

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE (HAMILTON)

Pandemic Plan

Pandemic Planning Committee

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ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

PANDEMIC PROCEDURE

Rationale

It is essential that schools take all practical steps to protect staff and students from a possible influenza outbreak.

GUIDELINES

Pandemic Manager:

Principal and/or the Deputy Principal and/or Guidance Counsellor

Duties the Pandemic Manager" may perform include:

- Establishing a system to monitor staff who are ill or suspected of being ill, including contacting staff who are unexpectedly absent from work – has their doctor been notified of their illness? Have they been in contact with anyone? Have "contact" issues been addressed? Is someone able to care for them?
- Ensuring school has adequate supplies of tissues, medical and hand hygiene products, cleaning supplies and masks.

Medical advisor:

Support and advice from Hillcrest Medical Centre and Accident & Emergency Centres.

Activation of Pandemic Action Plan

The Ministry of Health will widely publicise any changes to the "alert codes", and may signal the need to activate action plans and continuity plans. The Ministry of Education has a communication contact "tree" to assist with keeping regional and local Ministry offices, education agencies, and education sector groups informed of these changes. Schools will most likely find out about changes to "alert codes" via media, or from a sector representative group.

Communication with the School Community

Each Board member will have a list of people to contact in an emergency – a 'phone tree'. The Pandemic Manager will contact the Board to activate the phone tree when and if necessary.

| Protection measure | Where applicable |
|--|---|
| Hand hygiene, cough etiquette, ventilation | Everyone, all the time |
| Health and safety policies | School, all the time |
| Social distancing | Everyone, whenever practical stay at least one metre away from other people. |
| Protective barriers | In situations where regular work practice requires unavoidable, relatively close contact with the public, for example, reception areas. |

Restricting workplace entry of people with influenza symptoms

Students who are unwell should remain at home and staff, parents and whānau should be advised not to come in to the school when they are feeling unwell, particularly if they are exhibiting any influenza symptoms. Unwell staff and students (through their parents/whānau) should be advised to contact a doctor by phone, and to stay at home until symptoms resolve.

Managing staff and students who become ill

Assess whether the person or child has any of the following:

- High fever (or feel feverish and hot)
- Headache, fatigue and weakness
- Sore throat, cough, chest discomfort, difficulty in breathing
- Muscle aches and pains.
- Been overseas recently to an affected country
- Been in contact with someone diagnosed with influenza.

Fill in the suspected influenza Notification Form. Take names of contacts (those who have been within one metre of them or in an enclosed place for more than 60 minutes). File form in office. Copy to PHN.

Organise for them to leave school immediately. Suggest they or their family call their doctor by telephone to advise that they have been in contact with a suspected influenza case.

If a sick child cannot leave school immediate because we cannot get hold of the parent, the child will be placed in a designated isolation zone i.e The Library or Room 15 (Which will become the designated sickbay during a pandemic).

Hygiene practices should be elevated in a pandemic to an even higher level than usual.

Remind staff and students not to share cups, dishes and cutlery; and ensure these items are thoroughly washed with soap and hot water after use.

Remove books, magazines and papers from common areas.

Consider ways of cleaning and/or restricting communal use of some play, physical education equipment and office equipment.

Emergency Pandemic Supplies

Breathing mask, Latex / non-latex gloves, Paracetamol, Disinfectant, Cleaning fluid, Toilet paper, Tissues, Janola Paper towels, Liquid soap/alcohol wash, Chux Cloths. These supplies will be kept in the Multi-Purpose Room cupboard on a high shelf marked Pandemic Supplies and will be checked monthly by the Pandemic managers.

LETTERS TO PARENTS – Included in Pandemic Plan Document

SCHOOL CLOSURE

Closing schools to students would not necessarily mean that facilities would be closed in a quarantine sense. Staff may still go to work, work remotely, or carry out 'alternative duties' for other agencies with their board's pre-approval. Facilities may also be used for alternative purposes such as Community Based Assessment Centres.

The [Education Act 1989](#) gives principals and boards powers to exclude particular students and staff or to close their school in certain circumstances:

- *Section 19* provides that a principal may exclude a student who may have a communicable disease (communicable diseases are specified in the Schedule to the Act. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza or 'bird flu' (HPAI subtype H5N1) was added on 12 February 2004. In practice, schools would generally proceed subject to advice received from health authorities.
- *Section 65E* provides that a board may close a school in an emergency such as an epidemic.
- *The Health (Infectious and Notifiable Diseases) Regulations* place duties on schools, teachers and parents in the case of a pandemic.
- *Regulation 14* provides that schools must exclude teachers and students who have an infectious disease.

Careful exercise of all these powers will be especially important in the "stamp it out" stage. Any decision by the board chair and principal to close the school should be based on advice from health authorities. Though schools in an affected area may be closed to students, schools in unaffected areas will be expected to maintain normal services. Ill-advised action such as an unnecessary closure would make life very difficult for the wider community.

Assumptions

The following assumptions underpin the *Pandemic Planning Guide* and the *Pandemic Action Plan* for schools:

1. State and state-integrated schools will maintain as full a service as possible for as long as possible during a pandemic emergency (consistent with [State Services Commission Guidelines](#)).
2. Closing education sites to students in affected areas is part of the pandemic influenza section of New Zealand's [National Health Emergency Plan](#) to help prevent the influenza spreading. The closure of schools to students ("preclusion") aims to reduce close contact between children (children have been known to remain infectious for up to 21 days whereas the risk period is only 8 days for adults).
3. During a pandemic emergency, schools will be considering alternative means of delivering education to their students, such as paper-based and electronic distance learning options.
4. While schools might be closed to students, they will not necessarily be closed for quarantine. With their board's prior approval staff may still work at the school, work remotely, or carry out 'alternative duties' for their employer or another agency. Schools may also be used for alternative purposes such as Community Based Assessment Centres (CBAC)¹.
5. A pandemic may come in several waves over a six to eight month period. At the peak of the worst pandemic wave, up to 50% of the workforce may be sick, looking after sick dependents, or carrying out 'alternative duties' in priority areas for their employer or another agency (such as health or welfare roles).
6. State and state-integrated school employees will be paid their normal salary during a pandemic, provided, with their board's pre-approval, they:
 - come to work in their usual workplace (with rigorous personal hygiene, social distancing and cleaning regimes in place) or
 - work remotely (for example, from home) or
 - carry out alternative duties for their board or another agency.
7. State and state-integrated school employees will be expected to use their leave entitlements (sick, domestic, annual or other, with ability to anticipate some sick leave) if they are sick or looking after sick dependents during a pandemic emergency. An employee who contracts pandemic influenza may be sick for up to two weeks. When sick leave entitlements and advances are exhausted, state sector employers (for example, the Ministry of Education) may provide additional paid special leave during Stages 2 and 3 of a pandemic, but only where this will contribute to preventing the arrival or spread of a pandemic. For an approach to leave usage during a pandemic see the [State Services Commission](#) website.

¹ In a pandemic emergency people with influenza symptoms will be encouraged to stay away from hospitals and doctors' surgeries, and to seek assistance at a Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC). Some District Health Boards may consult with boards of some schools about using some of their school's facilities for this purpose.

New Zealand's Pandemic Plan

Table 1 Overall Influenza Pandemic Management Strategy and Associated Actions

| STAGE | NZ STRATEGY | Ministry of Health (MoH) / District Health Board (DHB) ALERT CODE | OBJECTIVE AND ACTION |
|-------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Plan for it (Planning) | WHITE (Information / advisory) | <p><u>Objective:</u> devise a plan to reduce the health, social and economic impact of a pandemic on New Zealand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full engagement of whole of government • Consultation with and input from many agencies |
| | | YELLOW (Standby) | Prepare to implement pandemic response action plans |
| 2 | Keep it out (Border Management) | RED (Activation) ² | <p><u>Objective:</u> keep pandemic out of New Zealand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of border management options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - closure of New Zealand's border to all non-nationals - quarantine of all returning New Zealand citizens • Enhance internal disease surveillance and notification • Investigate and follow up any suspect cases |
| 3 | Stamp it out (Cluster Control) | RED (Activation) ² | <p><u>Objective:</u> control and/or eliminate any clusters that might be found in New Zealand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate and treat patients and households • Contact trace and treat all contacts • Restrict movement into/out of affected area(s) • MoH directs regional closure of education organisations to children and students, closes other places where people congregate, and prohibits mass gatherings • Maintain border management |
| 4 | Manage it (Pandemic Management) | | <p><u>Objective:</u> to reduce the impact of pandemic influenza on New Zealand's population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health service reconfiguration to support community response in affected areas • MoH directs national closure of education organisations to children and students, closes other places where people congregate, and prohibits mass gatherings • Social distancing measures • Support for people cared for at home, and their families |
| 5 | Recover from it (Recovery) | | GREEN (Stand down) |

The decisions to move from Code White to Yellow, from Yellow to Red and from Red to Green, will be made by the Ministry of Health which will notify the public through its website and the media.

Other channels exist for communication by text and email to schools through the [New Zealand School Trustees Association \(NZSTA\)](#) and the New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF). Also some schools are linked to the web-based [Emergency Preparedness Network](#) available through the NZ School Trustees Association.

² The transition from Code White to Red could be quite quick (that is, the Code Yellow stage could be short).

Pandemic characteristics and impact

No one knows when or how severe a pandemic outbreak might be. In this way, planning for a pandemic is like planning for an earthquake. However, a pandemic will not be like a physical disaster in other ways. A pandemic has unique characteristics when compared with a more “typical” disaster. For example:

- ***Widespread impact***
The impact of a pandemic would likely be widespread, even nation-wide, not localised to a single area and there may be little outside assistance. Many business continuity plans assume some part of an organisation is unaffected and can take up the required capacity.
- ***Not a physical disaster***
A pandemic is not a physical disaster. It has some unique characteristics that require measures to limit contact, restrict movement, introduce quarantine and ban public gatherings.
- ***Duration***
A pandemic would not be a short, sharp event leading immediately to the start of a recovery stage. A pandemic emergency may last several months. Plans need to take this into account.
- ***Notice***
Some advance warning is likely if a pandemic develops overseas, but that warning period may be very short. Should pandemic influenza spread within New Zealand it will probably be some weeks before the full impact on the workforce will be felt, though there may be early impacts resulting from school closures (“student preclusion”) and similar measures.
- ***Primary effect is on staffing levels***
Unlike natural disasters where disruption to infrastructure and service delivery is likely to be related to hardware, a pandemic is more of a threat to staff. Employers will need to plan for the scenario of up to 50% staff absences at the height of a severe pandemic. Ministry of Health modelling shows that two weeks leave is the average amount of leave required for sickness and recovery of a staff member. Overall, a pandemic wave may last about eight weeks, though the pandemic may come in several waves of varying severity over time.³

Staff absences can be expected for many reasons, including:

- illness or incapacity (suspected or actual)
- their need to stay at home to care for sick dependents
- they may feel safer working from home (for example, to keep out of crowded places such as public transport – public transport may cease)
- some people may be assigned to ‘alternative duties’ for their employer or another agency (such as health or welfare roles)
- others may need to stay at home to look after pre-school and school-aged students (as early childhood education services and schools may be closed).

³ A pandemic could last many months and may contain peaks followed by periods of reduced illness. The 50% is an estimate of staff absences at peaks of a significant pandemic.

SJC Action Plan for Alert Code - White/Yellow

Preparing to implement our Pandemic Plan

Stage 1 Planning (prepare and standby)

Goal: Plan to reduce the health, social and economic impact of a pandemic in New Zealand
Trigger: Current stage

Action Plan

- Liaise with cluster principals
 - Organise a medical advisor for the school (Hillcrest Medical Centre)

- Review medical supplies and develop list of equipment that will be purchased.
 - Initial order of supplies purchased, received and stored (see appendix)

- Review cleaning policies, practices and supplies
 - Close liaison with cleaning supervisor and plans are in motion for upgrading cleaning to comply with guidelines for pandemic alert.

- Develop protocols for dealing with sick staff/students
 - Guidelines will be sent to all staff and families regarding the symptoms to look out for (Using official Alerts sent to schools)
 - Staff informed and supported in the use of the Screening Checklist and Infection Control Fact Sheet (see appendix)
 - School area designated for use to minimise spread
 - Sickbay
 - Lounge to be set up as a quarantine area
 - External doors locked

- Contact list set up and updated regularly
- Steps taken to clarify St John's College School's role in local response plans
- Consideration given to preparation of lessons for students to complete at home in case the school is closed

Working with your school community

- Form key group of planning developers
- Discuss pandemic preparedness with BOT
- Develop resources to maintain wellness (Personal hygiene)
- Inform parents through information bulletins
- Develop links with relevant agencies and community support networks

SJC Action Plan for Alert Code - Red

Implementing our Pandemic Plan

Stage 2 Border Management (keep it out) alert code Red

Goal: Keep pandemic influenza out of New Zealand.
Trigger: Human-to-human transmission overseas, or Australia and/or Singapore close borders.

- Maintain links with relevant agencies and community support networks
 - Up-date and activate telephone/email trees using key contact lists – public health nurse, DHB emergency planner, local Civil Defence Management (CDEM) group, local Child Youth and Family office, etc
 - Copy the contact details of our principal and board chair to our local Ministry of Education office (*to avoid any Privacy Act issue ensure the information is provided on the understanding it will only be used for the purpose of pandemic planning and response*).
- Review pandemic plan
 - Check board of trustees, staff and student contact details are correct
 - Brief staff on roles and responsibilities
- Consult with and inform relevant groups about your school's pandemic plan and what they can do to help.
 - Board of trustees
 - Staff
 - Students, parents and community
 - Send a copy of our plan to those in your local support networks, such as our local DHB and our local Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) group
- Educate staff, students and parents about:
 - The difference between symptoms of common cold and influenza (see appendix)
 - The importance of good hygiene practices Key Messages for Keeping Well)
 - The importance of staying home when sick
 - Appropriately educating groups about the gravity of the pandemic through scenarios/stories of the 1918 pandemic, etc (see *Ministry of Health* and *Ministry of Culture and Heritage* websites).
- Inform management of students planning to travel overseas and monitor students who have returned from overseas travel
- Programmes for students to complete at home if school is closed will be posted on our website. (see details of priorities)
- Principal to confirm SJC's role in local response plans
Preparing for possible school closure

Stage 3 Cluster Control (stamp it out) alert code Red

Goal: Control and/or eliminate any clusters that may be found in New Zealand.

Trigger: Human pandemic strain case/s found in New Zealand

- Maintain contact with our local DHB through our agreed cluster 'point of contact'
- Keep relevant groups informed through briefings, emails, newsletters and websites. Communicate with:
 - Board of trustees
 - Staff
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Volunteers
 - Other schools in our cluster.
- Prepare staff and student contact lists in case of school closure
- Prepare list of Staff to indicate if willing to carry out 'alternative duties' (for example, in health or welfare roles).
- Cancel all work-related travel plans (domestic and international)
- Take care of staff and students showing influenza symptoms - Actions;
 - Set up an isolation room
 - Use the table outlining the difference between influenza and the common cold in the Resources section of the *Planning Guide* (see appendix)
 - Implement policies around how/when decisions are made to send children and/or staff home, in consultation with school's medical advisor (public health nurse or doctor)
 - Notification of cases and status reports to health authorities
 - Assist Ministry of Health track contacts of people showing symptoms
 - Have excellent personal hygiene facilities and practices to reduce the spread of flu virus, such as good hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, staying home when sick.
- Implement rigorous cleaning policies and practices to reduce the spread of a flu virus

Closing St John's College to students

Stage 4 Pandemic Management (manage it) alert code Red

Goal: Reduce the impact of pandemic influenza on New Zealand's population.
Trigger: Multiple (>10) clusters at separate locations, or clusters spreading out of control.

- Communicate directly with your local DHB emergency planner through your agreed cluster 'point of contact'
- Close school to students (Notice home to all at school that day and on website)
- Prepare to secure premises
- Post notices of closure to students on entry points and main buildings
- Keep relevant groups informed through briefings, emails, newsletters and websites: Communicate with:
 - Board of trustees
 - Staff
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Volunteers
 - Other schools in our cluster.
- Finalise staff and student contact lists for school closure
 - Two emergency contacts for each student
 - Staff home contact details – indicate if willing to carry out 'alternative duties' (for example, health or welfare roles).
- Cancel all staff travel plans (domestic and international)
- Collaborate with local agencies in making school facilities available in local response efforts
- Activate programmes for students to complete at home during school closure period
- Activate rigorous personal hygiene, social distancing and cleaning regimes for those staff continuing to work on the school site. Provide options for working remotely where applicable or necessary. Co-ordinate 'alternative duties' for willing staff where applicable.

SJC Action Plan for Alert Code - Green

Getting back to business as usual

Stage 5 Recovery

Goal: Expedite the recovery of population health where impacted by the pandemic, pandemic management measures, or disruption to normal services.

Trigger: Population protected by vaccination or pandemic abated in New Zealand.

- Activate recovery plan; *Contact the Ministry of Education for advice and liaise with Group Special Education Traumatic Incident Co-ordinators as necessary. Also see Ministry of Health and Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM) websites.*
 - o Arrange debrief of pandemic event for staff and students as appropriate
 - o Arrange trauma and/or grief counselling as necessary
- Assess capacity of staff to resume normal school operations
 - o Employ relievers or appoint new staff
- Cleaning and disinfecting affected areas
- Keep relevant groups informed through briefings, emails, newsletters and websites:
- Communicate with:
 - o Board of trustees
 - o Staff
 - o Students
 - o Parents
 - o Volunteers
 - o Other schools in our cluster.

Checklist of the types of topics to cover:

- *Local status – the current pandemic phase*
 - *What the school is doing*
 - *What parents and students can do at home*
 - *Next steps.*
-
- Support and monitor the wellbeing of staff and students
 - o *NOTE – a young person can remain infectious for up to 21 days from when they first display symptoms and adults remain infectious for 8 days. Follow the advice of health officials in managing return to work/lessons. Watch for other symptoms of grief and trauma. Counselling and support may be required.*
 - Evaluate the success of your pandemic plan

Appendix 1

Order for St John's College School - Industrial First Aide Supplies

| Item | Amount |
|---|--------|
| Surgical Masks (ear loop type) – box of 50 | 10 |
| Eye Goggles (safety glasses) | 10 |
| Gloves – Latex, Vinyl or Nitrile 100's boxes large | 10 |
| Gloves – Latex, Vinyl or Nitrile 100's boxes Med | 10 |
| Gloves - disposable POLYETHYLENE - 100's Large | 10 |
| Hand Sanitiser (Bactol Alcohol Gel) gel - 500 ml pump | 8 |
| Disposable Aprons - Box of 100 | 1 |
| Disposable isolation gown (x5) | 5 |
| Paracetamol Ordered Paracetamol CAPSULESHAPED tablets - 240's | 2 |
| Viraclean (hospital grade) surface disinfectant wipes - canister of 100 x 5 | 1 |
| Vomit bags - pack of 50 | 2 |
| Ordered Shopping (grocery) bags (large) - pack of | 1 |
| Ordered Disposable pillow cases - 20's | 3 |
| Ordered Disposable bed sheets (75 cm x 200 cm) - 10's | 2 |

Infection Control Fact Sheet

Government Advice

Note that in the event of a pandemic, it is recommended Principals check the following website for the latest advice www.moh.govt.nz/pandemicinfluenza.

Hand washing

Hand washing is the single most important measure that will reduce the risk of transmitting infectious organisms from one person to another. To support high standards of hygiene in schools, there is a 'How to Wash Your Hands' poster included in this Pandemic Planning Kit.

The Ministry of Education recommends you place this poster in toilets and kitchens to remind students and staff to wash their hands with soap and water and to dry them with disposable towels. These practices should also be used when preparing/handling food.

The following responses should be used at all times and particularly during the active (red) stages of a pandemic to prevent or reduce the spread of influenza:

Hand washing and drying should also occur after:

- coughing,
- sneezing,
- handling used tissues,
- using toilets,
- touching objects, materials or hard surfaces that may have been contaminated by someone with the infectious illness or the infected person themselves.

Hygiene can also be maintained by:

- using disposable towels to open toilet doors
- cleaning surfaces touched by someone with an infectious illness (phones etc.) or not shaking out their clothing, linen or towels
- not sharing cutlery, cups or plates
- placing waste that could be infected (used tissues etc.) into covered rubbish bins.

Signs of illness

Students and staff members who begin to display respiratory infection symptoms (colds, flu etc.) are to follow the following etiquette whenever they are in the presence of others:

- avoid close contact (less than one metre) with other people
- cover the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with a tissue or sleeve (not hand)
- use disposable tissues to contain any secretions
- immediately dispose of used tissues in the nearest waste receptacle
- immediately wash and dry their hands
- if unwell they should apply a face mask, notify the Pandemic Manager and their leave contact details, and wait at their desk for clearance to go home.

Vaccination

Once the strain of the influenza is identified, vaccine supplies can be developed. These supplies will be supplied by the Ministry of Health for all New Zealanders. Students and staff will be given every opportunity to be vaccinated by a medical practitioner.

Dealing with illness at home

In the active (red) stages of a pandemic, employees must not come in to school if they have:-

- chills, shivering and a fever
- muscle aches and pains
- sore throat
- dry cough
- trouble breathing
- sneezing
- a stuffy or runny nose.

If the symptoms occur at home, the student or staff member should advise their teacher or manager, stay at home, seek medical advice and assistance and wait until they have recovered fully before returning to school. The student or staff member may need to undertake a gradual return to school.

Dealing with illness at school during the active stages (Red)

A student or staff member in the school, may develop some or all of the influenza symptoms listed below and become a 'suspect case' during the active stages of a pandemic:

- Suddenly feeling unwell (or much worse).
- Have a very high temperature (over 40°C or 104°F) that won't come down with paracetamol
- Pain in the chest
- Trouble breathing
- Bluish colour around the lips and cheeks
- Fainting
- Persistent vomiting or diarrhoea.

If the person stops breathing, becomes unconscious or has seizures – CALL 111.

For a 'suspect case', the student or staff member is to be provided with a disposable surgical face mask, and told to remain in an isolation room where they are distanced from students and staff, while the District Health Nurse is contacted.

Process for dealing with ill students and staff members

Ill students and staff members should be referred to the school's appointed Pandemic Manager for advice and support during the active (red) stage of a pandemic.

1. The Pandemic Manager should, if possible, avoid visiting the person and manage the process by phone using the screening flowchart featured later on in this document. The Pandemic Manager should also check if the student or staff member has any of the symptoms outlined in the first section of the flowchart.

2. If the student or staff member does not have the symptoms outlined he or she is unlikely to have influenza and should be reassured. The student or staff member should also be advised to contact the Pandemic Manager back or contact his/her doctor if they are still concerned.
3. If the student or staff member has symptoms that match some of those listed, they should be treated as a “suspect case” and their next of kin should be contacted immediately. It may be helpful to have a Suspected Influenza Case Workplace Notification Form (Appendix 4) completed, including details of any contact the student or staff member have had with other people at the school or at home. This information will allow the Pandemic Manager to identify recent movements and monitor well-being during the pandemic.
4. The student or staff member must then be sent home or told to remain at home and to immediately contact a doctor as advised by Ministry of Health on its website at that time. This may involve phoning the person’s normal doctor or nurse, next of kin, or a specially designated centre to seek further advice. The Pandemic Manager will inform the student’s or staff member’s teacher or manager of the situation.
5. The student or staff member should, if possible, avoid public transport when leaving the school.
6. The Pandemic Manager will begin identifying and managing the contact the infected person has had with others (see section on contact management below).
7. The student or staff member’s desk and stationary should be cleaned and disinfected by contacting the relevant contracted cleaner or, if they are not available, by wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves. Shared desks will need to be cleaned immediately.
8. Some issues to consider include:
 - Providing advice to the student or staff member on how long to stay away from school will be based on advice from the Ministry of Health website, which will have advice on this once the characteristics of a pandemic are known
 - Decisions on their absence and homework or cover arrangements
 - Checking on the student or staff member during his/her absence from school. This will facilitate treatment and contact tracing if they become ill. The Pandemic Manager needs to check that the student or staff member is healthy before allowing them to return to school. Once the student’s or staff member’s health is no longer a concern, they should be encouraged to return to school.

Social Distancing

In primary schools social distancing may be difficult to achieve, but any raising of awareness or any level of compliance will be useful. This advice applies to schools in the “plan for it” and “stamp it out” stages when schools are expected to remain open to students – when the school is operating in an unaffected area or region.

Social distancing is a strategy to protect staff and students during a pandemic by minimising their contact with others. Events involving large gatherings should be avoided, whether inside or outside. A distance of at least one metre should be maintained between people wherever practical. Larger distances are more effective. Visiting people who are unwell should be avoided unless it is essential.

The Ministry of Health has the following suggestions for minimising contact, but each school will need to decide which of these measures are practicable for them:

- Where possible avoid meeting people face-to-face – use the telephone, video conferencing and the internet to conduct business as much as possible – even when participants are in the same building.
- Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops or training sessions.
- Avoid public transport: walk, cycle, drive a car or go early or late to avoid rush hour crowding on public transport.
- Bring lunch and eat away from others (avoid the staffroom and crowded cafes). Introduce staggered lunchtimes and morning teas to reduce numbers in the staffroom. Consider how the school cafeteria or tuck shop should be managed.
- Do not congregate in staffrooms or other areas where people socialise. Do what needs to be done and then leave the area.
- If a face-to-face meeting with people is unavoidable, minimise the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one metre away from each other if possible. Avoid shaking hands or hugging. Consider holding meetings via conference call or outside.
- Set up systems where families and staff can request information via phone, email or fax and have information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.
- Encourage students and staff to avoid recreational or other leisure classes or meetings where they might come into contact with infectious people.

Where student’s and staff members are required to come to school during the active (red) stages of a pandemic, a distance of at least one metre should be maintained between people wherever possible. Any form of contact with people who are unwell with the pandemic influenza, including visiting, should be avoided.

Any students or staff members who have face-to-face contact with members of the public where social distancing is not possible or practical, will need to follow Ministry of Health guidelines and may be issued with face masks. Staff members should insist visitors and people with any form of respiratory infection symptoms wear face masks, stay at least one metre away and/or leave the area.

Contact Tracing and Management

The definition of a contact is likely to change once the nature of the pandemic strain is known. Schools should refer to Ministry of Health's website during a pandemic for up-to-date guidance.

Where a student or staff member is sick, to reduce the risk of further infection, contacts will be expected to stay at home and avoid contact with others for a recommended period. This period will be set by health officials not the Ministry of Education.

The role of contact tracing may vary according to the phase of the pandemic. At an early stage, when efforts are directed at keeping the pandemic out or managing small clusters, contact tracing and quarantine of cases and contacts will be vigorous. If, however, the pandemic affects larger numbers of people across the country, it will not be effective as a strategy to contain the pandemic, and may be dropped. Privacy regarding patient details will be maintained where possible.

If a doctor identifies the patient as being a suspect or confirmed case, they will commence contact tracing in accordance with the protocols set by Ministry of Health. This is likely to involve making contact with the patient's school.

It is helpful for Pandemic Managers to:

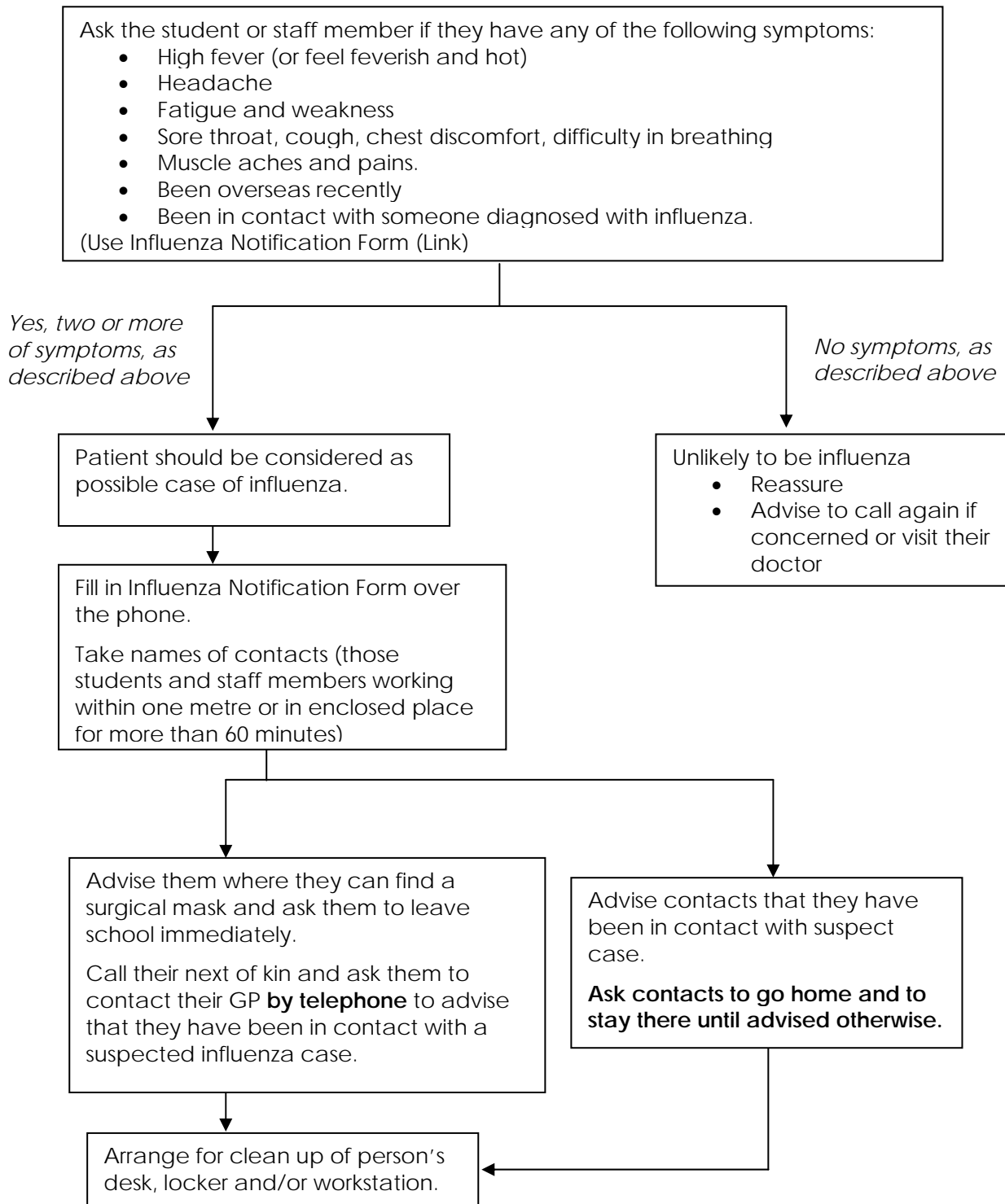
- identify contacts (once a student or staff member is suspected to be infected)
 - advise contacts in person that they have been in contact with a person suspected of having influenza
 - ask contacts to go home and stay at home until advised otherwise.
- Other Related and Useful Documents in the Pandemic Planning Kit:

Screening checklist for detection of Pandemic Influenza cases

Process

- 1) The Pandemic Manager receives a call from a student or staff member suspecting they may have influenza
- 2) Do not visit the person if this can be avoided – manage the process over the telephone
- 3) Follow the flowchart below

N:B Symptoms may change so please refer to the Ministry of Health website.



The Difference between the Influenza and a Common Cold

| SYMPTOM | INFLUENZA | COMMON COLD |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Fever | Usual, sudden onset 38°-40° and lasts 3-4 days. | Rare |
| Headache | Usual and can be severe | Rare |
| Aches and pains | Usual and can be severe | Rare |
| Fatigue and weakness | Usual and can last 2-3 weeks or more after the acute illness | Sometimes, but mild |
| Debilitating fatigue | Usual, early onset can be severe | Rare |
| Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea | In children over 5 years | Rare |
| Watering of the eyes | Rare | Usual |
| Runny, stuffy nose | Rare | Usual |
| Sneezing | Rare in early stages | Usual |
| Sore throat | Usual | Usual |
| Chest discomfort | Usual and can be severe | Sometimes, but mild to moderate |
| Complications | Respiratory failure; can worsen a current chronic condition; can be life threatening | Congestion or ear-ache |
| Fatalities | Well recognised | Not reported |
| Prevention | Influenza vaccine; frequent hand-washing; cover your cough | Frequent hand-washing, cover your cough |

Letter to Parents during Stage 1 of a Pandemic

Letter to parents/caregivers: introduction to pandemic planning

Dear Parents / Caregivers

Most of you will be aware that a ' _____' affecting a small numbers of people in countries overseas.

The government is preparing plans to protect the country from a possible influenza pandemic. As part of this nation-wide planning, schools have been asked to prepare their own pandemic plans.

Our school has an **emergency management plan** that covers most emergencies, such as fire and earthquake. Using resources provided by the Ministry of Education, we are now updating our emergency management plan to include plans for coping with a pandemic.

We will keep you informed as our **pandemic plan** develops. Meanwhile, you can reduce the risk of your child catching influenza:

- Teach your children the importance of hand washing – especially before meals and after toileting.
- Teach your children to use a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Keep your children at home if they have the flu.

An important part of emergency planning is ensuring we have **up-to-date contact details** for all students and staff. Please ensure that you **complete and return the attached form**. Your personal details will not be used for any other purpose other than in the context of emergency management.

Find out more about pandemic planning on these websites: www.moh.govt.nz and www.minedu.govt.nz.

If you have any questions or concerns at this stage, please contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

Principal

Letter to Parents during Stage 2 of a Pandemic

Letter to Parents/Caregivers: Introduction to Pandemic planning

Dear Parents / Caregivers

The government has announced that New Zealand is stepping up its pandemic influenza response plans. This means that the situation overseas has changed and New Zealand's borders have been tightened in an attempt to stop the virus getting here.

Our school is talking with health and civil defence officials and we have been advised that there is no reason for alarm. Our school will remain open until further notice. Our own pandemic plans mean that we have systems in place to help us cope if anything changes.

The most important thing you can do as parents and caregivers is reinforce healthy messages:

- Teach your children the importance of hand washing and drying – especially before meals and after toileting.
- Teach your children to use a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing.

We ask that all children showing flu like symptoms be kept home until checked and okayed by a doctor or nurse to return to school. **The symptoms of influenza and how they differ from common cold symptom are included with this letter.**

Our school is updating our **emergency contact details** for all students and staff. Please **complete the attached form and return it to your child's classroom teacher.**

The board of trustees and I are working closely with staff to ensure that all students at our school are kept as safe as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me directly. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Principal

SCHOOL CLOSED

DUE TO THE INFLUENZA PANDEMIC,
THIS SCHOOL IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE

DO NOT ENTER

For urgent enquiries, please contact

Ray Scott (Principal)

Ph. 07-856.7091

INFLUENZA NOTIFICATION

Influenza is a contagious disease. There is currently an increase in the numbers of people in New Zealand with influenza. To prevent the spread of influenza at this school please:

DO NOT ENTER if you have:

- chills, shivering and a fever (temperature above 38°C)
- onset muscle aches and pains
- sore throat
- dry cough
- trouble breathing
- sneezing
- stuffy or runny nose
- tiredness

If you start to feel ill at school or are showing any of the symptoms listed above, please **DO NOT** leave your area.

Call the Pandemic Manager: Mr Ray Scott **or**

Ms P. Lean **or** Mr M. Young **or** Mr B. Sparrow.

Suspected Influenza Notification Form

Details of Affected Staff/Students

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | Site: | Location of isolation: |
| Job title: | Nationality if visitor to site: | Date of birth: (optional) |
| Address: | | |
| Telephone no: _____ (W) _____ (H) _____ (M) | | |
| Symptoms noticed: | | |
| Fever <input type="checkbox"/> | Body aches <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Headache <input type="checkbox"/> | Fatigue <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Dry cough <input type="checkbox"/> | Others <input type="checkbox"/> | Details: _____ |
| Cold <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Time of fever on-set: _____ | | |
| Time of isolation: _____ | | |
| Travel history over the past eight days: | | |
| Countries visited _____ | | |
| Flights taken: _____ | | |
| Where referred: | | |
| Contact List (See separate page) | | |
| Where referred: | | |
| Contact List (See separate page) | | |

Details of Reporter

| |
|--|
| Name: |
| Job title: |
| Telephone no: _____ (W) _____ (H) _____ (M) |

Phone List:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Ray Scott Principal | Pandemic Manager | 07-856.7091 |
| Peta Lean Deputy Principal | Deputy Manager | 07-856.7091 |
| Mel Young | Support Personnel | 07-856.7091 |
| Brian Sparrow | Support Personnel | 07-856.7091 |
| Patrick Barrett | BOT Chairman | |
| | For Medical advice call Hillcrest Medical Centre | 07-856.5087 |

Notes