



Pukekohe North School

Princes Street, Pukekohe. Phone 0-9-238-8552

EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC PLANNING/RESPONSE POLICY

Rationale

There is always a high risk of an epidemic and or a pandemic occurring. The District Health Board is constantly updating its pandemic plan and leading government work to prepare for a possible pandemic in New Zealand. All educational institutions must prepare in advance for the possibility of a pandemic.

Definition

A pandemic occurs when a disease emerges, spreading around the world and infecting many people at once. An epidemic is when the disease spreads within a country, i.e. New Zealand.

Purpose

1. To ensure that the school has a workable plan in the event that the District Health Board activates Yellow or Red Alerts.
2. To encourage everyday practices to limit the spread of viruses and infection.

Guidelines

1. Notification of an epidemic outbreak is likely to be received from either of: The District Health Board, The Ministry of Education or Auckland Regional Public Health Service.
2. Immediately following notification, the Principal (or person acting in this position) will discuss the matter with the senior management and if possible, the Board Chair.
3. Taking all available information into account, the Board Chair and Principal will decide whether or not to close the school and/or to send out applicable information to the school community.
4. If the decision has been made to close, the children will receive a special notice to take home outlining the reasons for the decision, how long the school could be closed for and how future information will be communicated to parents and caregivers.
5. If the decision has been made late in the day, the normal dismissal procedures are likely to be used to clear the school.
6. If the decision has been made earlier in the day, the staff will attempt to contact all parents / caregivers to arrange for the children to be collected from school. Confirmed contact from parents will be required if children are going to leave with anyone other than their parent or caregiver, although the Principal may use his or her discretion in this area.
7. If the notifying body deems it appropriate, all staff and students will be instructed to wear disposable face masks until they leave the school. (These will need to be purchased in advance and stored at the school).
8. Teachers will be expected to stay with their class or other group of children and/or carry out other tasks at the school, at the discretion of the Principal.
9. Before staff leave the school site, the Principal will outline details of how future instructions will be communicated.
10. Once the safety of the staff and pupils has been organised, the Principal will attempt to contact the Ministry of Education and the school's insurers.
11. Cleaning policies, supplies and practices will be reviewed as part of this policy.

Ratified by the Pukekohe North School Board of Trustees October 2019

Review Date October 2022