and trauma-informed practice.
- Knowledge of the Ministry of Education's attendance strategies and frameworks.
- Strong advocacy, mediation, and problem-solving skills.
- The ability to be self-managing, organised, and maintain confidential case notes and records.

Key tasks

Attendance and Engagement (Primary Focus)

- **Early Intervention:** Proactively identify and respond to ākonga with irregular, moderate, or chronic absence patterns, in line with the school's **Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)** framework.
- **Assessment and Planning:** Conduct thorough, strengths-based assessments with ākonga and whānau to identify the underlying reasons for non-attendance (e.g., mental/physical health, whānau hardship, housing instability, peer relationships, bullying, transport, or disengagement).
- **Case Management:** Develop, implement, and monitor individualised support plans in collaboration with the ākonga, whānau, and school staff (e.g., Deans, teachers, pastoral team) to remove barriers and support a sustained return to school.
- **Whānau Partnership:** Act as the key liaison between the school and whānau, building trust and undertaking home visits (where appropriate) to understand the family context and co-design solutions.
- **Advocacy and Brokerage:** Advocate for ākonga and whānau needs. Connect families to community-based services and resources (e.g., financial assistance, health providers, counselling services, housing support) and coordinate a multi-agency response when required.

- **Data-Informed Practice:** Work closely with the school's attendance officer and leadership team to identify data trends, and contribute to whole-school attendance improvement strategies.

General Social Work Practice

- **Holistic Support:** Provide confidential, child-centred social work services, including 1-on-1 support for ākonga facing social, emotional, or behavioural challenges.
- **Child Protection:** Follow school policy and procedures for identifying and reporting any child safety or protection concerns.
- **Crisis Intervention:** Provide immediate support and intervention for ākonga and whānau during times of crisis.

Collaboration and Relationships

- **School Community:** Be a visible, approachable, and integrated member of the school's pastoral care team, providing consultation and support to teachers and staff on managing non-academic barriers to learning.
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** Demonstrate a strong commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Apply a culturally responsive and bicultural lens to all practice, working effectively to support Māori ākonga and their whānau, as well as Pasifika and other diverse communities within the school.
- **External Agencies:** Maintain strong, professional relationships with key external agencies, including Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, Ministry of Education, and local community/iwi social services.

Employee name:

Line manager:

Date:

Employee Signature:	
Approved by:	
Date Approved:	
Reviews:	