



## South East Flexi Schools Network

### South East Network - Youth+ Duty of Care Policy

Policy number	SEN/DOCP/0117	Version	December 2017
Drafted by	Network Principal	Approved by	NP/CP/HoC
Responsible person	Network Principal	Scheduled review date	December 2018

#### Introduction

The South East Network, Youth+ is committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of all young people who are engaged with our school communities. The Network recognises that young people who attend a Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) may have particular care arrangements, life experiences and personal vulnerabilities that require specialist support in the school environment and endeavours to provide a high level of care to enable young people to flourish.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide the Network's approach to meeting the duty of care owed to young people who are currently enrolled at an FLC or who are known to the FLC.

#### Policy

The Network recognises that a duty to provide reasonable care is owed to all young people enrolled across the Network of FLCs, as well as those young people who are known to the Network, such as formerly enrolled students or students who are interested to enrol at an FLC. This duty of care exists on all school sites, as well as during school activities and in certain non-school contexts (as outlined in the *EREA Code of Conduct*). The way duty of care is exercised in any given circumstance takes into consideration the age, developmental stage and particular vulnerabilities of each young person, as well as the potential risks associated with school facilities and activities.

#### AUTHORISATION

Chloe Hand  
Network Principal, Youth+  
December 2017

## Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the **Network Principal** (or a delegated authority) to implement this policy and to monitor its performance.

It is the responsibility of the **Head of Campus / Head of School** to ensure that:

- They are familiar with the duty of care policies and procedures, and that they follow them accordingly;

It is the responsibility of **all staff working in the South East Network, Youth+** to ensure that:

- They are familiar with the duty of care policies and procedures, and that they follow them accordingly;

It is the responsibility of the **Network Principal** to ensure that:

- All **Heads of Campus/ Heads of School** are aware of their responsibilities in regard to duty of care;
- **Heads of Campus/ Heads of School** are given continuous support and guidance to fulfil their duty of care.

## Duty of Care procedures

### Definition

A duty of care means that the holder has an obligation to take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to the person who is owed a duty of care. The duty is imposed on Edmund Rice Education Australia and its schools by common law or by statute. Duty of care can also refer to the same duty that attaches personally to a staff member. Whenever a relationship exists between a staff member of the South East Network, Youth+ and a past, present or prospective student of the Network, a duty of care also exists.

### Guidelines

#### *Enrolment*

During the enrolment meeting a staff member will explain to the young person and their guardian that a duty of care exists and how this is enacted in practice. This includes explaining the limits of confidentiality, supervision during school activities, how any instances of unsafe behaviour will be followed up, and communication with guardians when the young person is not at school as expected. This information will also be conveyed in enrolment documentation that the young person and guardian are supported to complete.

#### *Supervision*

Each school site will have in place a supervision roster and arrangements for supervision during offsite activities, as outlined in the *South East Network, Youth+ Supervision Policy*.

#### *Communication with parents & guardians*

Staff members will communicate regularly with parents / legal guardians and any other services for whom consent has been provided, for the purposes of best supporting the safety and wellbeing of enrolled students. On any occasion that a young person does not arrive or stay at school as expected, is injured or believed to be at risk, staff members will share this information with the young person's legal guardians.

Where a young person is believed to have experienced, or be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect, this will be communicated to the relevant state-based authorities, as per the relevant mandatory reporting guidelines and child safety standards.

#### *Informal and incidental contact with young people*

Where a relationship exists between a staff member and a young person, and the staff member comes into incidental contact with that young person outside of school hours / activities, the duty of care will remain with the staff member. If the staff member reasonably believes that the young person is at risk of harm, they will take reasonable steps to ensure the young person's safety. This may include contacting the Head of Campus / Head of School or the young person's legal guardian.

### *Young people who are particularly vulnerable*

Where a young person has been identified as being particularly vulnerable, extra measures will be taken as required in order to exercise a reasonable duty of care for the young person. The following factors may signal that the young person is in need of additional support:

- The young person has been diagnosed with a disability, or the young person's presentation and engagement in the learning environment leads staff members to believe they may have an undiagnosed or undisclosed disability or significant health concern;
- The young person has recently experienced family breakdown, or changes in their housing and care arrangements;
- The young person is known to have mental health concerns or to regularly use illicit substances;
- The young person has demonstrated in other ways that they may have difficulty comprehending or enacting directions from staff members, or acting in ways that maintain their safety and the safety of others.

The need for additional and highly individualized supports will be determined through:

- A narrative psychosocial assessment undertaken at the point of enrolment and regularly thereafter (see Appendix 1 - *Youth+ South East Network Wellbeing Rubric*)
- Other conversations held between staff members, the young person and their carers
- Consultation with former schools and other professionals who work with the young person (as long as the young person's guardians have provided informed consent for this to occur)
- Observation in the learning environment.

Appropriate measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Increased supervision, including line of sight arrangements as necessary
- The development of a *Safety & Support Plan (Appendix 3)*
- An individualized timetable
- Individualised or 1-1 social skills development sessions.

### **Related documents**

- *South East Network, Youth+, Supervision Policy*
- *South East Network, Youth+ Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct*

# APPENDIX 1 – Young Person Wellbeing Rubric



## Young Person Wellbeing Rubric

LEARNING					
		1	2	3	4
1	<b>Attendance</b>	Attends the majority of school days and absences are generally explained in advance / on the day.	Regular attendance pattern is established and improving. Absences are explained in advance / on the day.	Attendance is inconsistent. Young person may have other responsibilities or issues impacting attendance.	Attendance is poor. Absences are generally not explained in advance and young person is at risk of disengaging.
2	<b>Attention and memory</b>	Always attentive and able to complete and recall tasks without additional prompting.	Generally attentive and can usually remember instructions and concepts with prompting.	Attention span is inconsistent and can impact on learning and participation; has difficulty remembering instructions and concepts	Short attention span which impacts significantly on learning engagement and participation. Very low ability to recall previous concepts or content.
3	<b>ESL / EAL needs</b>	English skills are not a barrier to communication or learning.	Has sufficient English skills for most social needs. May require assistance with formal learning.	Can communicate socially but does not have English skills required for formal learning or situations.	Requires interpreters for most communication needs.
4	<b>Functional literacy</b>	Working at age appropriate level.	Working below age appropriate level.	Working below age appropriate level and lacking confidence in literacy tasks. May require structure and support with literacy tasks.	Lacks functional skill set in basic literacy tasks. Avoids literacy tasks and requires significant structure and support to participate.
5	<b>Functional numeracy</b>	Working at age appropriate level.	Working below age appropriate level.	Working below age appropriate level and lacking confidence in numeracy tasks. May require structure and support with numeracy tasks.	Lacks functional skill set in basic numeracy tasks. Avoids numeracy tasks and requires significant structure and support to participate.
6	<b>Goal setting</b>	Sets appropriate and achievable long and short term goals.	Can set short and limited longer term goals.	Will respond to prompted small and short term goal setting. May describe broad or general long term goals.	Not interested in engaging in conversation around goals including short term goals
7	<b>Learning needs</b>	No learning support needs; competent and confident learner	Identified learning support needs; support and adjustments made.	Moderate support required to facilitate learning needs. Specialised teaching required.	Diagnosed disability; significant specialised interventions required to support learning needs.
8	<b>Participation in learning</b>	Actively engages in a variety of informal and formal learning tasks.	Generally engages in formal learning opportunities.	Attempts to engage in some formal learning opportunities.	Chooses not to engage in or attempt most formal learning tasks
9	<b>Satisfaction in work</b>	Gains considerable satisfaction from own work; celebrates achievements	Gains some satisfaction from own work.	Appears to gain little satisfaction from own work. Reluctant to show work to others.	Appears to gain no satisfaction from formal learning. May destroy own work or refuse to show work to others.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SERVICE USE					
		1	2	3	4
10	Cooperation	Generally cooperates with others.	Generally cooperates with others, but is occasionally disruptive.	At times disruptive and uncooperative or passive.	Is disruptive and uncooperative or very passive.
11	Court or youth justice involvement	No involvement with Youth Justice System	Past involvement with no ongoing matters. OR Court Diversions	Involvement with Youth Justice system	Ongoing involvement with Youth Justice, periods of detention, community corrections
12	Empathy	Able to empathise with other viewpoints. Regularly displays empathy in verbal and non-verbal ways.	Shows some empathy for others.	Shows limited ability to empathise with others.	Generally unable to empathise with others.
13	Involvement of family services	No involvement or need for support from family services.	Some identified issues within the family home. May benefit from a referral, or have had previous involvement from family services.	Current involvement from family support services.	High level of family support currently required; services have had involvement over a number of years.
14	Peer connections	Usually open and engages with many other people.	Has connections to a small group of peers with a range of life views.	Connects with a small group of peers with similar life views.	Is withdrawn from others.
15	Support networks	Has a range of supportive relationships with family, friends and other community members. Accesses services as required.	Has sustained several supportive relationships with adults and peers. Willing to access support services when needed.	Can identify a small number of trusted adults and peers, although these relationships are difficult to sustain. Open to accessing support services with encouragement.	Unable to identify adults or peers with whom they have a positive and sustained relationship. Does not seek help from informal or formal support networks.
16	Working with others	Able to work collaboratively and part of a group. Contributes actively to group discussions.	Can work in group with structure, monitoring and support.	Can work well in small group / with certain people. May participate in group discussions in his/her interest areas.	Requires one on one assistance and generally doesn't participate in group discussions. May distract others.

INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS					
		1	2	3	4
17	Dealing with change	Positively deals with change.	Can respond to changes with support or deals well with changes that are personally desired.	Needs support to plan for or deal with change.	Generally unable to adapt to changed situations. Change can escalate behaviours.
18	Eating and nutrition	Regular eating patterns, healthy eating, shares meals with others	Mostly makes appropriate meal choices, will eat with others with encouragement, awareness of good food choices and willing to try new foods.	Irregular meals, unhealthy food choices, avoids eating with others.	Significant disruption to eating, poor food choices, avoids eating in company of others. Eating disorder. Neglect – no food available
19	Home Environment	Stable and supportive living environment.	Mostly living at home or is stable in care.	Unstable, dynamic living situation. Little housing support.	Homeless or highly volatile living situation.
20	Illicit substance use	No substance use	Recreational /opportunistic use – sometimes impacts on learning capacity	Intermittent use which can impact on learning capacity/wellbeing	Daily use; dependency; impacting on learning capacity/ wellbeing
21	Mental Health	No identified mental health issues	Reporting or showing symptoms of mental health conditions. OR Mental health condition well managed/good self-management strategies	Diagnosed or knowledge of mental health condition – minimal intervention, mostly stable. OR undiagnosed, unstable and requires clinical intervention.	Diagnosis of mental health issues that requires intervention, or significant mental health concerns identified by staff or family and seeking clinical intervention
22	Mood and affect	Shows personal insight into emotional state of self and others. Mood is generally positive and changes appropriately in response to environmental and personal factors.	Shows some insight and empathy toward self and others. Generally positive and optimistic but sometimes negative emotions persist.	Shows limited insight into emotional state of self and others. Emotions escalate quickly and may take a long time to calm. Generally pessimistic or anxious.	Young person experiences erratic moods and is frequently heightened. Generally negative or manic affect.
23	Physical health	Generally has high energy levels and maintains good health.	Health and energy levels are variable according to stressors.	Has limited vitality and enthusiasm – often appears to have health issues.	Is often unwell and has ongoing health issues.
24	Potential for self-harm	No self-reports of self-harm.	Has expressed thoughts of self-harm.	Talks openly about self-harm.	Evidence of self-harm on record.
25	Regulation and self-control	Is able to monitor and regulate own emotions. Decisions are generally rational.	May struggle to regulate emotions and decision-making in certain stressful situations. Can be supported to regulate and make good choices.	Struggles to self-regulate and moderate decisions. May display inappropriate physical or verbal actions. Potential to respond with violence in escalated situations.	Significant difficulty in ability to self-regulate. Regularly manifests in disassociation, explosive or violent behaviours, poor decision making.
26	Resilience	Enjoys challenges in many fields and manages by him/herself.	Willing to try something new/can manage challenges with support.	Moderate encouragement and support needed. At times is easily overwhelmed by challenges.	Requires a high level of encouragement, structure and support to engage at school.

INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS					
		1	2	3	4
27	Self-concept	Generally speaks positively about themselves and displays self-care.	Generally speaks positively about themselves and displays self-care. Will occasionally express self-doubt or demonstrate careless behaviours.	Often speaks negatively about themselves and has at times engaged in activities that they know to be harmful.	Has a negative perception of themselves and regularly engages in behaviours that are destructive or that they know to be harmful.
28	Sleeping	Regular sleeping patterns	Mild sleep disturbance, able to function and attend on time/ concentrate	Moderate sleep difficulties, impacts on ability to attend on time, impacts on concentration/attention	Significantly disturbed sleeping patterns, impacts on functional capacity, impacts on ability to attend/focus
29	Transport	Fully independent	Requires support	Relies heavily on service provider vehicles/ family support/ other agency	Fully dependent – would not attend school without pick up from home
30	Trauma or neglect	No reported history trauma or neglect.	Mild history of trauma/grief /neglect. Engaged in treatment/support.	Moderate history/level of trauma/neglect/loss which appears to be impacting on social and/or learning engagement. Support and intervention needs	Significant history of complex trauma or neglect which appears to be impacting on ability to function/form relationships, engage in learning.

Acknowledgements: Material has been adapted from the Student Intake Rubric; Malak Re-engagement Centre, Darwin and the Student Engagement Matrix, ICAN, South Australia to suit the young person profile of Youth+ Flexible Learning Centres.

## APPENDIX 2 – Engagement Plan



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal 2: \_\_\_\_\_

TERM \_\_

Week 1	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>
Week 2	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>
Week 3	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>
Week 4	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>	Attended <input type="checkbox"/>



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South East Flexi Schools Network

## Safety & Support Plan

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

I get upset, anxious or angry when:



When I get upset, anxious or angry, I find it hard to:

- be honest
- be respectful
- be safe & legal
- participate

I might do these things:

- Stop talking
- Yell or swear
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Lose concentration
- Move around a lot
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Clench my fists or jaw
- Breathe very quickly
- \_\_\_\_\_





# Youth\*

## South East Flexi Schools Network

Some things I can do to help myself feel calm and ok are:



- Go for a walk
- Take 3 deep breaths
- Have a hot drink
- Listen to music
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Draw or colour-in
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Some things an adult or friend can do to help me feel calm and ok are:



- Go for a walk with me
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Sit next to me
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Ask if I'm ok
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

I know that I am calm when I:

The people who need a copy of this plan are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We will review this plan on: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

