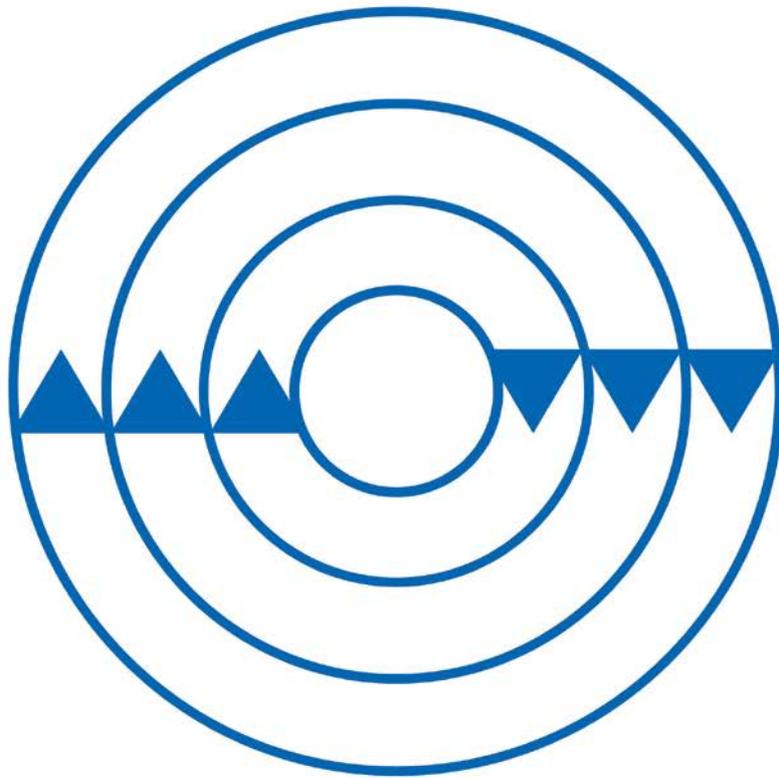


# competency framework

CHAPTER

**4**



## INTRODUCTION

This document explains and expands on the competencies contained in the Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) service specifications.

### Purpose

The competency framework has been designed to inform professional development, recruitment, retention, and extension of social workers, and to develop practice excellence. The competencies have the potential to improve the operational effectiveness of the SWiS service as they are measurable and specifically related to its delivery outcomes. It is hoped the competency framework will also support a common understanding among providers of the core competencies of the social work role in the SWiS service.

### Development Process

The competencies were developed between May 2007 and October 2007 by the SWiS Professional Development Advisory group in consultation with other managers, supervisors, social workers, school/kura principals, CYF, MSD and MoE staff about behavioural indicators. These have been reviewed in 2018 to ensure that they are still applicable and relevant.

### SWiS competencies at a glance

Integrity and self-awareness are attributes inherent in all of the 17 competencies that should be observed. These encompass the following qualities:

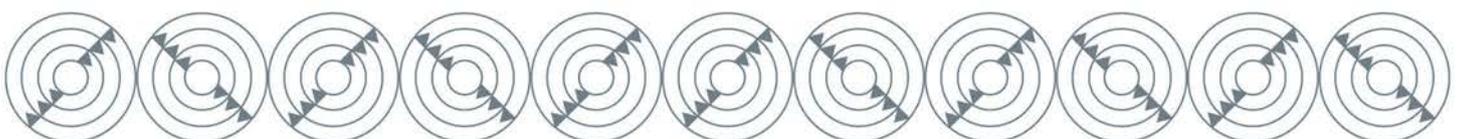
- Acts honestly and ethically at all times.
- Words and actions gain the respect of others.
- Follows through on agreements.
- Can be relied on to complete tasks and meet commitments.
- Displays an open-minded attitude towards others.
- Is open and transparent – saying what one means without hidden agendas.
- Identifies and works through personal issues that may impact on one's work.
- Purposeful – knows what one is doing and why.
- Committed to building respectful working relationships.
- Comes from a place of enquiry and learning.
- Shows in word and action a commitment to the SWiS service philosophy and goals.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### What are the competencies?

Competencies can be defined as clusters of related behaviours, arising from an individual's knowledge, skills and personal characteristics that are determinants of superior performance on the job.

In plain language, competencies describe the behaviours that lead to success in a particular role.



### How are competencies different from a job description?

A job description usually describes the responsibilities, duties and expectations of a job. The competencies describe the behaviours that help people do the job well.

### How do competencies relate to the Social Workers in Schools service specifications?

They should complement each other. The service specifications are a comprehensive description of the Social Workers in Schools service and include key policies and procedures to be followed by providers. The service specifications are therefore useful for developing a list of duties and processes that staff need to follow. Competencies on the other hand, describe the abilities and patterns of behaviour that will enable a person to do the job well.

### How do the service specifications, job description and competencies fit together?

- Service specifications focus on guidelines and standards. They provide a comprehensive description of the Social Workers in Schools service and set the minimum standards for providers – objectives, outcomes, policy and procedures. The service specifications include a high level description of staff skills, qualifications and experience.
- A job description focuses on individual responsibilities and duties. It sets out the expectations for an individual employee that if achieved will enable a provider to meet the service specifications. A job description may also include a description of the skills, qualifications and experience required to do the job.
- Competencies focus on behaviours that are linked to success on the job. They describe the kinds of things that people need to be good at doing if they are to be successful in the job. It is important to note that the competencies identified for a role do not list all of the skills, knowledge and characteristics required to do the job. Rather, the competencies are a description of the key behaviours that are linked to superior performance.

Competencies are designed to complement, not replace, the service specifications and job description. Some organisations choose to attach the competencies to the job description.



### Why do the competencies not include any detail on formal qualifications?

A relevant qualification is an important prerequisite for success in many roles because of the knowledge and skills the qualification provides. Competencies focus on describing the important things a person needs to do on the job, rather than exploring how a person may have learnt to do those things.

### How will the competencies be used?

The competencies are intended to be a tool to assist providers and social workers in schools in a number of areas. It is hoped that the competencies will complement and improve processes that providers already have in place, and that it will be a 'living document' to support service delivery.

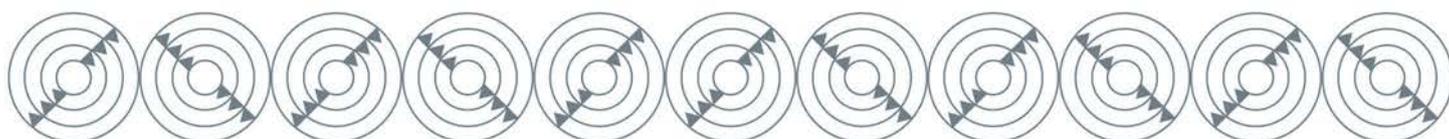
- **Competencies may be useful for staff performance reviews and professional development plans.** Providers may like to consider inviting employees to complete a competency self-assessment as part of their performance review processes. This would provide a solid basis for coaching/development discussions as well as enabling identification of team strengths/development needs.

**Note: Competencies may help providers make better recruitment decisions.** Providers may wish to use the competency framework to help them develop interview questions that show whether candidates have the right skills for the role.

### How can people be measured against the competencies?

Because each competency is a set of behaviours, it is relatively straightforward to assess whether a person has a specific competency and at what level.

- For Level 1, it would be expected to have evidence for all, or almost all, of the behaviours at Level 1. For Level 2, it would be expected to have Level 1 and Level 2 behaviours. For Level 3, it would be expected to have Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 behaviours (see appendices at the end of this document for a list of behaviours that make up each competency).
- When recruiting new staff, competencies can be assessed at interview and through feedback from referees. Each question used with a candidate or referee should be directly linked to a competency and the answer checked against the competency's behaviours. A library of suitable interview questions could be developed for providers to use.
- There are a range of feedback sources that can be used when assessing existing staff against competencies – direct



observation, staff self-assessment, supervisor/manager feedback, client, and peer feedback. A checklist based on each competency's behaviours is a straight-forward assessment method.

### Why 17 competencies and the three levels for each?

This set of competencies is intended to provide a comprehensive list of behaviour indicators for the social work role. In some situations providers and social workers may focus on a subset of the competencies. For example, providers may identify certain key competencies which will be a priority for their service and individual staff development discussions may focus on just one or two agreed competencies.

The competencies recognize that different people have different levels of expertise.

### Are people expected to have all the competencies before they can do the job?

No. The competency framework identifies a broad range of behaviours required for effective service delivery. These can be developed and enhanced over time.

### How do the competencies link to training?

It should be possible to link training objectives to specific competencies (and specific behaviours within the competencies). In a similar way, if providers identify common competency development needs across a number of staff, they might look for training that will address those competency behaviours.

## THE 17 SWIS COMPETENCIES

Working with  
children/family/  
whānau

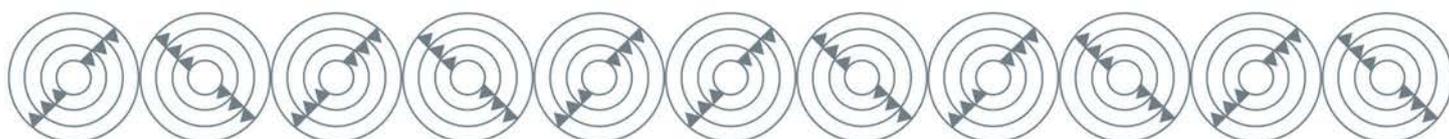
**Building relationships.** A person with this competency establishes, maintains and can re-establish rapport and trust with children and parents:

- Level 1. Establishes warm, friendly relationships.
- Level 2. Maintains trusting relationships.
- Level 3. Re-establishes and sustains positive relationships even in difficult situations.

**Cultural skills.** A person with this competency works from a bicultural base and relates to clients within their social and cultural context:

- Level 1. Shows respect for different cultures.
- Level 2. Shows an understanding of diverse cultures.
- Level 3. Moves comfortably within different cultures.

**Facilitating change through assessment and intervention skills.** A person with this competency supports planned approaches to change for the benefit of the child within the family/whānau:



- Level 1. Undertakes assessments that recognise and explore strengths, protective factors, risks and needs of a child and their family/whānau.
- Level 2. Demonstrates working with children and families/whānau to make progress toward agreed goals.
- Level 3. Review effectiveness of all plans from an outcome perspective and demonstrate the transfer of this learning into other work with children and families/whānau.

**Application of specialist knowledge and skills.** A person with this competency uses professional experience together with professional social work theory to accurately assess and address needs of children and families/whānau:

- Level 1. Has a general understanding of the social work field of child and family/whānau in schools/kura and applies this knowledge in day-to-day work.
- Level 2. Has in-depth knowledge and skill in the social work field of child and family/whānau in schools/kura.
- Level 3. Has expertise in the social work field of child and family/whānau in schools/kura and demonstrates this.

**Managing conflict.** A person with this competency takes action to reduce/resolve conflict with other professionals:

- Level 1. Recognises and responds to conflict.
- Level 2. Resolves simple conflicts.
- Level 3. Takes action to resolve complex or on-going conflicts.

## Programme work

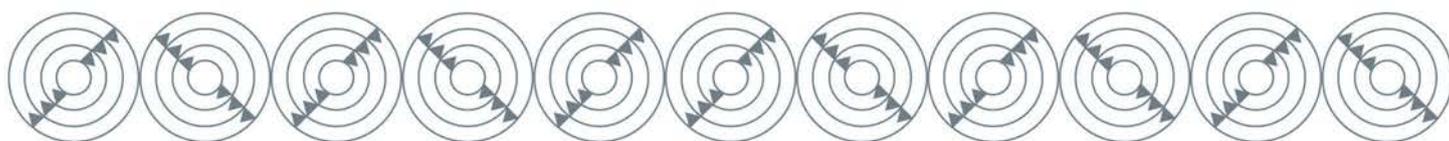
**Assessing strengths and needs.** A person with this competency determines what programmes are required through analysis of existing strengths and needs:

- Level 1. Observes and identifies collective strengths and needs through their interaction with the school/kura community.
- Level 2. Can describe how widespread the need is along with any possible barriers and challenges related to addressing the need.
- Level 3. Undertakes analyses of trends in their caseload and can link these to wider social issues.

**Implementation.** A person with this competency implements a programme with consideration to group management, relationship building, and the environment:

- Level 1. Facilitates the implementation of existing programmes.
- Level 2. Leads programme.
- Level 3. Implement programmes that require involvement from other adults such as professionals and parents/ caregivers and manage the additional complexities around this.

**Group facilitation skills.** A person with this competency can work with groups of children or adults so that programme objectives are met:



- Level 1: Has clear and agreed group guidelines (ground rules, kawa or tikanga) and can implement these.
- Level 2. Understands group processes and dynamics and consistently maintains a safe, supportive and learning environment.
- Level 3. Has effective conflict resolution knowledge and applies this to group situations to manage difficulties.

**Evaluation/review.** A person with this competency uses an evaluation and review process to inform the future sustainability of programme provision.

- Level 1. Completes individual participant performance evaluations/assessments and overall programme performance and contributes this to the annual programme performance plan.
- Level 2. Seeks wider feedback from others such as family/whānau and other professionals and applies this to critique the strengths and weaknesses of a programme.
- Level 3. Identifies trends from evaluations and actively contributes this feedback to the school/kura and community to improve planning around programmes.

### Networking /community support

**Interpersonal skills and communication.** A person with this competency creates understanding, builds relationships and has influence with others:

- Level 1. Communicates clearly and uses active listening to hear what others are saying.
- Level 2. Helps people express themselves and considers alternative points of view.
- Level 3. Displays highly developed communication and influencing skills.

**Linking to resources.** A person with this competency uses networks in the community to connect with and support families/whānau:

- Level 1. Uses general community knowledge and contacts to support children and families/whānau.
- Level 2. Uses specific community knowledge and contacts to support and, when necessary, advocate for children and families/whānau.
- Level 3. Uses extensive community knowledge and influential contacts to support children, families/whānau, and assist colleagues.

**Working in partnership.** A person with this competency works with other professionals to best assist children and families/whānau:

- Level 1. Develops regular contact with other professionals within the school/kura and provider agency context.
- Level 2. Initiates and maintains positive relationships with other professionals both inside and outside of the school/kura and provider context.



## Personal and professional management

- Level 3. Actively leads and promotes the development of effective professional relationships across a variety of settings.

**Administration.** A person with this competency plans and manages time efficiently, understands agency and wider policy and standards, and keeps accurate records:

- Level 1. Effectively manages their own day to day work and keeps accurate records.
- Level 2. Plans and prioritises their own work effectively in times of complexity and unpredictable situations.
- Level 3. Can instruct others in agency policy and standards.

**Supervision and reflective practice.** A person with this competency utilises professional supervision to support practice excellence:

- Level 1. Attends supervision regularly and engages in reflective practice.
- Level 2. Demonstrates putting practice reflection back into daily work.
- Level 3. Develops new ways of working that can be utilised by others.

**Personal and professional development.** A person with this competency models a high standard of work and seeks to improve this through partaking in personal and professional development opportunities:

- Level 1. Demonstrates the key elements of quality practice.
- Level 2. Takes responsibility to enhance and improve own practice and professional development.
- Level 3. Contributes to and provides professional development.

**Teamwork.** When a person has this competency their actions reflect a commitment to their colleagues and the organisation:

- Level 1. Participates in the team.
- Level 2. Actively contributes to the team.
- Level 3. Takes an informal leadership role in the team.

**Self-care.** A person with this competency can articulate their needs and take steps to meet these:

- Level 1. Supports own well-being and recognises indicators of stress and trauma.
- Level 2. Can safely articulate what is happening if experiencing stress or trauma and what assistance they require.
- Level 3. Utilises their own resilient traits and coping skills to manage stress and trauma and seeks appropriate help if required.



## APPENDIX 1: WORKING WITH CHILDREN/ FAMILY/ WHĀNAU

This appendix has the list of behaviours that make up the competency.

**Building relationships.** A person with this competency establishes, maintains and can re-establish rapport and trust with children and parents.

Level 1. Establishes warm, friendly relationships:

- Makes a positive first impression when meeting people.
- Has a positive, open, respectful, approachable manner that helps put people at ease.
- Invests time in building relationships
- Maintains healthy and appropriate personal and professional boundaries and seeks guidance around child and family/whānau work, for example, confidentiality.
- Creates an environment where people feel able to talk openly and share personal or sensitive information.
- Clearly communicates to children and families/whānau their role and priorities.
- Enables and supports successful relationship closure.

Level 2. Maintains trusting relationships:

- Models trust and respect in a way that advances the relationship. Develops and sustains empathy over time.
- Assists people to determine and achieve their goals.
- Establishes trust and credibility by helping people achieve their goals. Is able to separate problems out from the person.

Level 3. Re-establishes and sustains positive relationships even in difficult situations:

- Anticipates and takes steps to manage issues/situations that may affect relationships.
- Communicates effectively with people when situations are difficult. Reflects analyses and applies prior learning to support relationships.
- Is able to challenge/disagree with someone while sustaining the relationship.

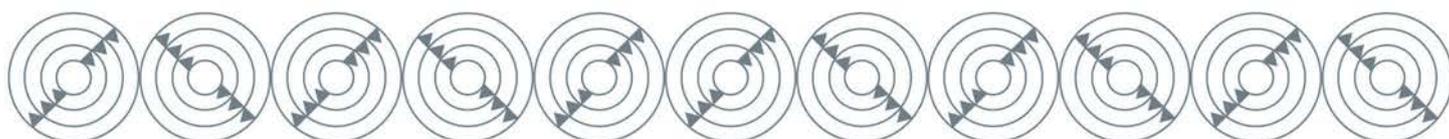
**Cultural skills.** A person with this competency works from a bicultural base and relates to clients within their social and cultural context.

Level 1. Shows respect for different cultures:

- Values and celebrates diversity – showing respect for other cultures and people's different needs and ways of living.
- Demonstrates awareness and understanding of their own cultural identity and how this might affect their work.
- Is respectful of each family's/whānau's values, history and life situation. Takes steps to learn basic practices, protocols and language of children and their families/whānau.
- Words and actions show an understanding of Treaty of Waitangi principles and Māori perspective as tangata whenua.

Level 2. Shows an understanding of diverse cultures:

- Demonstrates a good understanding of tikanga Māori and other cultural practices.
- Is self-aware of gaps in, and a desire to increase, their cultural knowledge and experience.
- Actions demonstrate a commitment to Māori perspective as tangata whenua.



- Actively seeks cultural consultation and supervision.
- Accesses resources to make sure culturally appropriate and language appropriate services are provided.

Level 3. Moves comfortably within different cultures:

- Can understand and be understood in language(s) used by a significant proportion of the local population base.
- Draws on cultural resources, support frameworks and Māori models of practice to improve their own practice.
- Participates comfortably in cultural practices when with children and their families/whānau.
- Supports people to identify and access appropriate cultural supports and resources.

**Facilitating change through assessment and intervention skills.** A person with this competency supports planned approaches to change for the benefit of the child within the family/whānau.

Level 1. Undertakes assessments that recognise and explore strengths, protective factors, risks and needs of a child and their family/whānau:

- Looks for underlying causes and seeks to address those.
- Identifies strengths and needs of families/whānau and the child to develop plans that are realistic and measurable, and ensures actions and solutions are safe.
- Uses a structured approach to planning which includes clear action steps and timeframes.
- Focuses on supporting and working with people rather than doing things for them.
- Is reflective and helps others reflect, see different points of view, explore priorities and be motivated to improve their well-being.
- Regularly reviews and updates plans with children and families/whānau.
- Identifies the time for closure and plans for this supervision.

Level 2. Demonstrates working with children and families/whānau to make progress toward agreed goals:

- Notices, acknowledges, records, celebrates and builds on achievements and changes.
- Fosters a positive learning environment where change is seen as an opportunity for growth.
- Takes into account different learning styles and adapts their approach accordingly.
- Ascertains family/whānau willingness, confidence and the capacity around the agreed plan and tasks.
- Works with the family/whānau to identify realistic parenting expectations and enables parents to develop strategies for change.
- Implements closure strategies and plans, including affirming changes made and providing future options.

Level 3. Review effectiveness of all plans from an outcome perspective and demonstrate the transfer of this learning into other work with children and families/whānau:

- Reviews assessment and intervention outcomes, and applies strengths and needs to the intervention.
- Initiates case reviews/debriefs to facilitate team learning using strengths and safety-based tools.
- Helps others develop innovative ways of dealing with problems including the strengths of the community.



- Applies identified information/trends from assessments and interventions to influence community initiatives from both a strengths and needs/risks perspective.
- Proposes changes to processes to improve SWiS service outcomes.
- Uses reflective practice when evaluating service delivery from own and families/whānau perspective at closure, and strengthens future practice through reflective practice.

**Application of specialist knowledge and skills.** A person with this competency uses professional experience together with professional social work theory to accurately assess and address needs of children and families/whānau.

Level 1. Has a general understanding of the social work field of child and family/whānau in schools/kura and applies this knowledge in day-to-day work:

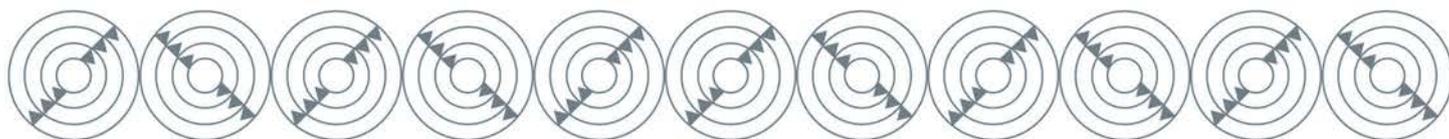
- Understands own role and maintains boundaries around this.
- Demonstrates professional experiences that support integration of theory with social work practice.
- Demonstrates a good understanding of children's learning and development.
- Draws on relevant theory and knowledge when assessing strengths, needs/risks and family/whānau dynamics and providing support around these.
- Understands the requirements of ethical decision making around child and family/whānau work.
- Demonstrates a good understanding of education legislation and school/kura protocols.
- Monitors safety and security indicators for children and families/whānau and does not hesitate to challenge and take appropriate action when necessary.

Level 2. Has in-depth knowledge and skill in the social work field of child and family/whānau in schools/kura:

- Takes action to keep up-to-date on relevant knowledge and research.
- Educates others involved in the school/kura-based community about the social work role.
- Ensures knowledge of children's learning and development contributes to achieving educational and social outcomes.
- Uses a range of skills to advocate for children and families/whānau.
- Uses specialist knowledge to add value to the multidisciplinary team.
- Works together with colleagues in the field of child and family/whānau social work to build their capability.
- Makes effective use of current tools and approaches in the social work field of child and family/whānau, especially in relation to schools/kura.
- Works effectively with education legislation, and school/kura protocols.

Level 3. Has expertise in the social work field of child and family/whānau in schools/kura and demonstrates this:

- Has a deep understanding of the social work field of child and family/whānau work in schools/kura and is regarded by colleagues inside and outside the organisation as an expert.
- Uses specialist knowledge and experience to innovate/significantly improve the service's ability to achieve its goals.
- Utilizes and contributes an awareness of trends and new developments within the social work field of child and family/whānau.
- Contributes to social and education policy development.



**Managing conflict.** A person with this competency takes action to reduce/resolve conflict with other professionals.

Level 1. Recognises and responds to conflict:

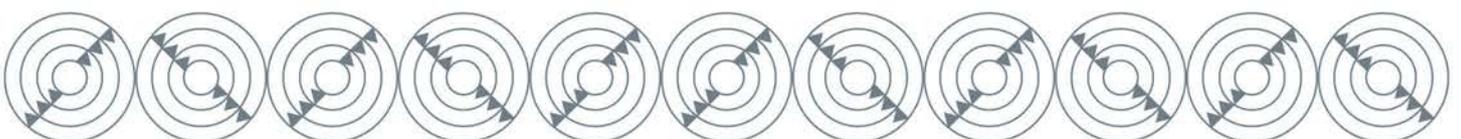
- Is prepared for, and takes steps to minimize, conflict.
- Keeps calm in situations involving conflict or aggression.
- Recognises that conflict can be constructive in some situations.
- Defuses tense situations using active listening and encourages others to do the same.
- Addresses own and others' immediate safety issues in a conflict situation.
- Recognises when a conflict is beyond own expertise and seeks assistance.
- Takes steps to seek self-care after experiencing conflict.

Level 2. Resolves simple conflicts:

- Addresses potential conflicts before they become serious. Facilitates reduction/resolution of conflict by exploring each person's concerns and needs.
- Helps those in conflict generate creative options that meet both parties' needs.
- Supports action to implement solutions and resolve conflict.
- Acts calmly and maintains a focus on purpose in situations of conflict.

Level 3. Takes action to resolve complex or on-going conflicts:

- Actively applies mediation and negotiation strategies for reducing the incidence and/or managing the impact of major conflicts.
- Engages people effectively – helps them see and accept appropriate responsibility for their part in destructive situations.
- Continues to have a functional working relationship where possible after conflict has occurred.



## APPENDIX 2: PROGRAMME WORK

This appendix has the list of behaviours that make up the competency.

**Assessing strengths/needs.** A person with this competency determines what programmes are required through analysis of existing strengths and needs.

Level 1. Observes and identifies collective strengths and needs through their interaction with the school/kura community:

- Discusses strengths and needs observed across schools/kura with school/kura professionals.
- Observes trends across individual referrals and notes these.
- Seeks information about what others think the strengths and needs are by taking time to enquire about these and reflects back this information.
- Defines and responds to behaviours through a trauma –informed lens. Asks what has happened to this child rather than what's wrong with this child?

Level 2. Can describe how widespread the need is along with any possible barriers and challenges related to addressing the need:

- Shows evidence of numbers across the school's/kura's community where the need is having an effect.
- Can identify what challenges and obstacles may be present around addressing the need from discussions with schools/kura and the wider community.
- Can evidence what will change or improve for the whole school/kura community if the need is addressed.

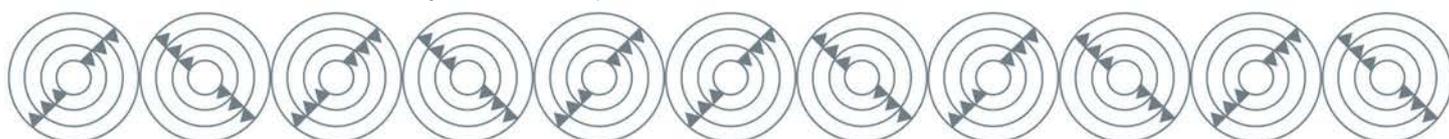
Level 3. Undertakes analyses of trends in their caseload and can link these to wider social issues:

- Discusses in supervision the key trends they are noticing with regard to social issues for their area and how planned group activities may assist with this.
- Shows awareness and insight about what is happening throughout the community and how this relates to what is happening for their schools/kura.
- Takes time to research and provide evidence of how SWiS programmes can support wider local and regional initiatives.

**Implementation.** A person with this competency implements a programme with consideration to group management, relationship building, and the environment.

Level 1. Facilitates the implementation of existing programmes:

- Completes a needs assessment and resource proposal.
- Can describe what a programme is going to achieve through articulating the difference between goals (broad aims) and objectives (action steps to achieve the goals).
- Liaises with other professionals in the community to promote successful programmes.
- Ensures resources listed include risk management plans and caregiver consent forms.
- Contributes to building a safe environment through careful selection of the group participants and has identified behaviour management strategies if required.
- Gives consideration to timing and physical location to run a programme.
- Parents, professionals, and children are aware of the purpose of the programme and understand clearly what is being undertaken.



Level 2. Leads programmes:

- Always places child safety as the first priority in all situations and can articulate how they do this.
- Demonstrates understanding of manageable group numbers, such as number ratios and safety requirements.
- Takes time to plan and structure sessions that can also be followed by others.
- Can utilise and implement a range of behaviour management strategies.
- Shows a good understanding of Education Outside of the Classroom (EOTC) requirements and provider requirements, along with health and medical consent processes where required.
- Manages the individual child's medical and personal information in a way that maintains confidentiality and privacy.

Level 3. Implement programmes that require involvement from other adults such as professionals and parents/caregivers and manage the additional complexities around this:

- Has a thorough understanding and can explain to others about vetting processes and has clear requirements in place for other adults that must be met.
- Builds effective and collaborative co-working relationships with others to support programme delivery and design.
- Is consistently seen as a competent leader and organiser of programmes that others have trust in, especially participants.
- Is engaged by other professionals to support programme delivery.
- Contributes to team planning around programme design.

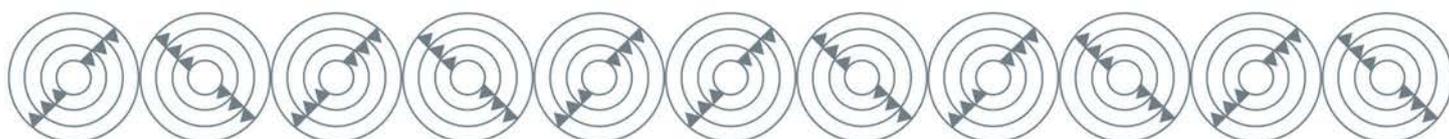
**Group facilitation skills.** A person with this competency can work with groups of children or adults so that programme objectives are met.

Level 1. Has clear and agreed group guidelines (ground rules, kawa or tikanga) and can implement these:

- When co-facilitating has agreed roles and understanding to establish a safe supportive and learning group environment.
- Discusses and seeks agreement on what group guidelines will underpin the programme, taking into consideration the venue.
- Has an agreed process if group guidelines are not or cannot be met.
- Ensures group guidelines are referred to and reinforced when necessary.
- Ensures the programme outline is followed.

Level 2. Understands group processes and dynamics and consistently maintains a safe, supportive, learning environment:

- Can describe the stages of group formation that usually occur and best ways to manage these.
- Takes time to reflect and acknowledge what is working well in groups.
- Listens respectfully and avoids defensive behaviour if conflicts arise.
- Can stop a process and take time to work through a difficulty if it occurs on either an individual or a group level.
- Anticipates emotional vulnerability and has identified ways to manage this.
- Maintains a focus on the whole group's welfare and what needs to occur for them all.



Level 3. Has effective conflict resolution knowledge and applies this to group situations to manage difficulties:

- Explores challenges from all angles in order to understand what is happening.
- Maintains a focus on respectful interaction at all times by enforcing and supporting taking individual responsibility for behaviour.
- Monitors and maintains individual needs within the group.
- Has pre-arranged involvement from others if required to best manage conflict and emotional vulnerability from a group or individual.
- Reflects on and develops strategies for the future around group management and facilitation.
- Leads effective debrief and closure processes with both the group and facilitators.

**Evaluation/review.** A person with this competency uses an evaluation and review process to inform the future sustainability of programme provision.

Level 1. Completes individual participant performance evaluations/assessments and overall programme performance and contributes this to the annual programme performance plan:

- Has age appropriate evaluation/assessment forms that are completed by group participants and facilitators.
- Determines whether programme objectives have been met.
- Can provide an overall summary of the programme outcome and provide feedback to stakeholders.
- Contributes overall programme summaries to annual programme planning.
- Engages in peer facilitation feedback.

Level 2. Seeks wider feedback from others such as family/whānau and other professionals and applies this to critique the strengths and weaknesses of a programme:

- Takes steps to assess how the programme has contributed to changes at home and school/kura for individuals and adds this to the overall programme evaluation.
- Engages in discussion with school/kura professionals about what they have observed for children during and on completion of a programme.
- Demonstrates continuous improvement thinking and discusses with their supervisor and other colleagues how the programme could be strengthened.
- Actively participates in peer facilitation feedback sessions.
- Applies new ideas from feedback or tries own ideas that may add value to the programme.

Level 3. Identifies trends from evaluations and actively contributes this feedback to the school/kura and community to improve planning around programmes:

- Takes steps to address the overall purpose of programmes and evaluates individual programmes within the context of meeting this.
- Participates in meetings with schools/kura and providers (for example, at cluster meetings) and contributes observations about what is best assisting children and families/whānau in terms of group based interventions.
- Constructively offers programme evaluations to best support wider community development outcomes and initiatives.



## APPENDIX 3: NETWORKING/COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This appendix has the list of behaviours that make up the competency.

**Interpersonal skills and communication.** A person with this competency creates understanding, builds relationships and has influence with others.

Level 1. Communicates clearly and uses active listening to hear what others are saying:

- Uses a range of communication skills to demonstrate attunement and genuineness.
- Listens attentively – can accurately summarise what people have said about their points of view, feelings and needs.
- Negotiates a mutual agreement - setting out goals, purpose and rules of engagement.
- Explains information clearly.
- Uses open questions to explore the situation, checking whether people have understood, gaining new information from others, and clarifying their own understanding.
- Shows in tone of voice, body language and manner, an empathy with people.
- Willingly responds to questions and concerns raised by people. Uses information and communication technology in a respectful, considered, and responsive way.

Level 2. Helps people express themselves and consider alternative points of view:

- Uses strengths and solution-focused questions to clarify and explore what is happening for others.
- Actively build an environment that allows for the expression and sharing of ideas enabling change and problem management.
- Logically and confidently communicates information/alternative points-of-view to people – pointing out benefits and opportunities.
- Responds in a non-defensive way when own position is challenged.

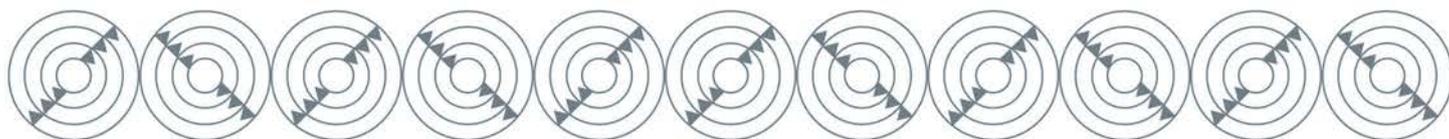
Level 3. Displays highly developed communication and influencing skills:

- Uses a range of techniques and strategies to help people with strongly held views to consider alternative points of view.
- Communicates vision/possibilities to people in a way that promotes enthusiasm and commitment for taking up opportunities.
- Acts positively in difficult and complex interpersonal situations – taking control when necessary to achieve important objectives.

**Linking to resources.** A person with this competency uses networks in the community to connect with and support families/whānau

Level 1. Uses general community knowledge and contacts to support children and families/whānau:

- Builds and maintains positive working relationships with a range of education, health, and social service personnel.
- Has up-to-date knowledge of a number of local agencies/community organisations (including whānau/hapu/iwi/Pacific Island organisations).
- Connects families/whānau with those who can provide the most appropriate support.
- Supports families/whānau in their contact with government and community agencies.
- Follows protocols and requirements for referral to a number of local agencies.
- Follows protocols and procedures for reporting to Oranga Tamariki



- Can convey information meaningfully.

Level 2. Uses specific community knowledge and contacts to support and, when necessary, advocate for children and families/whānau:

- Develops and maintains familiarity with a wide range of local agencies/community organisations (including whānau/hapu/iwi/Pacific Island organisations) and professionals.
- Advocates for children and families/whānau, as appropriate, with other professionals and agencies.
- Demonstrates knowledge of protocols and requirements for referral to a wide range of local agencies by providing information that ensures there is an informed choice.

Level 3. Uses extensive community knowledge and influential contacts to support children, families/whānau, and assist colleagues:

- Has knowledge of several agencies – such that colleagues seek advice and information on dealing with them.
- Expertise and experience is recognised by external agencies/organisations – for example by inviting participation in cross-agency project teams or committees.
- Uses networks to ‘open doors’ for children, families/whānau, and colleagues.
- Leads the development of networks through analysis of available service provision.

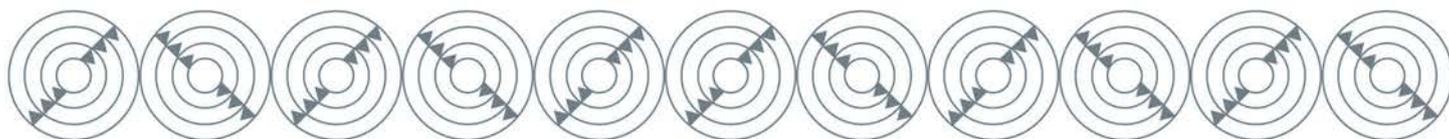
**Working in partnership.** A person with this competency works with other professionals to best assist children and families/whānau.

Level 1. Develops regular contact with other professionals within the school/kura and provider agency context:

- Develops a positive profile within the schools/kura which is supported by establishing and attending regular meetings and providing general feedback on work undertaken.
- Is known by school/kura staff and seen as approachable and visible especially during non-contact time.
- Has positive peer relationships with provider staff and connects with the agency in a predictable time-committed way to support this, including attending staff meetings and trainings.
- Takes time to connect and engage with the RTLB and health staff in a school/kura.
- Has regular catch ups with the deputy principal or principal and senior school/kura staff.
- Attends Family Group Conferences when invited.

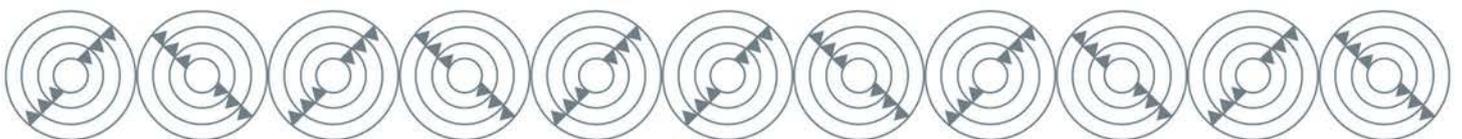
Level 2. Initiates and maintains positive relationships with other professionals both inside and outside of the school/kura and provider context:

- Attends meetings to profile the social work role within their schools/kura and with their provider.
- Has good networks and connections with other professionals within the community such as Work and Income, community police, local family/whānau violence networks, and other government and community service providers evidenced by accessing appropriate services for families/whānau.
- Has good connections with other school/kura social workers and an established peer network, for example, through regional hui.
- Facilitates and leads meetings; for example, family/whānau, and interagency meetings.



Level 3. Actively leads and promotes the development of effective professional relationships across a variety of settings:

- Demonstrates an ability to influence key decision-making within the school/kura and community.
- Is seen as credible and reliable evidenced by their involvement in both school/kura and community initiatives.
- Moves easily within a range of culturally diverse situations and groups.



## APPENDIX 4: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

This appendix has the list of behaviours that make up the competency.

**Administration.** A person with this competency plans and manages time efficiently, understands agency and wider policy and standards, and keeps accurate records.

Level 1. Effectively manages their own day to day work and keeps accurate records:

- Is organised and well-prepared for daily work.
- Manages time efficiently so that all tasks and responsibilities are completed on time and to the required standard.
- Responds promptly to all messages using the most appropriate means. Keeps up-to-date, legible, accurate and complete written and computer records as required.
- Provides records that contribute to successful auditing.
- Produces professional written external and internal reports as required.
- Uses non-contact time productively.
- Regularly monitors task progress against work plans.
- Informs others of whereabouts to support personal safety.

Level 2. Plans and prioritises their own work effectively in times of complexity and unpredictable situations:

- Plans, prioritises and effectively implements their own work activities in an environment where interruptions and unexpected events are the norm rather than the exception.
- Asks for and accesses workload support when required.
- Adjusts and shows adaptability and flexibility around daily schedule.

Level 3. Can instruct others in agency policy and standards:

- Demonstrates time management to a high standard through the successful completion of administrative tasks in required timeframes.
- Supports the work of others through their skills and experience of agency policy, standards, and tools.
- Mentors or supports new staff around administrative tasks and understanding agency policy and standards.
- Supports others around computer usage and systems.

**Supervision and reflective practice.** A person with this competency utilises professional supervision and reflective practice to support practice excellence.

Level 1. Attends supervision regularly and engages in reflective practice:

- Is prepared and organised for regular one-to-one supervision.
- Understands the reflective practice focus of supervision.
- Consults with supervisor when facing challenging situations and regularly identifies practice challenges to bring to supervision.
- Ensures supervision safely supports own social work practice to be of a high standard.
- Utilises other forms of supervision as well, such as peer and cultural supervision.
- Identifies, manages and mitigates risks to families/whānau and the service.
- Is open and receptive to suggestions made about practice.



- Shows a willingness to consider how unresolved and current personal issues may affect one's work.

Level 2. Demonstrates putting practice reflection back into daily work:

- Uses supervision to discuss connections between theory and research to practice situations.
- Seeks to facilitate own learning as well as build solutions for specific situations.
- Describes the application of contributions from reflected learning to new situations when working with children and families/whānau.
- Is aware of stress and situations that may put personal safety at risk and takes action to ensure own well-being.
- Demonstrates an increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses in own practice.

Level 3. Develops new ways of working that can be utilised by others:

- Identifies and analyses patterns and trends emerging from supervision and acts to respond to these.
- Initiates/develops new or improved practices to enhance practice and the ability to deliver outcomes.
- Makes space for emotional, spiritual, and cultural reflection within supervision and at other times to connect personal and professional development.
- Takes a lead role in peer supervision and mentoring opportunities.
- Puts forward critical reflection that addresses social justice and wider issues.

**Personal and professional development.** A person with this competency models a high standard of work and seeks to improve this through partaking in personal and professional development opportunities.

Level 1. Demonstrates the key elements of quality practice:

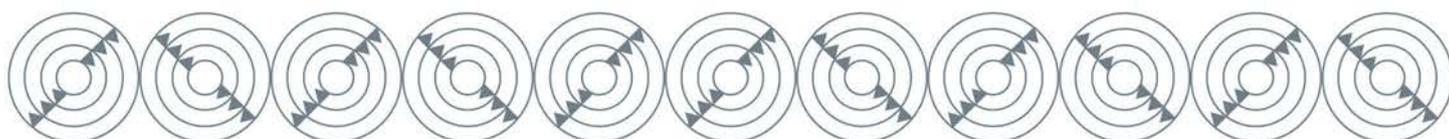
- Sets high standards for themselves and seeks feedback on quality of their own work.
- Seeks and takes up opportunities to learn and develop especially from supervision.
- Actions reflect an understanding of the child-centred nature of the work.
- Participates actively in training and professional development opportunities that are undertaken.
- Engages in regular performance reviews including identifying professional and personal needs.

Level 2. Takes responsibility to enhance and improve own personal and professional development:

- Has a structured and theoretically sound approach to work with ways identified to enhance this.
- Seeks training opportunities from difficult practice experiences.
- Displays flexibility in thinking and practice and a willingness to take on new information.
- Follows through on professional or personal development learning and actively applies this in their work.
- Develops and puts forward a rationale for resourcing around professional development.

Level 3. Contributes to and provides professional development:

- Identifies, and advocates for, opportunities to increase service effectiveness in achieving outcomes for children and families/whānau.



- Identifies opportunities for increasing team's knowledge and expertise.
- Provides feedback to own team and others from attending professional or personal learning opportunities.
- Contributes to the wider body of knowledge of the social workers in schools service and social work in general, for example, through workshop delivery, research, papers, or other presentations.

**Teamwork.** When a person has this competency their actions reflect a commitment to their colleagues and the organisation.

Level 1. Participates in the team:

- Sees themselves as part of a team – does not work in isolation.
- Participates in actions to enhance team spirit.
- Speaks honestly and respectfully about colleagues, the organisation and schools/kura.

Level 2. Actively contributes to the team:

- Offers and seeks support from colleagues and management.
- Words and actions show support for the vision and decisions of the team.
- Makes constructive contributions to team meetings, team building, and team review.

Level 3. Takes an informal leadership role in team:

- Volunteers to take on responsibility within the team.
- Constructively uses skills and experience to provide leadership and help the team achieve its goals.
- Is able to liaise, represent, and report back to the team.

**Self-care.** A person with this competency can articulate their needs and take steps to meet these.

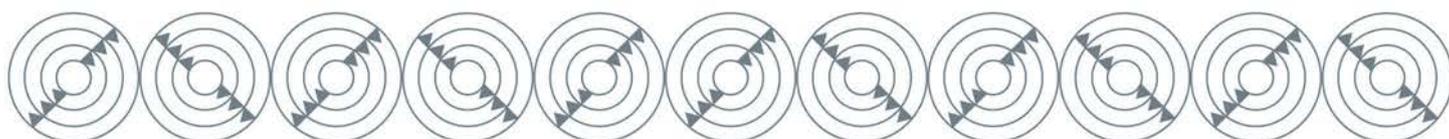
Level 1. Supports own well-being and recognises indicators of stress and trauma:

- Can generally describe how stress affects them personally and how they know this.
- Can generally describe the impact of traumatic events and the signs of this.
- Uses supervision to monitor own well-being.
- Can articulate what happens for them behaviourally when experiencing stress.
- Acknowledge that stress is often a part of working life and feel able to talk about it.

Level 2. Can safely articulate what is happening if experiencing stress or trauma and what assistance they require:

- Proactively takes opportunities to talk with others especially in supervision when experiencing stress.
- Notices and takes action to get help when they realise their behaviour (as a result of stress) may be being affected, for example, they seek help with prioritising and time management.
- Asks for help and explains steps they are taking to best manage personal and professional self-care.
- Can develop a self-care plan with clear strategies.

Level 3. Utilises their own resilient traits and coping skills to manage stress and trauma and seek appropriate help if required:



- Can articulate what resilient traits they have individually, or with work support, and apply these to manage difficult times.
- Keeps a positive focus in difficult or pressured situations that supports themselves and others.
- Is aware of supports when requiring more intensive help (for example, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) or medical advice) and shows readiness to accept this.
- Displays flexibility and willingness to change their coping behaviour if required.
- Recognises stress and trauma in others and support them to seek assistance.

