

NZHEA Position Statement: External Providers

There are a number of external providers who state that they have programmes that align with learning in the Health and Physical Education (HPE) learning area. These providers may provide a:

- one-off speakers on a health and well-being related issue,
- one-size-fits-all or modifiable programme that is delivered/taught by the provider,
- resource to support teaching and learning,
- one-size-fits-all (off the shelf) or modifiable programme that is delivered by the teacher, with or without classroom or PLD support from the external provider.

For all of the above, the external provider's programme or event may be run in health education time and/or contribute to a whole-school approach to promoting student well-being.

In health education time:

NZHEA would like to reinforce the intent of The New Zealand Curriculum and The Education Council's Our Code, Our Standards, which both underline the importance of the role of the teacher when planning for teaching and learning, engaging learners in learning, and assessment for and of learning. We believe that many programmes promoted to schools that claim to be aligned to HPE, have surface links only. We insist that teachers of health education are the best equipped and qualified to identify students' learning needs, to plan and teach lessons that meet these needs, and assess the extent to which intended learning outcomes have been met.

While external providers can be used as a resource to support health education learning, one-off speakers are not known to be effective (Ministry of Education, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2015) for education (that is, teaching and learning) or intervention purposes. Teachers and school leaders need to be critically evaluative before, during, and after engaging with external providers in order to ensure that the purpose for making use of these services or resources is consistent with education policy and the school's curriculum. See the NZHEA website for a document providing guidance in this area. It is worth checking the provider's website (or asking) for an evaluation or testimonials about what they offer.

In primary schools, NZHEA believes that The New Zealand Curriculum allows ample opportunities for health education learning to occur across the curriculum. This includes integration with numeracy and literacy rich learning, as well as opportunities to take action within the school community, as well as partnerships between home, school and community. A range of external expertise may be drawn upon to enhance, support and complement health education learning – but not replace the role of the teacher.

As part of a whole-school approach (WSA):

External providers may make a contribution to a whole school approach to promoting well-being by providing students with information to raise awareness about specific health or wellbeing issues, or deliver learning experiences that have relevance for health education.

Most students do not study health education beyond year 10. Therefore, in secondary schools, external providers may offer opportunities for learning that is positioned outside of the formal curriculum. These externally provided speakers or programmes contributing to a WSA may or may not claim to be connected to HPE in general, and health education specifically.

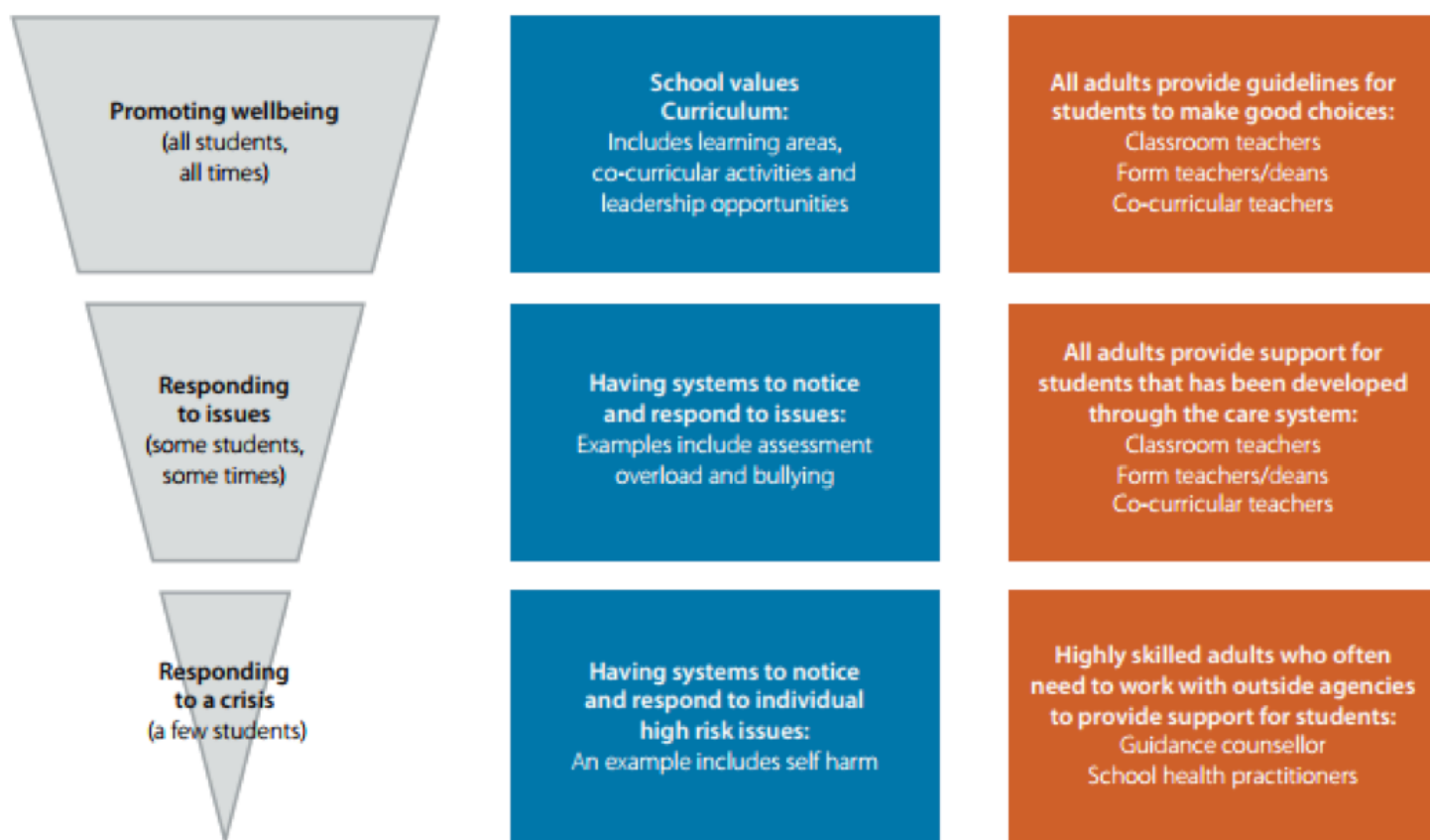
Note also the Ministry of Education's guidance to schools relating to the Vulnerable Children's Act (2014): <http://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/VCAPracticalGuide.pdf>. Specifically, volunteers do not need to be safety checked but given the sensitivity of health and wellbeing related information are external providers in your schools working in organisations that have a Vulnerable Children's Act policy?

It is NZHEA's belief that when students participate in such activities outside formal health education curriculum programmes, it is important that:

- prior and follow-up learning opportunities for all students are considered;
- school and/or community-based pastoral and early intervention support is available for some students when such needs are identified (applicable to the well-being context),
- access to specialist support in the community is available for the few students who require this and there are school systems in place that help make these links.

These three levels of support can be illustrated in the intervention triangle, as described by the Education Review Office in the document *Wellbeing for success: A resource for schools* (ERO, 2016). The following diagram is an extract from this document (p.17). The diagram demonstrates that external providers of the type referred to in this position statement, used as part of a WSA, contribute to the top section of the triangle (i.e. they are focused on promoting well-being and prevention of wellbeing issues, aimed at all students).

Likewise curriculum teaching and learning programmes may contribute to this top layer of the intervention triangle, but not all health education teaching and learning will necessarily be prevention focused in the WSA sense and instead provide a valued learning pathway through the curriculum and to further study and work beyond school.



References:

Education Council (2017). Our Code, Our Standards. <https://educationcouncil.org.nz/content/our-code-our-standards>

Education Review Office (2016). Wellbeing for success: a resource for schools. <http://www.ero.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Wellbeing-resource-WEB.pdf>

Ministry of Education (2015). Sexuality education: a guide for principals, boards of trustees and teachers. <http://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-guidelines/Sexuality-education-a-guide-for-principals-boards-of-trustees-and-teachers>

Ministry of Education (2014). Alcohol and other drug education programmes – guide for schools. <http://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-guidelines/Alcohol-and-other-drug-education-programmes>

Ministry of Education (2007). The New Zealand Curriculum. Wellington: Learning Media.