

## PROCEDURE 15: PANDEMIC PLAN

### Whareorino School Board Resolution:

The Whareorino School Board delegates full responsibility to the Principal of Whareorino School to implement this procedure, to take and implement up-to-date advice from the Ministry of Health, and to implement Ministry of Education guidelines, as these guidelines become available.

### Rationale:

It is important that Whareorino School takes steps to protect staff, students, or children from future pandemics (global disease events such as influenza) or epidemics (local disease events such as, measles, hepatitis, tuberculosis, norovirus, whooping cough etc).

The Ministry of Health leads the Government's response to a pandemic. It is the responsibility of other agencies to plan for and respond to a pandemic in their respective sectors and settings, based on the direction set out by the Ministry of Health. At all times, updates and latest information should be accessed from the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Education will provide regular updates and guidelines for Whareorino School to follow.

Pandemics, by their nature, are unpredictable in terms of timing, severity and the population groups that are most affected. Planning for an infectious disease outbreak is as important as planning for other emergencies.

### Guidelines:

- The Pandemic Manager will be the Principal. The Action Plan will include:
  - The school protocol for dealing with sick staff / students.
  - Cleaning requirements and practices in case of a pandemic outbreak.
  - Consultation procedures to be used in each stage of pandemic.

## Pandemic Plan

### Stage 1 – Keep It Out (Border Management)

**Trigger:** Ministry of Health announces human-to-human transmission overseas, or Australia or Singapore closes their borders.

**Goal:** The pandemic plan is activated, and the school is ready for the subsequent phases, should the pandemic enter New Zealand.

- All staff, board members, students and parents are informed, understands their roles and responsibilities, and have confidence in the school's preparedness.

**Actions:** It is important that schools and early learning services maintain a clean environment to prevent the spread of illness. All facilities should have good ventilation and regular cleaning practices which can be increased in frequency following an outbreak.

Influenza viruses are inactivated by alcohol and by chlorine. Cleaning the surface with a neutral detergent followed by a disinfectant solution is recommended. Surfaces that are frequently touched with hands should be cleaned often, preferably daily.

- Update and activate staff and Board telephone and email trees.
- Check all contact details are correct
  - Staff
  - Students
  - BOT Members
- Ensure MOE local office has updated BOT / Principal Contact details.
- Brief staff on roles and responsibilities including:

- Local status
- Actions to be undertaken with students, including closing school and sending children home where necessary
- Outline to parents, possible methods of future communications e.g. national and local media and school website, Facebook page, school loop.
- With students, implement programmes to limit spread of influenza/disease e.g. hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, not spitting, staying at home when sick. Resources available through [tki.co.nz](http://tki.co.nz) or Ministry of Health website
- Advise cleaning contractors of need to implement Pandemic Cleaning Procedure. Since the school holds the cleaning contract the procedures in such an event will be to use detergent and/or bleach to clean all surfaces as advised by the MOH public health.
- Review school's resources to ensure that there are sufficient supplies of:
  - cleaning materials
  - tissues
  - hand sanitisers

**Resources:** Use *Ctrl+Click* to follow links below

- Regularly check for updates on the Ministry of Health website ([Ministry of Health NZ](http://Ministry of Health NZ))
- Use posters available from Ministry of Health [re cough / sneeze etiquette, handwashing](#)
- Consider social distancing strategies. Information on this is available from the [Ministry of Health](#).
- Liaise with your local Medical Officer of Health (MOoH):
  - Name: Corynne Boyle
  - Contact number: 021 2211556
  - [Corynne.boyle@waikatodhb.health.nz](mailto:Corynne.boyle@waikatodhb.health.nz)

## **Stage 2 – Stamp it Out (cluster control) for Schools outside Cluster Area**

**Trigger:** Ministry of Health announces human pandemic influenza/disease strain case(s) found in separate locations in New Zealand.

**Goals:**

- Schools inside cluster area are closed
- Schools outside cluster areas are on heightened alert
- Students, staff and parents are informed, understand their roles and responsibilities, and have confidence in their school's preparedness. School endeavours to keep their community calm and reduce panic.

**Actions:** Through consultation with the DHB emergency planner, local MOE, local Principals and BOT Chairperson the Principal will make the decision of the need to close the school.

- Communicate through established means the decision.
- Take care of students showing influenza symptoms:
  1. Set up isolation room (sick bay).
  2. In consultation with group (Action Point 1) arrange to send children home. Only children to go home are those whose parents either collect them from school or have given permission via phone or email that they are to go home.
  3. Notify any cases to health authorities as are requested
  4. Children staying at school to be kept in normal classes where possible (dependant on number of staff available) until children are collected or until end of school day.
- Cancel all extracurricular activities and planned class / school trips.
- Introduce extra cleaning as per outlined schedule. This will be determined by the nature of the pandemic and will be advised by the MOH community public health.

### **Stage 3 – Manage It (Pandemic Management)**

**Trigger:** Ministry of Health announces significant number of pandemic influenza/disease outbreaks at separate locations, or outbreaks spreading out of control.

**Goals:** School successfully activates closure procedures in response to multiple –cluster or nationwide outbreak.

**Actions:**

- Close school to students
- Advise all staff
- Post notices of closure on entry points – office, library, hall and each classroom block entrance
- Through local media (radio, television), school website, Facebook page, School Loop and voice message – telephone inform all interested groups:
  1. What the school is doing
  2. What parents could be doing with students
- Collaborate with local agencies in making school facilities available in pandemic response efforts.

### **Stage 4 – Recover from It (Recovery)**

**Trigger:** Population protected by vaccination and / or pandemic abated in New Zealand. *MOH Alert Code: Green*

**Goals:** School ensures continuing wellbeing of staff and students, and education services are fully restored.

**Actions:**

- Through media (radio, newspaper, and television), school website, Facebook page, telephone message and email /telephone, advise that school is reopen.
- As necessary arrange for trauma / grief counselling – contact M.O.E Group Special Education.
- With BOT and Senior Management undertake debrief of procedures undertaken.
- Staff revisit the importance of keeping safe guidelines with students (*see Stage 1 Point 7*).

**Procedures:**

- School protocol for dealing with sick / staff and students
- Take care of students and staff showing influenza/disease symptoms:
- Set up isolation room (sick bay).
- In consultation with Senior School Leadership, arrange to send children home. Only children to go home are those whose parents either collect them from school or have given permission via phone or email that they are to go home.
- Notify any cases to health authorities as requested
- Children staying at school to be kept in normal classes where possible (dependant on number of staff available) until children are collected or until end of school day.
- Cancel all extracurricular activities and planned class / school trips.
- Cleaning requirements and practices in case of a pandemic outbreak
- Cleaning contractor to provide procedures for the extra cleaning required in a pandemic, as part of their contractual obligations.
- This will be dependent on advice from MOH Public Health as to suitable agent to clean all services (detergents and /or bleach).
- Consultation procedures.

The following letter will be distributed to all parents/caregivers in the event of a pandemic. These letters may be in several languages.

*Dear Parent*

*We have been advised by the Ministry of Health of a serious pandemic outbreak and have been advised, for health and safety reasons, to close the school.*

*In order to ensure the health and safety of your children, we are advising you of the closure of the school until further notice.*

*Please ensure that your children are kept at home until this closure has been lifted. Regular updates on the situation can be ascertained from local and national media and the school Website Page.*

*Yours sincerely*

*<name>*

*Presiding Member*

*Whareorino School Board*

## **More information**

Use **Ctrl+Click** to follow links below

**Download this page as a factsheet: Planning for an epidemic/pandemic event**

<https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/PLANNING-FOR-AN-EPIDEMIC-PANDEMIC-EVENT.pdf>

**Pandemic planning guide for the education sector**

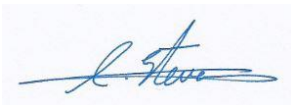
**Emergency Management Plan template (includes a template specifically for pandemics)**

**Communicable Diseases in Early learning services and Schools - Guide to legal powers**

<https://www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/student-and-staff-health/communicable-diseases-in-early-learning-services-and-schools-a-guide-to-legal-powers/>

**Preparing for emergencies, traumatic incidents, evacuations and lockdowns**

<https://www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/emergencies-and-traumatic-incident/preparing-for-emergencies-and-traumatic-incident/>



PRINCIPAL

Dated: February 1, 2022