

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE – 16 NOVEMBER 2021

16 November 2021

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FOREWORD

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you to all of you in the Waikato who worked incredibly hard over the last few days to prepare your school to open under Alert Level 3 settings – and now find yourself in Alert Level 2 tomorrow instead.

Agility, flexibility and adaptability are the new norms, but I do appreciate that uncertainty and change demands a lot of energy. Please get in touch with your local Ministry team if you need additional support.

I'd also like to acknowledge that today signals the Vaccination Order coming into full effect, and the challenges this therefore presents across education. Mandating vaccination is an unprecedented decision, but one that has been made in the interests of public health.

On that note, today we're further clarifying parents coming on site and whether you can ask their vaccination status. Please find this below, including ways you can manage health and safety in regard to those coming onto your school site.

Ngā mihi nui,
Iona

Vaccination requirements for parents coming on site

We continue to have queries regarding whether parents and caregivers coming on site are required to be vaccinated.

To clarify: parents or caregivers who are dropping off, picking up or settling their children or who are attending meetings or events on site are still permitted to attend on site whether they are vaccinated or not.

This vaccination requirement also does not apply to those who are performing services remotely or who are on site only when children and students are not present.

The requirement to be vaccinated is only for those people who are working for the school, which may be unpaid work such as volunteering. The table below will clarify.

A reminder that at Alert Level 3, there should be no non-essential visitors on site regardless of vaccination status.

Type of role	Are they required to be vaccinated under the order?
Parents or caregivers dropping off, picking up or settling children at a school or kura	No. The order does not apply to people who are visiting the school.

Parents or caregivers attending meetings or events on site (for example, for parent-teacher interviews)	No. The order does not apply to people who are visiting the school.
Parents, caregivers or volunteers at an EOTC or LEOTC programme or excursion	Yes. These people are required to be vaccinated because they are carrying out work (unpaid) at or for a school or hostel and they may have contact with children or students or will be present at a time when children and students are also present.
Parents, caregivers and members of the community who are volunteers at a school, kura or hostel	Yes. These people are required to be vaccinated because they are carrying out work (unpaid) at or for a school or hostel and they may have contact with children or students or will be present at a time when children and students are also present. If the volunteer is working off site and will not have any contact with children or students as part of their role then they are not required to be vaccinated.

Please see our table of information in our bulletin on 3 November for further details of required vaccinations.

Application of mandatory vaccination requirements – School Bulletin 3 November

How to manage health and safety

Rather than asking for their vaccination status, we encourage you to treat them as unvaccinated.

As such, you may want to consider the range of health and safety mitigations that can be put in place to help keep those on site as safe as possible.

For example:

- ask non-essential visitors not to come on site
- don't hold large events and activities, including those that bring parents and caregivers on site
- ask that they wear a face covering (staff may also prefer to wear a face covering)

- maintain a physical distance of two metres where practicable
- consider whether engagement with parents and caregivers can be held outside rather than inside
- hold meetings which do need to go ahead via Zoom, Teams or similar
- ensure the room being used is spacious and well ventilated if it is necessary to meet on site
- ensure hand sanitiser is available indoors
- reiterate that anyone who is not feeling well should not come onto the school site and encourage them to seek advice about getting tested.

Mandatory vaccination dates for NZ Police

The vaccination requirements for NZ Police personnel is different to education service employees. NZ Police employees involved in education services are required to have a first dose of the vaccination by Monday 29 November and a second dose by Friday 14 January 2022.

In some instances, this may affect their ability to provide or assist with lessons.

Where you are anticipating or planning for police staff to come on to your school site within two weeks of the mandatory vaccination deadlines (that is, yesterday 15 November and 1 January 2022), we would advise you to ask officers to provide assurance of their vaccination status or ask them to defer their visit until after Monday 29 November and Friday 14 January 2022.

We would expect that by this time all police officers working in or with schools will be vaccinated.

Changes to contact tracing categories

The Ministry of Health have made changes to isolation requirements, which will now reflect vaccination status.

Changes to isolation – Ministry of Health

The isolation period for fully vaccinated COVID-19 cases in the community has been reduced from 14 days to 10 days and must include 72 hours symptom-free.

The isolation period for partially vaccinated or unvaccinated COVID-19 cases will remain 14 days, including 72 hours symptom-free.

Also among the changes made is the tightening of use of 'casual plus contacts' to a more narrow range of circumstances. This change has been made because there is very little evidence of transmission in

this category, with preliminary data showing only 0.1% of 'casual plus' interactions resulted in infections.

Counselling support for vulnerable children

We know that some of our tamariki need help with their wellbeing and that poor wellbeing can get in the way of their attendance, engagement, and success. That's why counselling support is being put in place for around 24,290 of our most vulnerable learners.

Counsellors in schools is a new programme that will deliver counselling support to 141 primary, intermediate, area and small secondary schools throughout Aotearoa.

The initiative invests \$44 million over four years as part of a \$200 million package to improve wellbeing for learners in the wake of COVID-19.

Find more information, including a full list of the participating schools, on our website.

Counselling in schools – Ministry of Education

Update: Emergency payment scheme during Alert Level 3

As you know, the emergency payment scheme under Alert Level 3 was extended until today 16 November for regions at Alert Level 3.

Most day relief and casual staff who usually work in these areas will have received the emergency payment in their last pay, however, some day relief and casual staff who usually work in parts of Northland (the far north area of Northland) will receive payment to cover this period on 1 December.

We are reviewing when to transition back to usual payment operations and cease the emergency payment scheme. Specifically, we will advise whether the scheme will continue over the next fortnight for regions at Alert Level 3.

We expect schools and kura to engage day relievers and other casual staff as required to meet their operational requirements during Alert Level 3, particularly now that day relievers are now able to work at more than one school if they are fully vaccinated.

The emergency payment scheme will continue on application for day relievers and casual staff required to self-isolate in Alert Level 2 restrictions in the rest of New Zealand.

Payments will be processed automatically by Education Payroll (EPL) to all eligible staff who have worked on at least one occasion during the period from 5 May to 17 August 2021 at a state or state-integrated school.

If you do not use EPL for payroll we encourage you to put in place the same financial support for eligible staff. We'll reimburse non-EPL schools and kura the cost of these emergency payments.

Distance learning packs update

From tomorrow Wednesday 17 November, we will no longer be accepting orders for learning packs through the online emergency resources portal.

This decision follows Government decisions allowing more children in Alert Level 3 areas to return to face-to-face learning.

We know that there are a number of children and young people still learning from home and that there may be times when you need additional support such as distance learning packs. If you do require support, guidance or resources to support teaching and learning in your school or kura, please contact your regional office.

We are conscious that there are ongoing issues with courier service capacity in Auckland and that there are likely to be some delays between the time when packs are shipped and when these arrive on site.

Contact details for local offices – Ministry of Education

Auckland: Attendance data collection

This Thursday 18 November at 9:30am, we'll use Mataara to send schools in Auckland a text message to collect information on attendance.

Collecting information on how many students are attending on site for schools at Alert Level 3 is a helpful way for us to ensure we're providing the support you need.

The number this message will come from is 8707.

What we need from you:

- a text response of the number (in digits not words) of how many students you have on site (and no other words or messages if you can avoid it please).

Please reply to the text message by 11am if you are able to and, as always, please contact your education advisor if you need any assistance.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te ahiahi,

If you tuned into yesterday's 1pm briefing, you will have heard the Prime Minister discuss the opening of the internal borders and the shift away from alert levels to the "traffic light" system.

As we've already indicated this week, there's a lot of detailed planning underway for how the education system will operate under this system, particularly noting that schools will be deemed open for face-to-face instruction under all of colours.

I know you will want to be prepared for the new framework. Thank you for your patience as we work through the guidance.

In today's bulletin we're providing further information on employment processes under the Vaccination Order and addressing questions we have received on who needs to be vaccinated.

Ngā mihi,

Iona

Managing implications for staff impacted by the vaccination requirement

By now you will have started managing the employment processes for employees who did not receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by 15 November.

While working through this process it is important to ensure that there is no predetermined outcome. Your usual employment obligations still apply, including the duty to act in good faith, consider all reasonable alternatives, consult with the employee and take their feedback into consideration.

We acknowledge that this is particularly challenging at this time of year and as you plan for your staffing requirements for 2022.

You may wish to contact NZSTA or an alternative employment advisor for guidance with these employment processes. You can also contact employment.relations@education.govt.nz for advice.

If your employee has a medical exemption, you should follow the advice we have provided on our website.

Otherwise, you will need to work through the process in consultation with your employee to determine:

- if the employee is willing to be vaccinated
- if their work can be reasonably rearranged, to ensure that they do not have contact with children or students and are not onsite when children are expected to be present (not just until the end of the 2021 school year but also in the longer term). You should confirm with the employee their new working arrangements
- if there are other options such as extended leave without pay which are appropriate in the circumstances
- for roles where alternative duties cannot be reasonably accommodated beyond the short term, notice will be given to end the employee's employment as a last resort.

We have provided a fuller overview of this process on our website and in this flowchart.

Managing employment processes – Ministry of Education

Process for school and kura employees [PDF, 170 KB]

If the employee is not willing to be vaccinated, alternative duties should be provided where feasible.

If no alternative duties are available, they may be placed on discretionary special leave while you work through the employment process. Whether that leave is with or without pay is a matter for the school board, but an employee who has chosen not to be vaccinated is arguably not "ready, willing and able to work" and therefore may not be entitled to pay.

There may be cases in which a board decides that paid leave is appropriate, for example, in the case of an employee who is waiting on the outcome of a medical exemption application submitted to the Ministry of Health by their doctor or nurse practitioner.

Termination of employment

If you have found no suitable alternatives after consultation with the employee, you should move to give notice to the employee of termination of their employment. The notice period in the employee's employment agreement applies.

For example, the Primary Teachers' and Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreements both require the employer to give permanent employees two calendar months' paid notice of the termination of their employment.

If staff have been put on unpaid leave while you undertake the employment and consultation process described above, then the unpaid leave is not part of the notice period.

The employee will not be able to have contact with students or work on site at a time that students are present during this notice period. Therefore, the employee will need to continue with alternative working arrangements, or they should be on discretionary leave with pay during their period of notice.

In most circumstances you will be able to make payment in lieu of notice, and the employee's relationship with the school would be fully terminated on receipt of their final pay.

This will provide you with certainty as you plan your staffing requirements for 2022. Your employment adviser will be able to provide further information about how this would apply.

While you will already be thinking ahead about how to manage your staffing for next year, it is important that you fulfil your responsibilities as an employer, including undertaking a comprehensive consultation process with affected employees before moving to give notice of termination of their employment.

Advertising vacancies

You are able to advertise positions to temporarily backfill the role of the person who is not performing their usual duties.

However, you should consider whether it would be contrary to your employment obligations throughout this process (including not having a predetermined outcome) to start advertising any potential ongoing vacancies created by unvaccinated staff before their employment status is certain.

Positions can start to be advertised after staff have been given notice of termination of employment.

However, if their notice period has not yet ended, an employee who gets vaccinated might ask to have their employment reinstated. You will need to give reasonable consideration to this and, as a general rule, we suggest that you reinstate the employee unless the ongoing role has been filled.

Vaccination status data collection

Tomorrow Friday 19 November or Monday 22 November, your regional office will contact to ask you for summarised data on the vaccination status of your registered teachers, teacher aides and other paid (non-teaching) staff.

This information will be used to help us understand the national and regional vaccination status of the education workforce and to ensure we are providing you with the support you need.

Requirements for offsite providers to be vaccinated

We've received a number of queries seeking clarification on whether the vaccine mandate applies to providers of services who are off site – for example, whether the mandate applies to staff working or volunteering for libraries, museums, public swimming pools, school camps, movie theatres and so on.

These workers (paid or unpaid) are not covered by the vaccine mandate because they are not working 'for' a school, school hostel or early learning service. While you might be receiving their services when you book or use their facilities, those staff are working 'for' the local council/owner/operator.

There is nothing to prevent you from checking on the vaccination status of offsite activity providers as part of your COVID-19 health and safety assessments, but you cannot require those offsite providers to be vaccinated under the Vaccination Order.

Providers coming on site

However, if any provider is coming on site to a school or early learning service – and at a time where children or students are also present – then the vaccine mandate does apply.

Providers must have had at least one vaccine dose before they come on site (and be fully vaccinated from 1 January).

Staff you 'employ' directly

The order also applies to any workers you employ directly (including any volunteers undertaking work for you) who are working off site and may have contact with children or students when carrying out their work.

The order looks to balance the safety of children and students with the implications for human and employment rights of mandatory vaccination requirements.

On balance, the provisions have been limited to workers who are carrying out work at or for an education service, which has been defined as a licensed early childhood service, registered school or a hostel. This is in part because the ability for children to choose to use these services is limited, particularly for children aged six to 16 who are required by law to attend school.

Find further information about the vaccine health order on our website.

COVID-19 Required Vaccinations Order – Ministry of Education

Using school pools

Guidance for swimming in Alert Level 3 Step 2 settings

At Alert Level 3 Step 2, curriculum-related physical activities can go ahead outdoors (but not indoors). This includes swimming. Therefore, outdoor school swimming pools can be used for educational purposes.

You should be able to go ahead with swimming activities, but they will need some consideration to ensure that everyone is keeping a reasonable distance from each other both in and out of the pool – a one-metre distance is recommended wherever practicable, particularly between adults.

Where you have students grouped together for Years 0 to 8, they should be the only ones using the pool at that time.

Boarders in a school hostel can also use the outdoor school pool if this is usual practice (that is, the pool is an extension of the boarding facilities).

In every circumstance, all public health requirements must continue to be adhered to.

Guidance for swimming in Alert Level 2 settings

At Alert Level 2, you are able to go ahead with swimming activities, but they will need some consideration to ensure that everyone is keeping a reasonable distance from each other both in and out of the pool.

Community use of school pools

In Alert Level 2 areas, both indoor and outdoor pools are allowed to be open as public recreation spaces.

If your school pool is open and you give out keys to your pool, you must ensure your community understand what restrictions apply (for example, reduced numbers to enable social distancing).

You will need to have systems in place to ensure that visitors to your pool are familiar with the public health requirements for public venues before visiting the pool and comply with public health requirements while they are there including:

- keep two metres physical distance from people you do not know
- sign in using the NZ COVID Tracer app

- wash or sanitise your hands after using shared equipment.

Consider how you will limit use of the pool so that it doesn't become overcrowded – you could do this by, for example, implementing a booking system.

A reminder that in Alert Level 3 public recreation facilities, including both indoor and outdoor pools, must remain closed.

These websites have further information:

Sports and recreation at Alert Level 2 – Unite Against COVID-19

Play, active recreation and sport at Alert Level 2 – Sport NZ

Sports and recreation at Alert Level 3 – Unite Against COVID-19

As always, anyone who is feeling unwell should be staying home and seeking advice about getting tested.

Face covering exemptions

We're aware that in some cases, parents and caregivers are using the exemption card so that their child does not wear a face covering in class when it is unlikely their child has a disability or health condition that would prevent them from doing so.

The Delta variant is more transmissible by droplets, so face coverings are a way we can protect ourselves and each other. Those who are wearing a face covering will be better protected than those who are not.

Not wearing a face covering when required to do so is a breach of the health order and is an infringement offense under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020 and misuse of a the system designed to support those with disabilities and health conditions is more than disappointing.

COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020 – NZ Legislation

However, you are not required to undertake an enforcement role in this regard.

You will also know that there are many layers of protection in schools, including people who are unwell staying away, increasing rates of vaccination across the population including mandated vaccinations for staff and volunteers, good ventilation, other students and staff wearing face coverings, good cough and sneeze etiquette and more.

You may wish to focus instead (as you have been doing) on encouraging good practice.

There are some posters and resources on the Unite Against COVID-19 website which might assist you to encourage use of face coverings.

Cover for each other face coverings poster – Unite Against COVID-19

Please wear a face covering poster – Unite Against COVID-19

How to wear a face covering safely poster – Unite Against COVID-19

Face covering information in te reo Māori – Unite Against COVID-19

Posters in other languages – Unite Against COVID-19

Guidance for situations involving strong views and big emotions

As part of the COVID-19 Public Health Response Order, requirements including mandatory vaccinations for people working in educational settings and the wearing of face coverings has resulted in strong reactions from some people.

Over the coming weeks there may be times when an individual and/or a group's reactions to the government's public health order requirements may impact on others.

Find guidance and ideas on how to respond to emotionally heightened situations on our website.

Responding to situations involving strong views – Ministry of Education

Auckland: Official Information Act (OIA) requests

We're aware that a journalist has made an OIA request to all Auckland schools for information relating to the vaccination mandate and the systems and processes schools have in place to ensure compliance with the COVID-19 Public Health Response Orders.

We have discussed the request with NZSTA and an approach to supporting schools to address the questions asked.

NZSTA is available to provide advice and assistance to schools on how to address the request to meet the obligations under the OIA and reduce double handling. NZSTA can also provide support on how to address any privacy issues raised by the request.

NZSTA can be contacted by phone on 0800 782 435 or by email at govadvice@nzsta.org.nz.

Summer holidays insurance cover for digital devices

We have arranged coverage for school-owned digital devices that have been provided to students for summer learning.

Please note, this only applies where the student has enrolled in summer school. We have clarified details of cover in four key areas.

Devices covered by our risk management scheme (RMS)

The excess for handheld devices is \$100 per claim, and the risk management scheme (RMS) treats all students enrolled in summer school as a single event versus one claim per device.

As such, damage, loss or theft of devices incurred by a school in the scheme during the 2021/22 summer holidays (for example, the non-return or damage to electronic devices sent home) will be treated as a single claim with a single excess for that school.

- Excess for handheld devices is \$100 per claim (where one claim may cover multiple devices).
- RMS insurance premium costs of this scheme are deducted directly from each school's operational grant at a cost of \$10.50 per student per annum. This is deducted in four amounts from each operational grant payment and already covers handheld devices.
- Schools placing a claim can work directly with our RMS loss adjustor to help manage the process. As repairs or replacement of devices will be needed during COVID-19, claims can be submitted as required and the excess will only be applied once.

Risk management scheme – Ministry of Education

Devices covered by a school's own insurance arrangement

We are not clear how each school's private insurer will treat electronic devices being sent home during the 2021/22 summer holidays.

However, we understand the main commercial provider used by schools is not treating the 2021/22 summer holidays any differently to normal circumstances.

We would encourage you to clarify the cover of your devices during the holidays. If unsure, we recommend you contact your insurer directly to understand what cover you have and the risk to your school.

The following questions may be useful:

- are devices covered for at-home use?
- are the 2021/22 summer holidays being treated as a single event with a single excess covering multiple devices?
- is the excess the same for theft, loss, damage, unexplained disappearance, non-return, different device types (that is, laptop vs Chromebook vs iPad/tablet), individual devices, or can they be combined into one claim with one excess?
- is there a limit on the contents sum insured?

Needing additional cover to make a claim

We advise that you take the following steps:

- approach your insurance provider in the first instance to receive the cover you have paid for
- claim back the excess by contacting McLarens and provide evidence of the claim and the excess charged
- claim back a loss not covered by your policy by contacting McLarens and provide evidence of the loss and your insurer's advice of non-coverage
- the first \$100 of excess for the 2021/22 summer holiday event will apply as it does for schools in the RMS, but all further excesses or losses will be covered.

Changing your cover to our risk management scheme

Following a conversation with your insurer, you may decide to transfer your cover to our risk management scheme.

Risk management scheme – Ministry of Education

To discuss the complete insurance package we offer and any additional cover, your school can call 0800 293 031 (select option 2).

If, after considering the differences between providers you decide to switch to the RMS, please complete the application form and email RMS.mailbox@education.govt.nz.

This form has a date from which the cover will start. Please coordinate with your current provider so that the date you leave their scheme and join the RMS is the same.

Report: Learnings from schools on bullying prevention

You're invited to read learnings from schools that have achieved low levels of bullying in a new report, 'Tō Tātou Kura Atawhai: Our kind of school'.

Our kind of school – Office of the Children's Commissioner

We partnered with the Office of the Children's Commissioner to talk with hundreds of students, staff and whānau at a diverse group of schools with strong inclusive cultures.

The project team identified several key insights, which they hope will inspire other schools to create welcoming, inclusive environments for their students and whānau.

Common to all schools were six key characteristics:

- knowing and meeting the needs of each student
- strong and respectful school leadership which lays the foundation for a positive school culture
- commitment to tikanga and te reo Māori in the classroom, culture, and community of the school
- connecting with and including whānau and wider community in school life
- valuing and celebrating staff and student diversity
- quick and effective responses to bullying incidents.

Watch a video explanation of the project and findings:

Our kind of school – YouTube

Get involved: Develop the new Pacific studies NCEA subject

You are invited to help us develop the new Pacific studies subject and apply to be part of the NCEA Pacific studies reference group.

Pacific studies reference group – NCEA Education

The reference group will be established to determine the scope of Pacific studies and its connection as a multi-disciplinary subject within The New Zealand Curriculum – as well as identify the big ideas of Pacific studies.

We're looking for a range of voices and want to see a balance of relevant expertise, knowledge and experience reflected across the reference group. Experienced senior secondary teachers, industry

experts, academics and community leaders across New Zealand and the Pacific are encouraged to apply.

If you are interested, send your CV and a cover letter noting your relevant experience to ncea.review@education.govt.nz by Thursday 9 December.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te Rāmere,

It's fair to say that over the last 18 months the education landscape has changed significantly. Since our first COVID-19 update in January 2020, we have worked under a strong alert level system which has provided a solid basis for a centrally driven response in uncertain times.

Under this system, there has been a lot of demand on the education sector, but you have shown remarkable resilience and have responded calmly and confidently to the unexpected.

With the arrival of Delta, we're seeing cases grow exponentially. And as we've done so often in recent times, we must update and adapt our processes, particularly in regard to our approach to managing cases of COVID-19 when they occur in our communities.

We've been working with the Ministry of Health to develop toolkits which outline a process that you principals and tumuaki will use when a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs in a school.

These changes have been made based on what we now know about Delta transmission – for example, there is very little evidence of transmission in the 'casual plus' category. Preliminary data shows only one in a thousand 'casual plus' interactions have resulted in infections. More information below.

Kia pai tō rā whakatā,
Iona

Update: Contact tracing in schools

As we move toward the new COVID-19 Protection Framework (the “traffic light” system), and given the increase in vaccination rates, we've worked with the Ministry of Health to review how we can best work together to respond when cases arise.

This week the Ministry of Health has implemented changes to the contact tracing process that allow for those at risk to be more precisely identified, and for shorter isolation periods for those who are vaccinated.

These changes will make it easier for schools to stay open for onsite learning when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19.

To help you prepare for and manage when a confirmed case occurs in your school, we have worked with the Ministry of Health to develop a toolkit and step-by-step guide. These tools will help you:

- outline the process for identifying contacts
- show how to categorise people into close contacts, casual plus contacts and casual contacts
- outline what steps contacts should take after they have been identified
- outline scenarios to help you identify contacts
- provide letter templates for contacts and the general school community.

Schools and kura will need to complete a spreadsheet that identifies and categorises contacts that will need to be sent to the National Investigation and Tracing Centre (NITC).

The step-by-step guide will help you complete this spreadsheet and regional (Te Mahau) staff will be on hand to walk you through this.

Two separate tool kits – one for primary level and one for secondary level – have been developed to reflect the differences in the age groups. Because younger students are at a greater risk, area schools should use the primary toolkit.

Te Mahau regional offices will connect with schools about the updated approach over the next few weeks.

Primary, intermediate schools and kura

Managing COVID-19: A public health toolkit for primary and intermediate schools and kura [DOCX, 1 MB]

Step-by-step guide for managing COVID-19 in primary and intermediate schools and kura [DOCX, 351 KB]

Secondary schools and kura

Managing COVID-19: A public health toolkit for secondary schools and kura [DOCX, 1.1 MB]

Step-by-step guide for managing COVID-19 in secondary schools and kura [DOCX, 338 KB]

School hostels

We'll provide you with an updated copy of the guidance for hostels early next week, but there will be no significant change in the way you will work.

COVID-19 guidance for school hostels [DOCX, 167 KB]

Public health officials will make decisions about how to manage the case, including whether they may need to move into managed isolation, or return home to self-isolate.

Although it is unlikely any case will remain in the hostel, you will need to have a strategy in place to manage isolation while you work to agree to a plan with health officials, the boarder and their parent or caregivers.

If you're made aware of a case associated with your hostel and haven't received that notification from health authorities, please contact your local public health unit or your local Ministry of Education contact for information and support:

Public health unit contacts – Ministry of Health

Local contacts – Ministry of Education

Information about My Vaccine Pass

You'll be aware My Vaccine Pass can now be accessed which provides evidence of a person's vaccination status.

My Vaccine Pass will give people access to higher-risk places within New Zealand that will require proof of vaccination under the new COVID-19 Protection Framework ("traffic light" system). For example, events, hospitality, close contact businesses such as hairdressers.

However, passes are not needed until New Zealand moves to the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

My Vaccine Pass – Unite Against COVID-19

Settings prohibited from requiring evidence of vaccination

In the meantime, Ministers have agreed that there are certain settings where denying entry on the basis of vaccination status will be prohibited.

These settings are in regard to life-preserving services and being able to access these services (for example, public transport). The settings also include the right to access education.

As a result, all registered schools (including private schools), all school hostels (including private hostels), and all school transport services (for all students) will be prohibited from requiring proof of vaccination (either via My Vaccine Pass or other tool) as a condition of using or accessing education.

This prohibition will apply to all children, students and their parents or caregivers. It will also apply to secondary students who access learning at tertiary education organisations.

This means that a person's vaccination status should not restrict learning for children and young people. Neither should it restrict parents and caregivers from supporting their children in their learning.

In addition, school hostels cannot make vaccination a requirement for acceptance as a boarder in the hostel.

Other settings where entry cannot be denied on the basis of vaccination states include public transport, supermarkets, dairies, pharmacies, petrol stations and essential health and disability services.

Other events and activities

There are situations where requiring evidence of vaccination is not prohibited.

In situations where events and activities occur on school grounds and where participants extend beyond staff, parents, caregivers and learners, it may be appropriate to ask for a vaccine certificate. Examples

of this are fundraising fairs, concerts and other community events.

Third-party users of education facilities will also be able to require evidence of vaccination.

Please note, these decisions by Ministers will be reflected in an Order once the enabling legislation has been passed. We will therefore provide you with further information after the Order is confirmed.

2021 financial reporting

The 2021 annual reporting guidelines provide information on preparing your 2021 annual report and are now available on our website.

The 2021 annual reporting webinar is also available on our website. The webinar is designed to help you prepare your 2021 annual report and to prepare for your annual audit.

Annual reporting guidelines – Ministry of Education

Schools annual reporting webinar 2021 – Ministry of Education

The webinar is available to view at your convenience and is presented in four sections:

- briefing from the Office of the Auditor-General
- tips from a school auditor
- preparing your annual report
- guidance on key areas.

2021 Kiwi Park model financial statements

The 2021 Kiwi Park model financial statements have been published on our website to help you prepare your annual financial statements.

The models, a list of updates made in 2021, and short instructional videos to help you use the Kiwi Park model can all be found on our website.

If you have any questions on preparing your 2021 annual report, please contact your school finance advisor.

Model spreadsheet examples – Ministry of Education

Contact details for managing school finances – Ministry of Education

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 26 NOVEMBER 2021

26 November 2021

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FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te Rāmere,

The guidance in today's bulletin outlines how schools will align with the Red, Orange and Green settings under the new COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF).

In the new framework, all schools are open on site to all students across all colour settings.

The Government has also agreed that for the remainder of this year there will be little or no change needed to the way you operate on site – including numbers of students and children attending and regardless of which part of the country you're in. This provides much more certainty to support your planning for 2022.

This is very good news, particularly for Tāmaki Makaurau schools. Those of you in Tāmaki Makaurau will retain your current public health measures and other requirements that are in place at Alert Level 3 Step 2 for the remainder of the year.

This means you will continue with a mix of students learning from home and have many students learning on site (whether full time or part time). You will then move to the CPF from 1 January 2022.

Nāku, nā,

Iona

Information about the COVID-19 Protection Framework

The Prime Minister has confirmed all of New Zealand will move onto the COVID-19 Protection Framework at 11.59pm on Thursday 2 December.

On Monday 29 November, Cabinet will meet to determine which colour of the traffic light system different parts of the country will move into.

We already know Tāmaki Makaurau will move into Red and it is unlikely any region will move into the Green setting.

The very good news for all schools is that there will be very little to no change needed for the remainder of 2021 regardless of which part of the country you're in.

Schools will retain their existing COVID-19 settings until the end of the 2021 calendar year, but guidance will recommend that schools outside of Auckland align their practices with the COVID-19 Protection Framework settings which will come into effect for all schools from 1 January 2022.

Information for Tāmaki Makaurau

You will retain your current public health measures and other requirements that are in place at Alert Level 3 Step 2 for the remainder of the year.

This means continuing with a mix of students learning from home, as well as many students learning on site whether full time or part time. You will then move to the CPF from 1 January 2022.

With more businesses opening up from 3 December, please continue to support those students who need to attend school full time.

As always, for any events and activities which are not curriculum-related or those that are off site, you will need to follow the relevant requirements which apply at the time of the event.

You can see high-level guidance for these on the Unite Against COVID-19 website.

COVID-19 Protection Framework – Unite Against COVID-19

Information for all other regions

You will retain your current public health measures and other requirements that are in place at Alert Level 2 for the remainder of the school year. This means that even should your region move to Red, all students will attend on site and curriculum-related activities can still go ahead.

Should you move to Red in your region, you are encouraged (but not required) to apply the health mitigations in the CPF – for example, staff and students in Years 4 and above continuing to wear face coverings. Consider also whether you can minimise congestion on site. Large activities with students should not go ahead in Red regions unless held outdoors.

As always, for any events and activities which are not curriculum related or those that are off site, you will need to follow the relevant requirements which apply at the time of the event.

You can see high-level guidance for these on the Unite Against COVID-19 website.

COVID-19 Protection Framework guidance

This a brief summary of the COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF) guidance.

You will see below there are links to an A3 summary, further details about what the framework will mean for schools and a risk assessment template to support your planning.

At all settings of the framework

- All schools will be open with students and staff on site.
- The same public health measures you are very familiar with remain in place:
 - good hygiene and cleaning – contact tracing systems in place
 - vaccination requirements for workers (paid and unpaid), and all eligible people encouraged to be vaccinated
 - if you are sick, stay home and get tested
 - maintain good ventilation.
- Contact tracing and case management will continue to be very important with contacts being identified, self-isolating and getting tested.
- There will not be a physical distancing requirement at any CPF setting, but at Red keeping a one-metre distance is recommended between different groups when inside and where practicable.
- Face coverings on school transport will align with requirements for public transport at every CPF setting (we anticipate this will be required for ages 12 and above at Orange and Red).
- Similarly, events and activities not related to the curriculum will need to align with requirements for the relevant settings in the CPF, as will offsite curriculum-related activities.

Red

- Face coverings will be required at school when indoors for students and staff in Years 4 to 13.
- Physical activities and singing should be held outside only.
- Keeping a one-metre distance between different groups is recommended.

- Children with complex medical needs can seek advice from their health professional about whether it is appropriate to come to school.
- No non-essential visitors on site.
- Students from another school can attend exams on site.

Orange

- There are very few differences between Orange and Green when on site, however at Orange there is an increased emphasis on planning for events and activities with large student numbers involved.

Links to guidance and resources

CPF resources for schools and kura – Ministry of Education

CPF guidance for schools and kura – Ministry of Education

COVID-19 Protection Framework – Unite Against COVID-19

Information for offsite education and activities

Education outside the classroom (EOTC) and the vaccine mandate

As noted in our 18 November bulletin, your staff and volunteers who are working with children and young people off site are covered by the vaccine mandate. That is, your staff and parent volunteers who attend EOTC activities such as camps, museum trips and visits to public swimming pools.

Staff you 'employ' directly – School Bulletin 18 November

However, the staff and volunteers working for an offsite provider are not required to be vaccinated even if working with children and young people.

While as part of your health and safety assessment you might want to check on the vaccine status of staff working for offsite providers, you cannot require them to be vaccinated under the Vaccination Order.

If any provider is coming on site to a school or early learning service, and at a time where children or students are also present, then the vaccine mandate does apply.

Implications under the COVID-19 Protection Framework

From 3 December when the new framework takes effect, schools cannot prevent children who are not vaccinated from accessing education. This means that all children and young people can attend on site at school at any setting (Red, Orange or Green) under the framework regardless of their vaccination status.

Settings prohibited from requiring evidence of vaccination – School Bulletin 19 November

However, you will need to be aware that some offsite providers you may be using for education outside the classroom activities (or for other events and activities not relating to the curriculum), may choose to implement the use of vaccination certificates. This will have implications for any student eligible for vaccination who does not have a vaccine pass (or similar evidence of vaccination).

If a business or service is using vaccination certificates, they can continue to operate at all settings of the CPF, although they may need to limit numbers to meet the requirements of the health order. The current guidance on the Unite Against COVID-19 website also notes that public facilities will continue to operate across the framework but isn't specific on all those facilities.

We anticipate further guidance will be provided in this regard, soon after the health order takes effect.

If you have planned offsite activities for the end of the year, you may wish to proactively contact your providers to check on whether they might be using vaccination certificates at Red, Orange and/or Green.

For those of you with a mix of students who are aged over and under 12, you may also want to check if they will be requiring proof of age as part of that process. They may still be working their way through this process but should be able to confirm when they will have made their decisions and be able to advise what their processes are.

If you are faced with a situation where some students will not be able to participate in offsite curriculum-related activities, you'll need to consider how you can provide equivalent learning outcomes on site. We will provide further information about My Vaccine Pass once the health order is confirmed.

COVID-19 Protection Framework for school hostels

Please continue to operate as you are until the end of the 2021 year.

If your region moves to Red on 3 December, you may want to review your plans with staff and students who have complex medical needs to ensure the plan for them remains appropriate for your setting.

We will update our health and safety guidance to reflect the new framework in readiness for operations in 2022.

How to manage unvaccinated staff taking sick leave

Staff are able to use their sick leave as normal – for example, if they are sick or injured and unable to work. There are processes in the collective agreements which cover these situations.

If an employee has a medical certificate from a medical practitioner saying that they are sick or injured and unable to work, you should accept this.

You should defer any employment processes relating to their unvaccinated status until the medical certificate expires.

Paid and unpaid sick leave

If the employee has an available sick leave balance, then sick leave will first be provided with pay. If the employee exhausts their sick leave balance, they will revert to sick leave without pay.

If a teacher or principal is on sick leave on a public holiday or during a school vacation, this will not be deducted from their sick leave balance.

If the employee is not employed under a teacher or principal collective agreement they would be placed on sick leave with or without pay other than when on annual leave.

Employment processes during leave

You can undertake an employment process during the school holidays unless the employee is unfit to work at that time.

Any meetings should be scheduled during usual days and hours of work. The employee would need to provide a medical certificate to support that lack of fitness for work.

You would then need to defer any employment process as mentioned above.

Further guidance

The above information is general guidance.

Some of the collective agreements contain clauses that specifically address what further information (including second opinions) can be sought from an employee and when, so you should check before taking any action.

You may wish to contact NZSTA or an alternative employment advisor for guidance with these employment processes. You can also contact employment.relations@education.govt.nz for advice.

AstraZeneca now available

The AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine is now available for those aged 18 and older who cannot receive the Pfizer vaccine, and for people who would like a different option.

AstraZeneca vaccines – Ministry of Health

From tomorrow Friday 26 November, those wanting the AstraZeneca vaccine will be able to book their appointment to receive the AstraZeneca through Book My Vaccine.

Book My Vaccine – Ministry of Health

Please note, when AstraZeneca is selected, the site will show a list of vaccination centres where AstraZeneca can be given. Not all sites are equipped to deliver this vaccine.

Translated information for parents and whānau

COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF) or “traffic light system”

If you'd like to make information about the COVID-19 Protection Framework more accessible to your ethnic parents and whānau, translation information is available in 27 languages on the Unite Against COVID-19 website.

Information and advice translated into different languages – Unite Against COVID-19

Using and signing up for My Covid Record

Please find below information available in different languages about how to use and sign up to My Covid Record.

How to sign up for My Covid Record – Unite Against COVID-19

Required identification

To sign up for My Covid Record, users will need to provide one of the following documents as confirmation of their identity.

A New Zealander:

- driver licence
- passport
- birth certificate (if issued after January 2003)
- or citizenship certificate.

Or an Australian:

- passport
- birth certificate.

If someone has been vaccinated but doesn't have an ID, they can call 0800 222 478 to request a My Vaccine Pass.

They should have their National Health Index (NHI) number ready, but if they don't have it, they may instead be asked a few questions to confirm their identity (for example, name and date of birth).

Student vaccination register

With the COVID-19 Protection Framework coming into effect on Friday 3 December, the Ministry of Health has advised that it is no longer necessary to collect student vaccination data to support the tracking and tracing process.

I know collection of this information has added to your administrative burden, so thank you for completing it. You are no longer required to maintain it.

End-of-year withdrawals in ENROL

You can schedule your 2021 end-of-year batch withdrawals in ENROL now.

We would encourage you to do so by the end of December – it is difficult for other schools to enrol these students for next year if they are not withdrawn.

Your school should receive an email shortly from the ENROL team with instructions on the batch withdrawal process.

Recent changes to ENROL

A new release of ENROL was implemented this week with the following changes:

- replace 'BOT' and 'board of trustees' to 'board' application-wide
- update 'special education' to 'learning support' application-wide.

Recent changes to ENROL – Ministry of Education

Changes to verification of student names and dates of birth

Next year, we'll be re-introducing the matching of National Student Number (NSN) information against the NZ Birth Register.

The details on these registers will verify student names and date of birth which are viewable for schools via the ENROL system. This will cover NSNs for all students currently enrolled in school whose birth has been registered with the Department of Internal Affairs. It will not cover children born overseas.

Once NSN details have been checked against the birth register, the chances of any student being given a second NSN by mistake decreases significantly.

The process will update student details to use the latest name recorded on the Birth Register, correct spelling mistakes and add any missing middle names. NSNs will be more accurate and reliable.

We will give you more information and time frames for processing this data in the New Year.

National Student Number for schools – Ministry of Education

For any further information about NSN data matching project please contact

Data.Team@education.govt.nz.

Applications due for alternative entry initial teacher education

The University of Canterbury is offering a new alternative pathway for initial teacher education (ITE) in 2022.

Teacher education qualifications and courses – University of Canterbury

Applicants with suitable experience in Technology or Te Reo Māori may be eligible for entry to the Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning (Secondary) without holding a Level 7 qualification. If you currently have a teacher working on a Limited Authority to Teach in one of these areas, this could be a good opportunity for them to train and gain registration.

The Graduate Diploma can be completed full time in one year (on campus or by distance) or part time over two years (by distance only).

Applications are due on Wednesday 1 December and require a mapping of the candidate's work experience against the curriculum area they seek to teach.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 29 NOVEMBER 2021

29 November 2021

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

COVID-19 Protection Framework letter template for parents and whānau

Events, activities and proof of vaccination

Cannot require evidence of vaccination

Can require evidence of vaccination

Is your event or activity an education service?

FOREWORD

Kia ora koutou,

You will have heard the Prime Minister's announcement today where regions will move to in the COVID-19 Protection Framework as at 11.59pm on Thursday 2 December.

All of the Auckland and Northland regions and the following territorial local authorities will move to Red:

- Taupo and Rotorua Lakes
- Kawerau, Whakatane, Opotiki
- Gisborne
- Wairoa
- Rangitikei, Whanganui, Ruapehu.

All other regions will move to Orange. This will next be reviewed on 13 December.

Regardless of which part of the country you are in there will be very little change needed for the remainder of 2021.

Schools will retain their existing COVID-19 settings until the end of the 2021 calendar year, although we recommend that schools in Red areas encourage the wearing of face coverings for staff and students in Year 4 and above. The COVID-19 Protection Framework settings will come into effect for all schools from 1 January 2022.

Because schools are considered low-risk environments, and the benefits of going to school outweigh the risks, the framework enables you to come on site and operate as “normally” as possible. Schools are not subject to gathering rules for curriculum activities. Distancing is recommended where practicable.

Hei āpōpō

Iona

COVID-19 Protection Framework letter template for parents and whānau

Letter template for Tāmaki Makaurau [DOCX, 18 KB]

Letter template for all other regions [DOCX, 17 KB]

Events, activities and proof of vaccination

As noted in Friday’s bulletin, curriculum-related events and activities can continue to go ahead regardless of your region’s setting under the COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF).

Information for offsite education and activities – School Bulletin 26 November

COVID-19 Protection Framework – Unite Against COVID-19

Cannot require evidence of vaccination

When the CPF takes effect on Friday 3 December, you cannot require evidence of vaccination for children, students and their parents and caregivers if they are there to access education (see 19 November bulletin).

Settings prohibited from requiring evidence of vaccination – School Bulletin 19 November

Can require evidence of vaccination

However, there are other events and activities you may be running that are not related to the curriculum, where you can require evidence of vaccination including by parents, caregivers and students (from 3 December when the CPF takes effect).

For example, a school fair, concert or other community event.

Is your event or activity an education service?

You are best placed to decide whether the event or activity you are running relates to providing access to education services or not.

If not, then you will be able to require evidence of vaccination as a condition for those to participate in the event or activity where they must follow all requirements under the CPF setting.

For example, at Red, outdoor community events can go ahead with up to 100 people attending (with one-metre physical distancing). Further details can be found on the NZ Business website.

For offsite activities – whether curriculum-related or not – please also see our bulletin on 26 November for more information.

Events and gatherings guidelines – NZ Business

Information for offsite education and activities – School Bulletin 26 November

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 2 DECEMBER 2021

02 December 2021

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Pay equity update for school administrators and kaiārahi i te reo

FOREWORD

Kia ora koutou,

As we enter the final month of 2021 and a new phase of living in a pandemic, I'm aware that it has felt like both a very short and a very long year. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to keeping our tamariki and rangatahi safe.

Adapting to all of the changes associated with COVID-19 is no small feat and this is a time to remember to be kind (especially to yourselves). Find information on accessing EAP services below if you need it – centrally funded wellbeing support services will continue to be available to you and your staff next year.

As indicated yesterday, today's bulletin clarifies holding events and gatherings and also whether you should require courier drivers and postal workers to be vaccinated. You're also invited to have your say on proposed changes to enrolling international fee-paying students under Year 9.

Ngā mihi,
Iona

Update: Information about events, activities and gatherings

There have been requests for clearer and more definitive advice about events, activities and gatherings. This information will support you when planning events and activities to be held in the remainder of 2021.

A reminder of our previous advice:

- at Alert Level 3 there should not be any events, activities or gatherings held on site beyond those related to curriculum requirements
- numbers involved in any curriculum-related activity should be kept to a minimum
- physical activities, including singing and dancing, should only be held outside
- no non-essential visitors on site at Alert Level 3
- while there is discretion in what you may do at Alert Level 2 (subject to meeting public health requirements), we encourage you to take a precautionary approach when deciding whether to host a gathering or large event. Careful planning will need to be undertaken.

When planning any activity whether under the alert level requirements or under the new COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic lights system), we encourage you consider how you will keep risk of spread to a minimum. For example, you might consider having different points for entry and exit, increased ventilation and requiring face coverings.

COVID-19 guidance for events and activities – Te Mahau

Curriculum-related events and activities

There is no physical distancing requirement in the Public Health Response (Alert Level Requirements) Order for those people who are normally on a school site to receive or provide education services. This allows curriculum-related activities to go ahead on site (with a range of other health measures in place).

However, please be aware that the exemption from physical distancing requirements when onsite does not extend to inter-school activities.

Curriculum-related events and activities should continue using alert level guidelines until the end of Term 4 2021 and from 2022 the traffic light setting guidance will apply.

Some examples of school-based curriculum-related events and activities include:

- assemblies
- physical education classes (including swimming)
- parent-teacher meetings
- examinations
- school plays or performances during class time
- cultural activities during class time
- pōwhiri ceremonies (for example, start of year/new student or staff welcomes)
- music during class time
- inter-school events during class time (such as inter-school sport events)
- science fairs.

A reminder that as soon as you bring others onsite (who are not receiving or providing education services) for curriculum-related events, including parents and caregivers, you will need to follow the relevant rules which apply to all events and activities in your region for your traffic light setting.

COVID-19 guidance for events and activities – Ministry of Education

Education outside the classroom (EOTC)

Education outside the classroom (EOTC) activities, including field trips, camps, library or museum visits, are curriculum-related and can operate using the alert level guidelines until the end of Term 4 2021.

From 2022 the traffic light setting guidance will apply.

If you are offsite you will need to determine the requirements of any providers or venues in advance.

(For example, establish whether EOTC providers may require a vaccination pass for those aged 12 and three months or older.)

Non-curriculum related events and activities

Any non-curriculum events and activities will be subject to the general event and gathering requirements under the traffic light framework.

Gatherings and visits at Orange – Unite Against COVID-19

Gatherings and visits at Red – Unite Against COVID-19

Some examples of events and activities that are not curriculum-related include:

- prizegiving events involving the wider community (parents and whānau)
- school balls and leavers' dinners
- weekend sports
- community use of swimming pools or other facilities
- out-of-hours music and art, and sporting and cultural activities held out of school hours
- school fairs and fundraising events
- PTA meeting
- religious instruction during school hours (state schools only).

Generally, events and activities are not curriculum-related if they occur outside of class time – particularly where attendance is optional.

Workforce wellbeing: EAP services extended

Centrally funded wellbeing support services will continue to be available to the education workforce next year. All teachers, regular relievers and support staff across kura and state and state-integrated schools are eligible to access these services.

Confidential one-on-one counselling sessions are available. These services are available face-to-face (subject to CPF settings), online or on the phone.

There will be no charge for these services. They are not intended to replace existing services you already offer staff, but rather to supplement any existing local wellbeing and counselling services for a specific period of time.

You'll find further information about these EAP services on the our website. Alternatively, if you any questions call 0800 327 669 or visit the EAP website.

My Vaccine Pass and students who have just turned 12

You may request to see a student's My Vaccine Pass if you are maintaining a student vaccination register or planning an education outside the classroom (EOTC) event. (Noting that students are not required to provide evidence of their vaccination status.)

However, a reminder that students under the age of 12 are not eligible for vaccination.

As such, from this Friday 3 December My Vaccine Pass cannot be required for these students for any offsite activities. This is also the case for any students aged up to 12 years and three months at the time of the event or activity.

This is because anyone who has just turned 12 will need to have the opportunity to get both vaccine doses before they need to prove they are eligible for entry to an event, business or service.

Required vaccinations for courier drivers and postal workers

We'd like to clarify that anyone coming on site to pick up or drop off parcels or mail is unlikely to be included in the vaccine mandate that applies to schools.

This is because courier drivers and postal workers are not on your school site to work for you (they are employed by NZ Post or another company) and they are very unlikely to be within two metres of (the same) children or students for 15 minutes or more.

If you believe some couriers or postal workers may be onsite for a period longer than 15 minutes and will have close contact with the same children and students for 15 minutes or more, we encourage you to discuss this with the company involved.

You may wish to clarify that in those instances they will need to be vaccinated (first dose now; second dose no later than 1 January 2022).

In addition to this, NZ Post have confirmed they are moving quickly toward to having all their workforce fully vaccinated. They have also set the expectation that all staff should be wearing face coverings when on your school site.

Have your say: Enrolling international fee-paying students under Year 9

Consultation on proposed changes to enrolling international fee-paying students under Year 9 is now open.

Enrolling international students under Year 9 – Kōrero Mātauranga

Consultation closes on Friday 11 March 2022.

Feedback from this consultation will inform advice and options to the Minister of Education, who signaled the intention to undertake this review in his speech at the International Education Forum in July 2021.

School Investment Package extension

Because market constraints due to COVID-19 and subsequent alert level restrictions have impacted on project delivery and completion timeframes, the School Investment Package (SIP) has been extended until end June 2022.

If you have identified a project but have yet to submit the opening documents to us, please do so no later than Monday 31 January 2022. This timeframe is to ensure outstanding projects can be in delivery by end June 2022.

If you haven't identified a project, please contact your property advisor as soon as possible and work with them to identify a project. January 31 2022 is your final opportunity to spend your allocated funding.

If your project is in delivery, continue to work with your project manager to meet the end June delivery time frame.

Pay equity update for school administrators and kaiārahi i te reo

The investigation phase of the school administrator and kaiārahi i te reo pay equity claims are now complete. Together with NZEI Te Riu Roa, we are analysing the evidence gathered to draw our conclusions.

School administration support staff claim – Ministry of Education

Kaiārahi i te reo claim – Ministry of Education

The investigation phase consisted of several activities to build a body of evidence. This included claimant and comparator interviews, analysis of remuneration and terms and conditions from collective agreements, and the use of a factor scoring process using a gender-neutral work assessment tool.

We will start negotiations with NZEI Te Riu Roa shortly and final reports and conclusions will be released upon any proposed settlement.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 7 DECEMBER 2021

07 December 2021

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

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Life skills teaching resource now available

Official Information Act request to schools

FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te ahiahi,

Year end is always hectic, and I know this year even more so. I am sure you are looking forward to some well-earned respite.

You will be as pleased as I am that the last planned bulletin for this year will be Thursday 9 December.

In today's bulletin, please note that there have been some changes made to the Employment Relations Act specifically to do with staff vaccinations. There is also an update on the plans to introduce vaccines for children aged five to 11.

Ngā mihi maioha,
Iona

Changes to the Employment Relations Act around vaccinations

There have been recent changes to the Employment Relations Act 2000 which you need to be aware of.

Minimum amount of notice

There is now a minimum amount of paid notice that employers are required to give where an employee is dismissed due to not meeting vaccination requirements.

If an employee is not vaccinated as required by the Public Health Order, and after following a fair and reasonable employment process you terminate their employment, you must provide at least four weeks paid notice.

If the employee's employment agreement has a longer notice period, then the longer period applies. The notice period provided for teachers by their employment agreement is two months.

Some non-teaching staff have a one-month notice period which will continue to apply but staff in roles covered by the School Caretakers', Cleaners' and Canteen Staff Collective Agreement or the Secondary and Area School Groundstaff Collective Agreement who had a two-week notice period, will now be entitled to four weeks' paid notice.

Employment agreements – Ministry of Education

This new requirement applies to those who receive notice on or after Friday 26 November and only to those who are dismissed due to not meeting vaccination requirements.

We have previously advised that notice should be cancelled and the employee reinstated if, while the notice period is being worked, the employee becomes vaccinated. This applies unless cancelling the notice of termination would unreasonably disrupt the school's operations. This is now also a legal requirement.

Before giving notice of termination of employment, you must ensure that a full employment and consultation process has taken place, including exhausting all other reasonable alternatives. Please contact NZSTA or an alternative employment relations adviser for support.

Paid time off for vaccination

Our advice has been that you should support staff to get vaccinated by providing paid time off where they were unable to be vaccinated outside of their normal hours of work.

This is now a legal requirement and an employee is now entitled to reasonable paid time off during their normal working hours to receive a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Before taking paid time off, the employee must notify you of the date and time they intend to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and the amount of time they expect to take as paid time off (including any travel time).

If providing paid time off would unreasonably disrupt the school's work or the performance of the employee's duties, you can work through options with the employee for when the time off will be provided.

Vaccinations for children aged five to 11

Independent safety regulator Medsafe is currently considering an application to use a child version of the Pfizer vaccine for five to 11-year-olds. We can expect a decision in mid-December.

Pending the decision made by Medsafe, Cabinet may be in a position to consider vaccinations for children before Christmas.

Health officials are therefore planning for a rollout starting early next year. Although timing has not been decided, it is expected it would begin before the end of January.

Current plans are to use the existing health sector infrastructure such as GPs, pharmacies and vaccination clinics, as well as working with iwi, DHBs, local providers, communities and the Ministry of Education to ensure a whānau-based approach.

Children and tamariki under the age of 12 can only be vaccinated with the consent of their parent or caregiver. We encourage whānau to discuss vaccination so that everyone understands the decision they are making.

Using your school as a vaccination site

We're aware that some of you have been approached by your District Health Boards about the possibility of hosting vaccination clinics in 2022.

Schools are often at the centre of our communities and can provide a safe and convenient place for young people and their whānau to access good information or be vaccinated against COVID-19.

The use of school facilities remains a matter for your board to decide and we will support you in your decision.

If you wish to communicate with your community regarding COVID-19 vaccines, you can access information from the following trusted sources:

COVID-19 vaccines – Unite Against COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines – Ministry of Health NZ

Doing it for each other – Karawhiua

Information for Pacific Peoples – Unite Against COVID-19

COVID-19 – The Immunisation Advisory Centre

Insurance impacts of non-vaccination

In line with other school insurers, our Risk Management Scheme (RMS) liability insurer has notified us that it intends to apply a pandemic exclusion from renewal on 1 January 2022.

This means that any claim notified after 4pm on 1 January 2022 which has arisen from the pandemic or the Government's response to this will be excluded (that is, not covered).

We strongly advise you notify the RMS liability insurer of any circumstance that may give rise to a claim as soon as possible and no later than 4pm on 1 January 2022.

More particularly, notify the RMS liability insurer if you have circumstances involving any staff that either have been stood down since 15 November, or staff who have indicated they may not comply with the second dose deadline or that they may seek redress due to any action of the school relating to the pandemic.

Our RMS liability insurer is Lumley, a business division of IAG New Zealand. Notifications can be sent to liabilityclaims@nzi.co.nz.

Out-of-school care and recreation and school holiday programmes

Out-of-school care and recreation (OSCAR) programmes

Out-of-school care and recreation (OSCAR) programmes can open in Red, Orange and Green settings of the traffic light framework.

Providers are prohibited from requiring a My Vaccine Pass for people accessing these programmes.

Vaccination of OSCAR staff

Board-employed staff and volunteers will already be covered by the vaccine mandate for education and must be vaccinated.

If not covered by the vaccine mandate, staff are not required to be vaccinated unless they are providing a close-proximity service. Providers should consider based on their service model whether they are close-proximity services and, if so, whether they can operate safely at all levels.

Public health advice indicates that it may not be feasible for OSCAR providers with unvaccinated staff to operate safely at any level.

Further information on the vaccination of OSCAR staff and guidelines for operating OSCAR programmes under Red, Orange and Green can be found on the Ministry of Social Development website.

Guidance for social service providers – MSD [PDF, 361 KB]

School holiday or summer programmes

School holiday or summer programmes may also open in Red, Orange and Green settings.

These may be on school sites, however, in order to go ahead, the providers need to apply the general rules for gatherings and events.

Update on ventilation

We're asking all schools to stay up to date with our guidance on ventilation and complete the ventilation self-assessment:

Ventilation in schools – Te Mahau

Ventilation self-assessment for schools [PDF, 145 KB]

Please contact your property advisor if you have concerns or need advice about ventilation.

Contact from ventilation suppliers

We're aware many schools are being contacted by suppliers offering to supply CO2 monitors, portable air cleaners/purifiers or other proposed solutions. Please be aware these vary greatly in quality and performance and advice from leading international authorities is that portable air cleaners are not a substitute for good ventilation.

We are investigating how active technologies such as air treatment may supplement the management and ventilation measures already in place in schools. We are working closely with a panel of experts including the Ministry of Health and NIWA on this.

Ventilation study gets underway at three schools – Ministry of Education

COVID-19 resource toolkit

The Unite Against COVID-19 Resource Toolkit (hosted by Brandkit) is the new home for all the Unite Against COVID-19 resources.

In the toolkit you can easily find and download any of the resources, including logos, templates, posters, videos and social media tiles.

Some frequently used posters that may be required in your school or kura can be found on our website.

COVID-19 Protection Framework for schools and kura – Te Mahau

If you wish to create your own posters, you can head to the COVID-19 Resource Toolkit and use the 'login/register' button to create an account.

COVID-19 Resource Toolkit – Unite Against COVID-19

Fake ID cards claiming diplomatic immunity from vaccination

We've been advised that there are individuals claiming diplomatic immunity exemption from vaccination requirements and using fake ID cards as evidence.

The fake diplomatic ID cards are being sold by 'Te-Moana-Nui-A-Kiwa Embassy' and 'Avoid Vaccines | Ranger Security' organisations.

The individuals holding these ID cards do not hold diplomatic immunity in New Zealand and you should not accept these ID cards from people seeking exemption from the vaccine mandate.

The ID card presented is not a diplomatic ID card provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and does not entitle the holder to any immunity under the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1968.

It's the expectation that any spouse or dependent family member of an accredited diplomat who has been approved to work in New Zealand comply with the requirements of their profession – including any vaccination requirements.

MFAT are maintaining a log of all claims using these fake IDs which may be of assistance to New Zealand Police. Please forward any examples of claims to protocol@mfat.govt.nz.

Life skills teaching resource now available

The School Leavers' Toolkit (SLTK) provides information and resources to help young people gain the core skills and knowledge they need to help launch their post-school lives.

Following ongoing feedback on our SLTK resources, we've created a set of life skills lessons (unit plans) for teachers and careers advisors to support life skills programmes for senior secondary students.

Life skills lessons – School Leavers' Toolkit

These six life skills lessons (unit plans) align with the six sections of the School Leavers' Toolkit and curriculum learning areas. They can be used as is or can be adapted/built on to fit your teaching style.

Official Information Act request to schools

We're aware that an OIA request has been sent to a number of schools from "Education Aotearoa" seeking information about their transgender, non-binary and gender fluid students.

As you will all be keenly aware, schools and kura are required to provide and promote a safe and inclusive environment for all students, including for transgender and gender diverse students and we know it is a responsibility you take very seriously. This responsibility also includes protecting the privacy of individual students.

Any person or organisation can request information held by a school or kura under the Official Information Act 1982. However, the Act also provides grounds to withhold information where the release would breach the privacy of an individual.

We would be very concerned about the release of any information which might identify individual students in this context or breach their privacy and we know those schools that have received this request will be considering very carefully what information (if any) is appropriate to provide in response to this request.

We would encourage any schools or kura who receive this request for information to contact NZSTA or Te Rūnanga Nui. These organisations are the appropriate bodies to provide case-specific advice and support to schools/kura on meeting their governance obligations.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE – 9 DECEMBER 2021

09 December 2021

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FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te ahiahi,

Tēnā koutou e ngā manawa tīti, o ngā whare ako huri noa i ngā tōpito o te motu, me he maonga āwhā. Nei rā āku whakamiha atu rā me te maioha ki a koutou. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

Thank you for your mahi during 2021 to make the best of some very difficult circumstances. I particularly acknowledge the additional pressure for those of you in Tāmaki Makaurau, Tai Tokerau and Waikato. I wish you all a safe and restful break.

In our final bulletin for the year, we have a number of updates for you which cover your queries about EOTC, the emergency payment scheme, the extension of home internet connections, an end-of-year checklist for your school property and more.

Meri Kirihimete me ngā mihi o te tau hou,
Iona

Clarification on education outside the classroom (EOTC)

At all settings (Red, Orange, Green), education outside the classroom (EOTC) activities can go ahead with careful planning.

Although schools are continuing to operate under alert level settings for the remainder of the year, venues and facilities are operating under the traffic light system and have options for how they choose to operate.

This means that venues and facilities can choose to require My Vaccine Pass as a condition of entry. This applies to all attendees at their facilities, including any school or kura groups with students who are 12 years and three months and older.

A reminder that all tamariki and rangatahi and their parents or caregivers have the right to attend school (including those secondary students who access learning at tertiary education organisations).

Settings prohibited from requiring evidence of vaccination – School Bulletin 19 November

Vaccine passes and certificates – Unite Against COVID-19

Managing requirements for My Vaccine Pass

If you are taking students aged 12 and over offsite (even if the activity is curriculum related), you will need to work closely with your EOTC providers.

This may mean that some EOTC activities you have already planned may need to be changed.

We encourage you to consider how you might provide appropriate opportunities for unvaccinated students to engage in learning outside the classroom, as you would for other students such as those who have additional learning needs.

COVID-19 Protection Framework for schools and kura – Ministry of Education

Teacher supply for Term 1 2022

If you are concerned about your ability to fully staff your school or kura in 2022 and have not already been in touch with your Te Mahau regional staff, we encourage you to do so.

Some regional offices are planning region-specific online hui on teacher supply issues towards the end of this term and during Term 1 next year. Your local team will be in touch if there is one in your region.

Alternatively, if you have questions you can contact the national office team responsible for teacher supply by emailing teacher.supply@education.govt.nz.

Below are some further options – you are welcome to discuss these with your advisor.

New programme: Beginning teacher vacancy support

This initiative provides additional financial support to the schools and kura most affected by the COVID-19 vaccination mandate to support the employment of a beginning teacher.

If this would be helpful and you have not already been contacted, please get in touch with your regional office.

Existing recruitment incentives

Programmes exist which provide financial support for recruitment. These incentives are largely targeted at low decile and hard-to-staff schools, and at teachers of STEM and te reo Māori.

See details below:

Domestic finder's fee – TeachNZ

Domestic relocation grant – TeachNZ

National beginning teachers' induction grant – TeachNZ

Other responses to consider

- Online learning you may be able to supplement your staffing by using Te Kura (Correspondence School) or a Virtual Learning Network.
- A limited authority to teach (LAT) provides authority to teach for those who do not have a teaching qualification but have 'specialist skills' or 'skills in short supply'. If you could call on someone who, despite being unqualified, would be capable in the classroom, and who has a knowledge of the curriculum, you can call the Teaching Council on the principal's line and discuss the requirements for a LAT. Additional funding to assist you to attract or retain someone holding a LAT may be available through the Recruitment, Retention and Responsibility National Fund (3Rs National Fund).
- It may be possible to share or combine resources with neighbouring schools or kura possibly through your Kāhui Ako/Community of Learning.
- We are able to provide hard packs of learning materials on request. In the first instance, contact your local office.
- We know that school leaders and resource staff including learning support coordinators were called on in 2021 to manage the initial impacts of COVID-19. These are not long-term solutions, but they could be considered in 2022 to cover critical shortages.
- Finally, RTLB will continue to be available on a voluntary basis to cover such situations.

Recruitment, Retention and Responsibility National Fund – TeachNZ

End of the emergency payment scheme

With the introduction of the COVID-19 Protection Framework and the ability for students to work on site, the emergency payment scheme will close for day relief teachers and casual employees who have been prevented from earning because of COVID-19.

Auckland

The final payment for eligible casual non-teaching and day relief staff in secondary schools in Auckland was made on Tuesday 30 November.

We expect the demand for relief teachers and casual non-teaching staff in secondary schools from Wednesday 1 December to the end of the secondary school year to be similar to the same period in previous years.

For eligible casual non-teaching staff and for day relievers working in primary schools, emergency payments will continue until Monday 20 December to recognise the ongoing variability in face-to-face learning taking place in primary settings.

Outside Auckland

Emergency payments for casual and day-relief staff in all schools and kura outside of Auckland Support will also cease with effect from Wednesday 1 December.

Home internet connections extended

All homes currently connected through the Ministry will continue to have free internet access until the end of June 2022.

We provided student homes with internet access as part of the COVID-19 support plan and these connections were due to expire at the end of December. This extension will now help individual schools continue to provide distance learning support for these students in the event of further COVID-19 outbreaks.

Please pass this message on to your students and whānau that are currently on this service. In the coming weeks, they will also receive a physical letter sent to their home address informing them of this extension.

If you have any queries or know, for example, if any students or whānau have moved to a new house, please contact the 'Learning From Home' helpdesk at EDA@education.govt.nz or 0800 783 744.

Reminder: Managing staff impacted by the vaccination requirement

Many of you will have started managing the employment processes for employees who did not receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by 15 November.

A reminder of the information we have shared about this process and the recent changes to the Employment Relations Act around vaccinations shared in previous bulletins:

Managing implications for staff – School Bulletin 18 November

Changes to the Employment Relations Act around vaccinations – School Bulletin 7 December

End-of-year property checklist

As the end of term approaches, please make sure you:

- have contact details for the emergency response coordinators for your region in the event your school is damaged as the result of fire, flood or extreme weather
- remove external material that could be used to start fires. Visit the Fire and Emergency NZ website for more information on protecting your school and assets
- have holiday management procedures in place for swimming pool areas and your board is aware of their health and safety responsibilities for everyone using it, including after-school use by the wider community under the traffic light system. Further information on school pools is available on the 'Swimming pools at schools' page on our website.
- check your school's insurance is current and provides enough cover.

Emergency response coordinators – Ministry of Education

Protecting your school and assets – Fire and Emergency NZ

Swimming pools at schools – Ministry of Education

Insurance – Ministry of Education

New bill strengthens learner wellbeing and safety

Improving wellbeing and safety for learners as well as the quality of their education experiences is the key focus of the new Education and Training Amendment Bill (No. 2).

The bill is expected to have its first reading before Parliament rises for the year.

The main changes impacting schooling include:

- requiring that all non-teaching and unregistered employees working in early learning services or schools are police vetted before beginning employment. Previously, employers only needed to apply for these workers to be vetted within two weeks of starting work
- streamlining the Teachers Council disciplinary regime by allowing more disputes to be resolved at a lower level
- enabling the Education Review Office to review the quality of professional learning and development services to help improve their quality
- strengthening the wellbeing and safety of domestic tertiary and international learners and better providing for a dispute resolution scheme to address learner complaints
- removing the need for the Secretary for Education to review and confirm strategic plans from school boards. The right to require changes where there is concern about a plan's quality is retained.

The bill reflects consultation with the public and a call for changes to clarify and strengthen learner wellbeing and safety.

Providing digital devices to students

We've received several queries about the options available to schools and kura for providing digital devices to students.

Schools and kura may:

- purchase or lease devices for use by students. If a device is required as part of the curriculum, parents and whanau cannot be charged for the use of the device
- ask students to bring their own device (BYOD). A BYOD scheme may lower the ongoing capital commitments of the school or kura, however this cannot be made compulsory, schools and kura must still provide devices for students that are unable or unwilling to bring their own device
- use its purchasing power to provide the school community an opportunity to purchase a device. Where the school or kura has purchased devices, this sale should be treated like an item of stationary and full payment is made at the time of sale. Alternatively, where payment cannot be made in full, the sale should be completed directly between the parents / whanau and the retailer making the offer.

Schools and kura may not:

- lease devices to students. A lease is a type of loan (debt financing) and is not allowed under current legislation
- offer 'payment over time' options to parents/whānau. This also creates a type of loan (debt financing) and is not allowed under current legislation
- subsidise the cost of devices that students will keep.

Digital devices for learning – Te Kete Ipurangi

Quarterly update for NCEA Change Programme

Read a snapshot of the progress in the delivery of the NCEA Change Programme in our quarterly update for the period ending 31 December 2021.

NCEA Change Programme quarterly update – 31 December

This includes updates on the four NCEA pilots in 2022, Review of Achievement Standards, Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau | Literacy and Numeracy, the work to develop resources which support Universal Design for Learning and inclusive practices in NCEA, ongoing work to design a Vocational Entrance Award, Accord Teacher Only Days for secondary schools, Change Hubs and support package for parents and whānau.

Thank you for engaging with us about the NCEA Change Programme throughout the year. If you have any queries, please email us at ncea.review@education.govt.nz.

Reminder: Te Kura Summer School

Te Kura Summer School can support your students who need additional credits to attain NCEA or University Entrance this year.

State or state-integrated schools, you can register you students free:

Summer School information and registrations – Te Kura

Te Kura Summer School is run over the summer break to support students who require up to 12 NCEA credits to progress to further study, training or employment. A range of subjects are offered, including English, maths and science and are delivered online with support from registered teachers.

Te Kura Summer School runs from 20 December 2021 to 11 February 2022. Registrations open from 8 November 2021 and close on 2 February 2022.

Circular 2021/04: Initiation of bargaining notice

Circular 2021/04 has been published on our website and is about the initiation of bargaining for the renewal of the Support Staff in Schools' Collective Agreement and the Kaiārahi i te Reo, Therapists', ATSSD and Special Education Assistants' Collective Agreement.

Circular 2021/04: Initiation of Bargaining Notice – Ministry of Education

Employers must let any employees who may be covered by these collective agreements know about the upcoming bargaining.

Further information on the bargaining is available from NZSTA.

VLN Primary School: Registrations invited for 2022

Nau mai, haere mai, all tamariki are invited to learn with the VLN Primary School.

Online learning – VLN Primary School

Extend curriculum choices for your learners and increase your school's confidence and capability in online and distance learning.

A wide range of language programmes are available, including te reo Māori and kapa haka, digital technology, gifted and talented, creative arts, literacy and science and maths.

Find out more and register your interest online or email primary@vln.school.nz.

Registrations close Monday 21 February, with classes starting Monday 14 March.

Back-to-school learning sessions for Apple devices

If your school uses Apple devices, Apple are hosting a series of back-to-school learning sessions to support teaching and learning experiences.

The sessions will take place on 19 and 20 of January, and you can choose from a selection of nine workshops based on your areas of interest to discover new ways to integrate technology into everyday

lessons.

To view the full line-up of sessions and register your interest visit the Apple website.

Back-to-school learning sessions – Apple

Opportunities to learn through sport in 2022

Sport NZ | Ihi Aotearoa is leading an educational project called 'In Our Backyard' which aims to support schools and kura, sporting organisations and local communities to work together in a collaborative way, and engage tamariki in new, different and innovative ways to learn through sport.

In Our Backyard – Sport NZ

Registrations for opportunities in 2022 are now open.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 25 JANUARY 2022

25 January 2022

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FOREWORD

Tēnā koe me ngā āhuatanga o te wā, greetings to you in this new season of COVID-19.

Just a week out from the beginning of Term 1, you'll know the Omicron variant is now in some of our communities, and you will be beginning your school year under the Red setting of the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

I know many of you will have planned for this outcome already, but in this special bulletin, we will outline some of the key measures under the framework. We have also provided a letter template you can share with parents and whānau.

You'll also find information on booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, as well as an update on immunisations for children aged five to 11.

Thank you for your response to Sunday's email and the queries you have already sent in – as always, please continue to send them through. It's so helpful in shaping what we include in these bulletins.

Ngā mihi nui,
Iona

Preparing for Omicron

The COVID-19 Protection Framework helps to protect Aotearoa from COVID-19.

Based on overseas experience and local modelling, New Zealand has been preparing for an Omicron outbreak.

Evidence to date suggests Omicron has a greater rate of transmission, individuals tend to be infectious sooner after exposure, hospitalisation rates are lower and fewer patients had severe disease when compared with Delta.

It is not, however, a mild virus and there is little data on the severity among older age-groups and people with underlying risk factors (see the epidemiological update from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control – ECDC).

With this in mind, we have reviewed the framework guidance for schools and early learning services to support your preparations for possible outbreaks of COVID-19 in your community.

[Download a summary of the COVID-19 Protection Framework – Ministry of Education](#)

[Epidemiological update – ECDC](#)

Schools to remain open at all traffic light settings

There are no changes to the framework as a result of that review. Schools, along with most other services, will remain open on site at all colour settings, for all students to attend, subject to health and safety settings.

As has always been the case throughout the COVID-19 response, some children, students or staff may be required to self-isolate (as they are a confirmed case or a close contact) or have complex medical needs, particularly if not fully vaccinated, and therefore may not attend on site for a period of time.

Your planning needs to consider what you would do if a large number of staff are unable to be at school. While it is unlikely that schools will be closed for public health reasons, you and your board may consider that in extreme circumstances staff and students may need to work remotely for a period of time.

Planning in these extreme circumstances will need to accommodate the needs of students under 14 who would not have supervision or who would be unsafe at home and must therefore be able to access supervision and care at school.

Key health measures under the framework

Vaccinations

Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy in managing the COVID-19 pandemic and can help reduce the risk of outbreaks.

All workers in schools, paid and unpaid, have had two vaccine doses by 1 January 2022 and many staff will now be due for their booster dose (see item below).

Vaccination levels vary from community to community. Where vaccinations are lower you may wish to introduce some other measures to augment the existing requirements. See the item below 'Reviewing your COVID-19 plan' for more information, including a risk assessment template.

Your school board may decide that offering vaccinations at school (a school-based programme), or on a school site is in the best interests of your community.

Your school can be used as a community vaccination site, which will be able to vaccinate staff, students and whānau using a District Health Board (DHB) vaccination team or other DHB approved provider.

Should a school and local health provider agree that the school will be used as a vaccination site, they will be the joint PCBU – school boards for the health and safety of people on the school site and Ministry of Health/the health provider for the health and safety in relation to vaccine logistics and delivery.

The Ministry of Health have set up a dedicated email you can use for any queries about vaccinations: schools@health.govt.nz.

Evidence of vaccinations

You cannot require evidence of a child's vaccination status, nor can any child be excluded from education outside the classroom (EOTC) based on vaccination status.

If you do ask about vaccination status, you must take reasonable steps to ensure the information is collected lawfully, including students being aware of how this information will be used and why it is being collected.

Personal information about an individual's vaccine status must be protected and cannot be shared without the student's consent.

COVID-19 immunisation programme for ages 5 to 11 is now available

Parents and caregivers now have the opportunity to protect their tamariki aged five to 11 against COVID-19 by being immunised with a child (by a paediatric) formulation of the Pfizer vaccine.

The vaccine used is a children's version of the Pfizer vaccine with a lower dose than used for adults. Children will need two doses of the vaccine and it is recommended to have the first and second dose at least eight weeks apart.

There are a number of websites available with resources that will help explain what the vaccine is, how it works and whether the vaccine is safe for young people.

COVID-19 immunisation for 5 to 11-year-olds – Kids Health

COVID-19 vaccine in children – Health Navigator

Vaccination of 5 to 11-year-olds – The Immunisation Advisory Centre

Masks

The Government confirmed today that masks (not face coverings) will be required at Red for children and staff in Years 4 to 13 when indoors. This requirement will take effect nine days from today's announcement.

The Government is also now requiring that a face covering be an actual mask to ensure that it is properly designed to cover your nose and mouth properly. That means no more scarves, bandannas or t-shirts pulled up over the face, for example.

It is also now recommended that masks be a medical-grade mask (that is, a Type IIR/Level 2 mask or above). These include the widely available 'blue' medical-grade masks that many New Zealanders are already wearing.

A reminder that there are a number of exemptions to wearing a mask including if you have to communicate with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, or the person has a physical or mental health illness or condition or disability that makes wearing a face covering unsuitable.

Younger children will need help to learn how to wear a mask and the reason for wearing them: they are a protection. We understand many of you are using the analogy of sun hats and sunscreens.

Here is information and a video that may help explain to young children how to safely put a mask on and remove it.

How to safely put on and remove masks – Stuff

Currently public transport and school transport requires face coverings to be worn for those aged 12 and above at Red, however there has now been agreement to extend this to Year 4 and above so that the requirements are consistent. We will advise you when this change takes effect.

We have secured an initial supply of appropriate masks for teachers and school workers, which can be distributed for the start of Term 1. Our distribution channels are well established and can usually deliver within 48 hours of receiving orders.

As you can appreciate, there is significant global demand so we want to make sure that our stock goes to those with the highest need first. We will therefore provide further information on the ordering process no later than Friday morning.

We are working with the Ministry of Health to secure additional stock should it be needed.

Case management and contact tracing

Your contact tracing systems (attendance register, visitor register and timetable) will continue to support your response should there be a case in your school.

The Prime Minister has signalled that we will be managing cases differently in light of the Omicron variant. These changes are:

- the 'casual plus' category is being removed
- vaccination status will no longer be considered for different pathways.

These changes took effect from Friday 21 January 2022. We are working with the Ministry of Health to update our tool kits to reflect these changes.

Schools connected to a confirmed case – Ministry of Education

Events and activities

In light of the greater risk of infection with a likely Omicron outbreak, we strongly recommend you do not hold events or activities that involve large numbers of students, such as school assemblies, when at Red traffic light settings.

There should be no non-essential visitors onsite at Red. Non-curriculum related events can only go ahead if you are using the My Vaccine Pass (this applies to all attendees, including students).

Events held outdoors continue to minimise risk.

At Red, singing must be held outside with participants two metres distance.

A reminder we have developed events and activities flowcharts to support your planning for any events or activities. Our 2 December bulletin also provided information to support decisions on whether an event would be considered curriculum-related, or not.

COVID-19 guidance for events and activities – Ministry of Education

Information about events, activities and gatherings – School Bulletin 2 December

The following information will assist you with your decision-making and help you understand your responsibilities at Red:

COVID-19 Protection Framework – Sport NZ

Events and gatherings – Business NZ

Entertainment, recreation, and exercise – Business NZ

Pōwhiri

Under Red we recommend fewer than usual numbers at outdoor and indoor pōwhiri/pohiri.

Advice about pōwhiri

1. Consult your local iwi authority (mana whenua) regarding their COVID-19 response and guidelines pertaining to hosting pōwhiri.
2. Refrain from hongī and harirū, instead consider adopting other practices, for example, 'hā ki roto hā ki waho'. That is, sharing a combined inward and outward breath at the conclusion of the formalities.
3. Hold pōwhiri outdoors wherever possible.
4. If indoors, ensure numbers are limited and consider holding more than one pōwhiri with smaller groups.

Distancing and groupings

- Maintaining a physical distance from others, particularly people you don't know, continues to be an effective measure to reduce risk of infection.
- You will need to group your students when at Red, so that wherever possible they do not intermingle with other groups (keep a minimum of one-metre distance between groups). This is particularly important in primary settings where vaccination rates will be much lower than in secondary settings.
- There is no physical distancing requirement between group members, only between groups.
- You should not bring together large groups of students indoors.

- Consider setting up one-way systems for corridors, staggering start times, finish times and breaks, and rostering the use of playground equipment and other outdoor spaces.
- To minimise congestion, parents and caregivers should be encouraged to do drop-offs and pick-ups from outside the school grounds. Some will still need to come on site (for example, to settle in a new entrant into class). They must wear face coverings in these instances and should be encouraged to remain physically distant from others, especially when indoors.

Good hygiene and cleaning

Continue using and encouraging good hygiene practices including:

- regular hand washing/sanitising
- cough and sneeze etiquette
- regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces
- open doors and windows.

Stay home if sick and get tested

Ensure tamariki, students or staff members with COVID-19 symptoms get a COVID-19 test and remain at home until a negative result is received and they are symptom free for 24 hours.

What the COVID-19 symptoms are – Unite Against COVID-19

Ventilation and CO2 monitors

Maintaining good ventilation in schools is recommended at all levels of the COVID-19 Protection Framework. Keeping your windows and doors open as much as you can to keep fresh air moving through your classrooms is the fastest and best way to ventilate a space.

Please stay up to date with our guidance on ventilation and contact your property adviser with any concerns.

Ventilation in schools – Ministry of Education

From next week onward, we will be distributing CO2 monitors to all state and state-integrated schools as part of a classroom ventilation self-assessment toolkit.

Please confirm your details and we will let you know before yours has been dispatched. The self-assessment toolkit will include access to an online calculator to help you identify indoor spaces which get good levels of fresh air flow, those that don't, and help identify the right approaches to improve ventilation.

We have also ordered 5,000 portable air cleaners we expect to roll out to targeted areas within some schools in 2022 and will keep you updated on this.

If you have been approached by a supplier offering to sell CO2 monitors, air cleaners or other technologies, you can direct them to ventilation.mailbox@education.govt.nz.

Reviewing your COVID-19 plan

In light of the Omicron variant, it is timely for you to review your COVID-19 plan.

If you need help with your planning, Worksafe has a helpful template you can use.

COVID-19 safety plan – WorkSafe

The COVID-19 Protection Framework contains a number of requirements and recommendations to help reduce the risk of an outbreak. However, each school has a unique community and context which will also inform your health and safety planning.

For example, schools in a community with vaccination rates below 90% or whose population is more vulnerable to severe illness, or where your student and/or staff population is more vulnerable to severe illness, may wish to consider further mitigations that can be implemented at any setting of the framework.

The risk assessment template has been developed to support you when considering whether any further mitigations might be introduced at each framework setting.

Risk assessment and planning for Omicron [DOCX, 39 KB]

Plan for more disruption

If Omicron does take hold, there is very likely to be a significant impact on New Zealand's supply chain.

Some considerations to inform your COVID-19 planning are below.

1. Scale and time frame of outbreak: In some communities an Omicron outbreak may occur very quickly and infect a large proportion of people and affect those people isolating as a close contact

at the same time. In other situations, there may be continuous impact on the community with rolling absences over much longer period of time.

2. Mitigating key person or key service dependencies: Ensure you have a number of key service staff available, for example qualified first-aid staff and staff to oversee the contact management process or emergency management response capability.
3. Backups for cleaning or other services: Have backups ready in case of illness/isolation requirements, so that minimum service standards can continue to be met.
4. Readiness for localised restrictions: Tighter restrictions are still an option under the framework if public health systems are overwhelmed and/or there are extremely high case numbers locally. These restrictions will likely take effect with little notice.

Supporting children to return on site

The priority remains to have children and young people on site to best support their engagement in learning.

Our letter template (linked below) can help support your messaging to parents, caregivers and whānau to encourage their tamariki to return to school.

There is also helpful information on our parents and whānau website that you may wish to draw from or include as links in your communications.

Back to school or kura – Ministry of Education

Unvaccinated children, students, parents and caregivers

As noted in the 19 November bulletin, all registered schools (including private schools), all school hostels (including private hostels), and all school transport services (for all students) are prohibited from requiring proof of vaccination (either via My Vaccine Pass or other tool) as a condition of using or accessing education.

Information about My Vaccine Pass – School Bulletin 19 November

This prohibition applies to all children, students and their parents or caregivers.

This means that a person's vaccination status should not restrict learning for children and young people. Neither should it restrict parents and caregivers from supporting their children in their learning.

In situations where events and activities occur on school grounds and where participants extend beyond staff, parents, caregivers and learners, it may be appropriate to ask for a vaccine certificate. Examples of this are fundraising fairs, concerts and other community events.

Third-party users of education facilities will also be able to require evidence of vaccination when using your premises.

When you can require vaccination

Parents and caregivers are required to be vaccinated if they are undertaking work for your school, including voluntary work, and may have contact with children or students when carrying out that work or will be present at a time when children and students are also present.

This vaccination requirement does not apply to those who are performing services remotely or who are onsite only when children and students are not present.

Other mitigations to minimise risk

All your staff and volunteers being vaccinated is a significant mitigation of risk. Consider also the range of health and safety measures that can be put in place to help keep those on site as safe as possible.

For example:

- treat all parents and caregivers coming on site to support their child's learning as unvaccinated
- ask non-essential visitors not to come on site at Red
- do not hold events and activities, including those that bring parents and caregivers on site (that is, more than 100)
- require all visitors to wear a face covering
- strongly encourage staff to wear a face covering when meeting with visitors, including parents and caregivers
- maintain the recommended physical distancing of two metres where practicable
- consider whether engagement with parents and caregivers can be held outside rather than inside
- hold meetings which do need to go ahead via Zoom, Teams or similar (and if it is necessary to meet on site, ensure the room being used is spacious and well ventilated)
- ensure hand sanitiser is available indoors
- reiterate that anyone who is not feeling well does not come onto the school site and encourage them to seek advice about getting tested.

Education outside the classroom: Offsite options

With careful planning, education outside the classroom (EOTC) activities can go ahead at Red.

By Friday 4 February we anticipate that public health orders will be in place so that EOTC providers will be able to offer curriculum-related activities/services to a registered school that does not require all children to be vaccinated (even if require this from other users of their facilities).

This means the provider will need to meet a number of conditions, such as:

- working with a registered school to deliver curriculum-related activities
- ensuring the activity is in a defined space (solely using part or all of a setting/venue for the period the service is provided)
- ensuring staff delivering the service are vaccinated.

The provider will essentially be treated as a school premise while the EOTC activity is taking place.

Guidance is also being developed to support the EOTC provider to meet anticipated legislative requirements. We will provide you with this information as soon as it becomes available.

Misinformation, disinformation and abuse

Unfortunately, a small number of individuals are resorting to harassment and abuse of school leaders and school communities.

Report false or misleading information – Unite Against COVID-19

If you receive inappropriate contact online, you can make a non-emergency report to the police on 105. Call 111 for emergencies.

School hostels

Guidance for hostels under the COVID-19 protection framework is on our website.

Guidance for school hostels – Ministry of Education

There is one change to the guidance from the content published prior to Christmas. That is, staff in hostels are not required to wear face coverings under the COVID-19 Protection Framework, however it

is strongly recommended that they do when in close contact with other staff, boarders and visitors.

Public health officials will make decisions about how to manage the case, including whether they may need to move into managed isolation or return home to self-isolate.

Although it is unlikely any case will remain in the hostel, you will need to have a strategy in place to manage isolation while you work to agree to a plan with health officials, the boarder and their parent or caregivers.

If you're made aware of a case associated with your hostel and haven't received that notification from health authorities, please contact your local public health unit or your local Te Mahau office for information and support:

Public health unit contacts – Ministry of Health

Contact details for local offices – Ministry of Education

Wellbeing supports

As we start our third year of delivering education in a global pandemic, we cannot underestimate the impact of the last two years on you, your staff and your community.

Children and young people will again look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events. If parents or teachers seem overly worried, the anxiety of children and young people may rise.

Parents and teachers can reassure children and young people that everyone is working together, from the Prime Minister down, to help people throughout the country stay healthy and to limit the spread of this virus.

As things change, families and whānau will also want to stay connected with you. Things may be challenging for some children, young people and their families. As an individual teacher you might not have all the answers but working collectively can help. Work with parents, other school staff, iwi, social and health agencies and other services in your community.

Our website has a range of resources and information on COVID-19 and wellbeing that will be helpful for you and the wellbeing of children and young people and their whānau.

COVID-19 and wellbeing – Ministry of Education

EAP services extended

As noted in our 2 December bulletin, we have extended the availability of the centrally funded wellbeing support services for the education workforce.

All teachers, regular relievers and support staff across kura and state and state-integrated schools are eligible to access these services.

- You'll find further information about these EAP services on our website.
- Or if you any questions call 0800 327 669/1800 726474 or visit the EAP website.

EAP services extended – School Bulletin 2 December

COVID-19 EAP support – Ministry of Education

Care in the community

Omicron arriving in our communities will be tough for many families across New Zealand.

If families do need to isolate, most people will be able to look after themselves with help from friends and whānau. However, some people may need help with things like food and groceries.

Families self-isolating who need extra support can call the COVID-19 welfare team on 0800 512 337. It's open seven days a week. MSD will connect callers with someone – they may be from a local community organisation, a government agency or from marae-based services or support that iwi have established.

See the letter template below for further details to share with your community.

Further information is also available on the COVID-19 website:

Isolation and care – Unite Against COVID-19

Help when you are self-isolating – Unite Against COVID-19

Public health order requiring mandatory booster doses

The mandatory vaccination requirement for people working in schools and kura has been updated to require a COVID-19 booster dose.

The booster requirement applies to everyone who was affected by the 15 November 2021 and 1 January 2022 education workforce vaccination mandates – that is, anyone who works for a school or

kura and who may have contact with children or students or will be present at a time when children and students are also present. This includes teachers, teacher aides, support staff, relief and casual staff, caretakers and cleaners and contractors.

You can find more information on the application of mandatory vaccinations requirements by role in this document:

Application of mandatory vaccination requirements by role [DOCX, 21 KB]

The COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Amendment Order 2022 has been published and came into force at 11.59pm on Sunday 23 January.

To meet the booster dose requirements as set out in the revised health order, all affected persons need to have received two COVID-19 vaccinations as well as a booster dose within 183 days of their second vaccination.

- If 183 days have already passed since the person received their second vaccination, they are required to receive their booster dose by 1 March.
- Any person who does not meet these requirements will not be able to continue working on site.

COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Amendment Order 2022 – NZ Legislation

Everyone aged 18 and over who has received two initial COVID-19 vaccinations is able to receive a vaccine booster dose four months after receiving their second vaccination.

The Pfizer vaccine booster shot is the main COVID-19 booster being used in New Zealand.

An AstraZeneca booster is also available. This is also available at least four months after receiving a second vaccination of the AstraZeneca vaccine. Those who wish to receive this booster will need a prescription from their GP or vaccinating AstraZeneca clinic.

You can find more information on the both the Pfizer and AstraZeneca boosters here:

Get your vaccine booster – Unite Against COVID-19

Next steps for schools and kura

Schools and kura will need to:

- communicate to all employees and volunteers the new requirement to receive booster doses within 183 days of receiving their second COVID-19 vaccination. You will be provided with a template letter to assist with this communication.

- add the date people received their second COVID-19 vaccination and their booster dose to their COVID-19 register for their employees and volunteers. You will need to monitor this and ensure that only people who meet these vaccinations and booster dose requirements continue to work on site.

Medical exemptions

People who hold a valid temporary medical exemption issued by the Ministry of Health which prevents them from being vaccinated against COVID-19 are also exempt from the booster dose requirement.

However, please note that medical exemptions are usually only available for the length of time that people need to arrange for a medically tolerable vaccination.

All medical exemptions expire within six months of being issued and upon expiration of a person's medical exemption they are subject to all vaccination requirements including the booster requirement. Alternatively, they need to arrange a further medical exemption.

Rapid antigen testing

The vaccine remains New Zealand's key defence against all variants of COVID-19, including Omicron.

With a highly vaccinated adult population, our focus is on the vaccination roll-out:

- to five to 11-year-olds so as many of our tamariki are protected from the virus as possible
- for boosters as people become eligible to add further protection.

When Omicron enters communities, we will work with the Ministry of Health to review the response in relation to education settings.

We know there is a high degree of interest in the availability of rapid antigen testing (RAT). At this time the Ministry of Health has not yet finalised guidelines on the use of RAT testing, but we know RATs will not be used for regular surveillance testing once Omicron is widespread in the community. They will only be available for those who are symptomatic or those who are defined as close contacts.

You will also be aware that there is a worldwide supply issue with RATs therefore the Ministry of Health will be allocating any supplies to the most vulnerable and most effective use.

At this stage of the response to Omicron, the gold-standard PCR test will continue to be used along with contact tracing and rapidly isolating cases and contacts.

Teaching and learning

It is important that school and kura leaders re-assess their pandemic readiness for teaching and learning both before Term 1 begins and as the year progresses.

Preparing for staff absences in your school

Next week we will provide additional materials to support you to plan and prepare for staff absences in your school, this includes:

- a tool kit that sets out a range of options to manage situations where you experience staffing shortages
- templates to assist your school to prepare its own school-specific workforce plan, including materials to prompt thinking and prepare a school to response to a range of different scenarios.

Distance learning

We encourage you to work with your regional office to explore all options to keep face-to-face teaching and learning going through 2022. However, it is possible that you may have some or all students unable to learn on-site, and you should consider distance learning.

To help you assess your readiness, you can find a self-assessment tool that you can use with your teams on our Learning from Home website:

Advice for teachers – Learning from Home

Support is available now and we will be releasing more prior to, and throughout Term 1, 2022. We will make sure you are informed when this material is released.

What's available now

- You'll find teaching and learning resources for teachers, parents and students (this includes materials you can print and use in hard copy) on our Learning from Home and Kauwhata Reo websites.
- Regionally allocated PLD to support digital teaching and learning.
- Internet connections across the country to households in need (until 30 June). Contact us to discuss this at EDA@education.govt.nz.

What's coming

- Prior to Term 1, we will release additional guidance about effective teaching practice in distance learning and ways you might think about implementing this in your context. This will include more curriculum resources, guidance and tools to help you pick and choose, creating quality learning opportunities which meet the particular needs of learners not in face-to-face contexts.
- Over Term 1, we will also begin to roll out 'spotlights' – resources sharing some examples of innovative and excellent teaching and learning approaches to distance learning.
- Special guidance for remote schools and kura who may not be able to easily access printed materials for distance learning.
- Other supports for your immuno-compromised learners or learners who are likely to remain learning from home for an extended period of time in 2022.
- We also recognise providing distance learning is likely to carry some costs, and we understand that schools' level of preparedness for this is likely to vary. We are looking at other options for how we can support schools with resources to help with this and should be in a position to confirm our approach before the start of Term 1.

Where do I start?

In such a changeable teaching and learning environment, we need to know now if your school or kura needs support both

- (a) to remain open for face-to-face teaching and learning, and
- (b) in the event you are required to do distance learning.

Please get in contact with your regional office as soon as possible if you need help preparing for teaching and learning in 2022.

Planning checklist: If you answer 'no' to any of the questions in the checklist you may need to update your plans or let your regional office know what support you need.

Planning checklist and sector guidance [DOCX, 127 KB]

Letter template for parents and whānau

We have drafted a letter template that you can edit as needed. We appreciate it is very long, but is able to be cut down to suit or easy to spread across more than one communication.

Letter template for parents and whānau [DOCX, 27 KB]

There is also a wide variety of COVID-19 information in 27 languages and four alternate formats on the Unite Against COVID-19 website.

Languages and resources – Unite Against COVID-19

Vaccine mandate: Relief funding

Some schools and kura have needed to work through employment processes with staff who have not met the vaccine mandate requirements.

We will be providing support to schools for the cost of backfilling unvaccinated teachers and staff during their notice period.

We are currently developing an application process and will provide details on how to apply for this support in February through a bulletin.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE – 27 JANUARY 2022

27 January 2022

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

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FOREWORD

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Masks and ventilation have featured in questions lately – we have provided more advice about masks for children and the education workforce today.

On the topic of ventilation, I know there is concern to ensure sufficient and appropriate technology is available. However, it remains the case that fresh air and natural ventilation are the best response. If you do not think that you can ensure adequate ventilation, please discuss with your property advisor or email ventilation.mailbox@education.govt.nz.

If you're aware of any families seeking support on their child's immunisation (or if you'd like to be well equipped to talk to families about immunisations), Manatū Hauora – Ministry of Health have a Facebook live event happening tonight. Apologies for the short notice!

I know that you will already be concerned by the needs of our most vulnerable families – and in many cases they may well be the children who do not arrive at school. If you have concerns about any children's welfare, please contact your advisor in Te Mahau or go directly to Oranga Tamariki depending on the situation. We have included information about access to food in this bulletin too.

Business continuity planning for your staff is important. While decisions about how to manage staff to reduce the risk of depletion (for example, having two teams of staff working separately) need to be made by your board and you, in the next bulletin we'll include some advice about some of the things you need to consider and possible organisational solutions.

As we begin this new season of the COVID-19 pandemic, we'll send these COVID-19 updates on Tuesdays and Thursdays if they're needed. (And perhaps also in those certain outstanding situations where it is critical you hear from us!)

Noho ora mai,
Iona

Omicron in the community: What this means for you

Yesterday the Government announced the phases for response to Omicron.

Omicron in the community phases [PDF, 178 KB]

To summarise Dr Ayesha Verrall, Associate Health Minister:

- we have started a new chapter in the fight against COVID-19
- we will slow the spread of the virus through our high vaccination rate and high booster rate and through the tools and public health measures we know work
- while Omicron is the most transmissible variant of COVID-19 yet, it is markedly less severe than previous variants and for most it will be a mild to moderate illness that can be managed at home
- 31% of all children have already received their first dose of the vaccine or are booked to do so.

Wearing masks in school

This section contains further information about the requirements and recommendations announced on Tuesday 25 January.

Masks increase protection

There is strong evidence that the correct use of masks decreases the risk of Omicron transmission, and that some types of masks are more effective than others in decreasing risk.

The Government has therefore strengthened the requirements and recommendations for use of masks.

Children, young people and visitors

Whenever masks are required to be worn (for example, by Year 4 to 13 students when indoors at school, at supermarkets, retail stores, cafes, public transport, school transport) they must be the type that attaches to the head either through an ear loop or a head loop.

Bandanas, scarves or t-shirts pulled up over the mouth and nose are no longer acceptable for use in settings that require masks to be worn.

School staff (paid and unpaid)

Anyone who is covered by the vaccine mandate and currently required to wear a mask must wear a medical-grade mask (for example, a Type IIR/Level 2 mask).

The widely available 'blue' medical mask is an example of these. The mask is only required to be worn while in a public-facing role. However, while masks are not required to be worn by staff in staff rooms, we would strongly encourage they are worn in any indoor setting where people are in close contact.

For composite classes, you will be able to make a pragmatic decision about how you will manage the mask requirements when you have a mixture of year levels between 0 to 3 and 4 and over. We would encourage you to take a cautious approach given the benefits of wearing masks to reduce risk.

There is no requirement for masks to be worn in Years 1 to 3 but anyone who chooses to wear a mask should be supported to do so.

Exemptions and enforcement

We recognise that some adults and children will be exempted from wearing a mask, including those who have a disability or health condition.

However, we are aware that, disappointingly, the exemption card process is being abused by some families who do not want their child wearing a mask.

You will also have some children and young people simply not wanting to follow the rules (which are a legal requirement).

If the person has an exemption card or a letter from their medical practitioner or health provider, or you have agreed that mask wearing is not practicable, they can be supported to not wear a mask.

For any child or young person who is failing to comply with the legal requirement, and who is not exempted, you will be able to apply or agree your own school policies to manage this behaviour, in the same way you might enforce sun hat and sunblock rules, uniform rules, and so on.

What to do if you have case of COVID-19 in your school

If a staff member, parent or caregiver notifies you that they or their child are a confirmed case, please contact your regional Director of Education or your region's COVID-19 contacts.

Regional contacts are available on our website – we encourage you bookmark this page as it is updated regularly.

Key contacts for COVID-19 advice and guidance – Ministry of Education

These contacts will provide advice on the next steps and their team will connect with public health services to seek advice on next steps for your school.

You will already be able to identify those who may be considered contacts through your timetable (that is, which staff were on site and with which classes/groups), attendance register, sports, cultural and other extra-curricular group lists and visitor register.

However, you will also need to help identify:

- if the COVID-19 case was wearing a mask at school
- if they were at least 1.5 metres away from other students
- how long the COVID-19 case spent with other students
- how they arrived at school (that is, whether they were on public or school transport)
- who they spent most of their time with during breaks

- whether they had any contact with any non-teaching staff – cleaners, school office people and so on.

Letter templates will be provided to you to support communications to your community, including information for any person who may need to self-isolate and/or get tested.

Please ensure you have up-to-date contact information for your children, students, parents, caregivers and whānau so that they will quickly get the information from you noting the actions they will need to take.

We are working with the Ministry of Health to update our processes and detailed guidance for contact tracing. In the meantime, please continue to connect with your regional Te Mahau office if you need any support.

Ask an expert: COVID-19 immunisation for five to 11-year-olds

Manatū Hauora – Ministry of Health are holding a Facebook live event for parents and whānau to get accurate and reliable information about COVID-19 immunisations for five to 11-year-olds.

The live event is happening today Thursday 27 January at 7.30pm.

Panellists include:

- Dr Lily Fraser, GP and Clinical Director at Turuki Healthcare
- Dr Hinemoa Elder, MBChB, FRANZCP, PhD, MNZM
- Dr Teuila Percival, QSO FRACP
- Dr Jin Russell, Community and Developmental Paediatrician at Starship Children's Health.

Join the Facebook event here (be sure to click 'going' or 'interested' to be notified when this event starts):

COVID-19 immunisation for 5 to 11-year-olds – Facebook

Advice for people with COVID-19

Most people with COVID-19 (particularly those who are fully vaccinated) are likely to have a mild to moderate infection and will fully recover at home (or in other alternative accommodation).

Manatū Hauora – Ministry of Health has created a series of helpful videos to help you learn about infection and care, isolating at home, what to expect and care in the community.

Advice for people with COVID-19 – Ministry of Health

Reminder: Alert Level 3 testing requirements no longer apply

A reminder that previous Alert Level 3 or Auckland-area testing requirements for workers on school sites were revoked on Sunday 16 January when the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Protection Framework) Amendment Order 2022 came into effect.

This means that workers who were previously required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test when entering school sites in Alert Level 3 areas no longer need to provide this evidence.

This is because if they are working on a school site, they are required to have been fully vaccinated by 1 January 2022 and are also now required to receive a booster dose.

These workers include school staff, volunteers or unpaid workers, contractors and tradespeople who may have contact with students in the course of performing their work or service or who will be present when children or students are also present on site.

COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Order 2022 – NZ Legislation

Care in the community: Financial help to buy food

Work and Income has a range of supports available for individuals and families affected by COVID-19. Parents and families who need financial help to buy food may be able to access assistance, even if they are not receiving a benefit.

COVID-19 – Work and Income

Local foodbanks may also be able to help. Local foodbanks can be found by searching on the Family Services Directory website or contacting a local community social services provider.

Help for you and your family – Family Services Directory

Care in the community welfare response – Ministry of Social Development

People who have COVID-19 and need assistance can also call MSD on 0800 559 009 to find out what help is available to them.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE – 1 FEBRUARY 2022

01 February 2022

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

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FOREWORD

Tēnā koutou katoa me ngā mihi i runga i ngā tūāhuatanga o te wā, kua hipa te tau, greetings to you all as we start a new school year.

I'd like to acknowledge the planning that has been done to get ready for your start to the year – thank you for your continued responsiveness and dedication to your mahi.

A number of principals and peak body representatives have been interviewed on media in the last couple of days, which has revealed calm, pragmatic leadership.

Past experience tells us that there will continue to be interest in how schools are responding to ever-changing circumstances. Because you and your board will need to make decisions that make sense in your particular circumstances and communities, we have included a business continuity planning tool in today's bulletin that you may wish to use or check your current plan against.

We have also included some important clarifications on exemptions for masks – please find details below.

A number of you have reported that there can be a disparity between information on websites and what we share in these bulletins. Please be aware it can take a day or two to have websites updated, so in the first instance we will share the most up-to-date information here.

In our bulletin on Thursday, we'll have information on attendance codes and different leave arrangements available to teachers.

Kia kaha,
Iona

Guidance for pandemic readiness

Business continuity planning

It is highly likely that you will experience staff shortages as a result of Omicron. You need to have a business continuity plan (BCP) so that you can manage, even with reduced staffing, to deliver your most critical functions.

Business continuity planning: Preparing for an Omicron outbreak [DOCX, 34 KB]

We have developed guidance including a number of scenarios to test your planning in light of the Omicron variant. The guidance also summarises the different tools and resources available to support your planning including:

Pandemic preparedness: Preparing for staffing absences [DOCX, 140KB]

Risk assessment template (COVID-19 health measures) [DOCX, 39 KB]

Teaching and learning in 2022: Planning checklist [PDF, 164 KB]

Even with careful planning and with every health mitigation in place, you may experience staff shortages that require you to change your normal operations.

If you do not have sufficient staff on site to meet minimum health and safety requirements, you will need to close on site and move to learning from home for a period of time. This would include:

- qualified first-aid staff
- sufficient staff to respond to an emergency
- sufficient cleaning to meet minimum health and safety and COVID-19 requirements
- sufficient staff to safely supervise all the children/students attending on site.

Decisions will need to be made locally by boards and principals pertinent to the particular circumstances – the important thing will be to give your communities as much information as soon as possible about those decisions.

Staffing guidance for in-person teaching and learning

As noted in our bulletin on 23 January, schools and kura will remain open under all traffic light settings. At the very least you will need to have a plan to supervise the children who have to be at school. This is particularly important for children who are vulnerable.

New Zealand moves to Red – School Bulletin 23 January

Once Omicron is in the community, schools and kura could experience staffing challenges. Each school will need to plan ahead to identify solutions to keep your school/kura safely open for onsite teaching and learning as far as possible. In some cases, this will mean that at least some children will need to be learning from home – information about distance learning arrangements follows.

We strongly encourage you to work as a full leadership team, including principals and boards, to prepare for how your school or kura will respond in the event of disrupted staffing availability.

As a reminder, in the current Red setting, relievers who are suitably vaccinated can work across more than one school but must adhere to all public health rules, including wearing face masks.

We have produced a staffing options document and supplementary template to help schools and kura consider a range of staffing options that can help you to remain open.

Pandemic preparedness: Preparing for staffing absences [DOCX, 140KB]

Template: Exploring staffing options for in-person teaching and learning [DOCX, 151 KB]

Te Mahau staff are here to support you to put in place strategies that work for your particular school or kura. In the first instance, please work with your local Te Mahau contact if you have questions about this guidance or if you need support with planning or addressing staff shortages.

You could also talk to colleagues in other schools to share strategies that have worked for them.

Please also contact the Teacher Supply Team in national office teacher.supply@education.govt.nz if you have further questions.

Planning for students with additional needs

Children and young people with additional needs will likely be more impacted by any changes to staff that may occur due to shortages.

During your planning phase, consider the following:

- make sure several adults are familiar with support routines for children who have teacher aide support. This will be particularly important for children with significant health needs
- proactively discuss with whānau how to manage if a teacher or teacher aide with a particular specialist skill (for example, NZSL) is unable to work
- gather resources that will help children to understand why their routine is different or different people are supporting them
- learning support remains available. Please reach out to your local learning support specialists and resource teachers if you need support to plan for students with additional learning needs.

Reminder: Planning for teaching and learning

A reminder for you to reassess your pandemic readiness for teaching and learning as Term 1 begins and as the year progresses.

We encourage you to work with your regional Te Mahau office to explore all options to keep face-to-face teaching and learning going through 2022.

However, it's possible that you may have some or all students unable to learn onsite and you should consider distance learning. To help you assess your readiness, you can find a self-assessment tool that you can use with your teams on our Learning from Home website.

Advice for leaders and staff – Learning from Home

Support is available now and we will be releasing more throughout Term 1.

What's available now?

- Online teaching and learning resources for teachers, parents and students (this includes materials you can print and use in hard copy),
- Internet connections across the country to households in need (until 30 June). Contact us to discuss this at EDA@education.govt.nz.
- Regionally allocated PLD to support digital teaching and learning – more information below.

Distance learning support – Learning from Home

Ki te Ao Mārama – Kauwhata Reo

What's coming?

- Throughout Term 1, we will begin to roll out 'spotlights' – resources sharing some examples of innovative and excellent teaching and learning approaches to distance learning.
- Special guidance for remote schools and kura who may not be able to easily access printed materials for distance learning.
- Other supports for your immuno-compromised learners or learners who are likely to remain learning from home for an extended period of time in 2022.
- We also recognise providing distance learning is likely to carry some costs and that the level of preparedness for this is likely to vary. We are looking at other options for how we can support you with resources to help with this.

Where do I start?

In such a changeable teaching and learning environment, we'd like to understand if your school or kura needs support both (a) to remain open for face-to-face teaching and learning and (b) in the event you are required to do distance learning.

If you answered 'no' to any of the questions in the list above, you may need to update your plans or let your regional office know what support you need.

Update: Managing cases of COVID-19 in schools

The toolkit for managing COVID-19 cases at schools and kura has been updated to reflect the following changes which took effect 21 January:

- the casual plus contact category has been removed and
- close contacts are required to self-isolate for 10 days.

We are currently working with the Ministry of Health to identify what changes need to be made to the toolkit in preparation for Phases 2 and 3 of the Omicron COVID-19 response.

Schools connected to a confirmed case – Ministry of Education

Further information: Masks

Update on mask exemptions

Where parents have concerns about mask wearing, they should be encouraged to discuss this in the first instance with their school.

You may like to consider identifying certain staff who are responsible for managing questions around face coverings in your school. This could help ensure that conversations are had appropriately by staff who are across the complexities of the issue and have the school's authority to make decisions and assist with consistency.

Where someone meets the criteria for exemption, it is important that they are supported.

Who does not need to wear a face mask – Unite Against COVID-19

It's not always obvious why someone can't wear a mask. For example, they may be victims of crime or experience mental health conditions. If not dealt with in a sensitive and respectful manner questioning someone's eligibility for a mask exemption could unintentionally victimise people further.

While a small number of national organisations have previously administered exemption cards developed by the Ministry of Health, this will not be necessary. The Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA), Deaf Aotearoa, and Blind Citizens NZ encourage parents, as we do, to discuss their circumstances with you or their teacher in the first instance.

For those who have an exemption card, it is their choice whether they wear it publicly or not. No one should be required to wear an exemption card if they have one.

We are continuing to work with the Ministry of Health to identify possible improvements to the mask exemption process.

You will know that there are many layers of protection in schools, including people who are unwell staying away, increasing rates of vaccination across the population including mandated vaccinations for staff and volunteers, good ventilation, other students and staff wearing masks, good cough and sneeze etiquette and more.

A reminder that the Unite Against COVID-19 website has several resources to support mask use:

Cover for each other face coverings poster – Unite Against COVID-19

Please wear a face covering poster – Unite Against COVID-19

How to wear a face covering safely poster – Unite Against COVID-19

Face covering information in te reo Māori – Unite Against COVID-19

Posters in other languages – Unite Against COVID-19

Mask use when playing sport or recreational activities

You are not required to wear a mask when you are playing sport or engaging in recreational activities outdoors.

For more information, see Sport NZ's FAQs.

COVID-19 Protection Framework FAQs – Sport NZ

The requirements for masks depend on the traffic light setting:

- at Red, masks are mandatory in retail settings and public facilities, but not swimming pools. Face coverings are recommended whenever you leave the house, including before and after playing sport or engaging in a recreational activity
- at Orange, face coverings are mandatory in retail settings and public facilities, but not swimming pools. Face coverings are encouraged at all other locations
- at Green, masks are encouraged whenever you are indoors.

Those in a coaching role are encouraged to wear a mask, particularly if you are indoors.

CO2 monitor dispatch

We have begun distributing CO2 monitors to all state and state-integrated schools as part of a classroom ventilation assessment toolkit. This will help schools assess ventilation in classrooms and other spaces.

Classroom ventilation assessment toolkit – Ministry of Education

Thanks to the many schools that have already confirmed their details – if you haven't already, please confirm your details and we will let you know once yours has been dispatched.

We are continuing to update our guidance on ventilation, so please stay up to date. If you have any concerns about ventilation, please contact your property advisor as soon as possible rather than waiting to receive your CO2 monitor.

Applications for home education

Since September there has been a significant increase in enquiries from parents about home education.

Information about home education and the application process is on our website for parents and whānau.

Home education – Ministry of Education

Here are some key messages about home education you can use if parents and whānau inquire.

- Home education is not a short-term solution. To home educate well, parents need to thoroughly research and plan their approach.
- If parents are concerned about their children attending school during the pandemic, they should first talk with their children's teachers and principal about alternative learning options that the school may be able to support.
- Parents must apply for an exemption to home educate their children and they must demonstrate in their application that they can teach their children as regularly and as well as in a registered school.
- Applications are reviewed and assessed by our Ministry regional staff and exemptions are approved/declined at the regional level.

- We are currently assessing a large number of home education applications and decisions are taking longer than usual – on average more than six weeks. While families wait for their application to be assessed, legally all children aged over six years must be enrolled at and attending school (children can enrol at age five and then they must attend).

Regionally allocated professional learning and development in Red

Schools and kura can submit proposals for professional learning and development (PLD) support for up to 25 PLD hours if you need support with distance teaching and teaching under the 'Red' setting.

See information on how to apply for this is on the PLD website:

Distance learning PLD support – Professional Learning & Development

This PLD support must be for an immediate need to work towards delivering teaching and learning and/or contingency planning, must be delivered virtually by the PLD facilitator, and must be used within the next three months.

Existing PLD hours can also be repurposed to get support from your current PLD facilitator with transitioning to teaching under the 'Red' setting. These hours would be subtracted from the overall allocation total.

This support is available ahead of the Term 1 application round, which closes for applications on Friday 18 February at 5pm.

Find 2022 application round closing dates on the PLD website.

PLD delivery in Red

We have published guidance on the PLD website regarding PLD delivery in Red.

Regionally allocated PLD and the CPF – Professional Learning & Development

Under 'Red', the framework states there should be "no non-essential visitors onsite" at schools and kura. It is up to the school or kura and supplier to determine whether delivery is essential and requires an in-person visit to the school site.

If service delivery can continue virtually, the supplier may not be considered an essential visitor. If both the school and supplier deem face-to-face delivery essential, and all parties are comfortable and compliant with the public health measures required, then the delivery can take place onsite.

Postponements are a final resort, as virtual delivery is still encouraged if in-person delivery is not possible.

A cautious approach should be taken with in-person delivery under 'Red' due to the highly transmittable nature of the Omicron variant. Virtual delivery should be the primary approach for delivery in areas/towns/regions with lower vaccination rates or active COVID-19 cases/clusters.

All parties involved must be comfortable with the delivery taking place in-person. If one or more parties are not comfortable, this decision must be respected, and all parties should work together to find the best alternative to ensure the delivery can continue. This is likely virtual delivery via a video conferencing platform.

For delivery under 'Orange', PLD delivery can take place in-person onsite with the public health measures in place.

These public health measures, which apply at all levels of the framework, include the vaccination requirements for the education sector, mask use, physical distancing, good hygiene practices, contact tracing measures, and travel requirements. These measures must be always followed.

PLD facilitators must comply with the vaccination requirements for the education sector and be vaccinated for COVID-19 from 1 January 2022 to deliver PLD in-person on a school site.

We will provide guidance around service delivery at 'Green' later in 2022 once the government announces that moving to 'Green' is a possibility.

Please contact PLD.Enquiries@education.govt.nz if you have questions or need support with your PLD allocation.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 3 FEBRUARY 2022

03 February 2022

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Ngā mihi o te Rāpare,

Thank you for the feedback you've sent through on the supply of face masks for school staff.

You'll know already that our initial supply has come from the Ministry of Health, but we have also managed to secure an additional supply of masks for a longer period. We're currently working with NXP to make these available to schools as soon as possible. The most recent advice from Health about how long a single-use mask can be used suggests the supply you have will last longer – find details below.

If you have placed an order, I assure you it is being distributed as quickly as possible within our control – please be aware there may be freight or courier limitations that are causing a delay.

A number of you have asked about supplying masks for students. At this stage, our supply is for the mandated education workforce. However, we are currently considering options for some additional supply.

As we begin Term 1, I understand that many of you continue to be challenged by minority groups in the community. For some, this is taking the form of protests outside school grounds or receiving bogus threats about the legality of vaccinations or mask use. If at any point you feel unsafe or that tamariki or ākonga are in danger, please contact the police.

My advice is not to engage with the correspondents.

In such uncertain circumstances as these, I'd like to acknowledge the ongoing leadership you have provided not just for your staff and students, but parents and whānau and the wider community. Please contact your Director of Education if you need additional support.

Tēnā koutou katoa me ngā mihi ki a koutou kua mahi i te ahiahi whatiwhati kāheru ki te hikitia i te kaupapa, thank you for your extra effort this week and for your role in our kaupapa.

Aku mihi,

Iona

Managing staff leave due to COVID-19

If an employee at your school or kura is sick with COVID-19 or required to self-isolate, your first considerations should be to look after your people, contain COVID-19, and protect public health.

COVID-19 Protection Framework and leave situations for education staff [DOCX, 36 KB]

If your employee is sick with COVID-19 or needs to care for a dependant who is sick with COVID-19, their absence from work should be recorded as sick leave or domestic sick leave (in the same manner as time off for any other illness).

If your employee does not have enough sick leave to cover the period they are ill, you may provide additional paid discretionary or paid special leave in accordance with your usual leave policy.

There may be instances where an employee may still need to self-isolate after they have recovered from COVID-19 and before they are cleared to return to work. When this happens, if possible, they should work from home and be paid as normal.

If the teacher or principal is unable to work from home or is caring for dependents who are self-isolating, the absence should be recorded as discretionary paid leave.

If a teacher or principal has been diagnosed with COVID-19, they can request disregarded sick leave related to COVID-19 at the conclusion of the sick leave. This applies only when the teacher or principal is sick themselves and they have not taken sick leave to care for dependants.

These types of leave reflect the various collective agreements in a school/kura.

If your employee is required to self-isolate due to COVID-19:

- they must self-isolate immediately for the length of time specified by public health
- they should work from home where possible. If the staff member is working from home, no absence needs to be recorded.

We encourage you to be accommodating of any staff that become sick from COVID-19 or who need to support a dependant who is sick with COVID-19.

Further information about masks

As you know, unless exempted, school staff are now required to wear a medical-grade mask when working in public-facing roles.

Masks are just one of the measures we can use for reducing the spread of the virus. Other measures include:

- being fully vaccinated and having a booster
- staying home and seeking medical advice if you are unwell
- keeping your distance from other people and opening windows for ventilation

- cleaning your hands often and sneezing and coughing into your elbow
- keeping track of where you've been with the NZ COVID Tracer app.

The Ministry of Health have advised that there is no specific time limit for how long a single-use mask is effective, and you do not necessarily need to change your mask regularly throughout the day. School staff are able to wear a medical mask until it is damp, soiled or damaged.

The important thing is for the wearer to make sure the mask has maintained its integrity. If you can see it is soiled or torn, it needs to be replaced.

Acceptable types of medical-grade masks

The terms 'medical', 'surgical', and 'procedural' are often used interchangeably to refer to these masks.

When looking for a medical mask in New Zealand, the manufacturer's box normally states that it is a medical mask and meets a standard.

For example:

- Meets ASTM F2100-11 standard level 1: translated this means it meets the American Standard – American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard F2100-11). A level 1 mask is recommended but you could wear level 1, level 2 or level 3.
- Medical mask meets BS EN 14683 type I: translated this means it meets British Standard (BS) or European Standard (EN) 14683. A type I or type II is recommended but you could wear a type IIR.

Some reusable masks with filters do meet the medical-grade standard. Again, the packaging will indicate if it is a medical mask. These can be used, so long as the manufacturer's instructions for use are followed.

Safely disposing of masks

In addition to the information in our bulletin on Monday, a number of you have suggested cutting off the ear loops with a pair of scissors prior to disposal.

How to order masks – School Bulletin 31 January

Without ear loops, there are fewer chances of the mask entangling wildlife in the event it ends up in the environment.

Changes to mask requirements on school transport

We encourage you to convey the following information about face masks to your students and their parents or caregivers.

Students in Year 4 and over

The COVID-19 Public Health Response (Protection Framework and Other Matters) Amendment Order 2022 has been published.

COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Order – NZ Legislation

From 11.59pm tonight, all students aged eight years and over or are students in Year 4 and above legally must wear a mask on school transport (both Ministry and regional council-operated) and public transport services in the Red and Orange traffic light settings unless they have an exemption.

This includes SESTA, daily, technology, direct-resourced, and Māori-medium school transport services. It also includes charter buses hired by schools to transport students and staff.

The Government is also now requiring that a face covering must be an actual mask. This means that face coverings such as scarves, bandannas or t-shirts pulled up over the face are no longer allowed. As above, it is recommended that masks be a medical-grade mask.

Please note, while the school transport drivers are not required to enforce the wearing of masks, they will report any non-compliance to your school's bus controller (noting that some students may be exempt from mask requirements for health and safety reasons). Schools are expected to manage any non-compliance just as they currently manage behavioural issues of school transport users.

Students in Year 3 and below

While we encourage all students to wear masks on school transport, students in Year 3 and below are not required to wear masks.

This includes SESTA, daily, technology, direct-resourced, and Māori-medium school transport services. It also includes charter buses hired by schools to transport students and staff.

SESTA students

Although SESTA students are included in the above mask requirements, we understand that this will not be possible for some SESTA students and that they will have an exemption.

Similarly, we expect SESTA drivers to wear masks wherever possible, but we also expect that there will be some situations where a SESTA student's caregiver requests that the driver not wear a mask due to safety considerations.

We have asked our SESTA drivers to contact caregivers about the new mask requirement for both drivers and students.

Exemptions from wearing masks

Information on mask exemptions can be found on the Unite Against COVID-19 website.

Wearing a face mask – Unite Against COVID-19

Update: Education outside the classroom

With careful planning, education outside the classroom (EOTC) activities can go ahead at Red.

From 11.59pm on Thursday 3 February, EOTC providers are able to offer curriculum-related activities/services to a registered school without requiring all children to be vaccinated (even if this is a requirement for other users of their facilities).

The provider will need to meet a number of conditions, including:

- working with a registered school to deliver curriculum-related activities/services
- the activity is held in a defined space (either sole use of the venue or a separate defined space for the entire period the service is provided)
- all staff delivering the service are fully vaccinated.

Further guidance on EOTC under the traffic light framework – Te Mahau

Out-of-school care and recreation programmes in Red

A reminder that out-of-school care and recreation (OSCAR) programmes can open in Red, Orange and Green settings of the traffic light framework.

Providers are prohibited from requiring a My Vaccine Pass for people accessing these programmes.

OSCAR guidance overview – Ministry of Social Development

Update: Time between boosters reduced

As you will be aware, the required waiting time for a Pfizer booster vaccine has been reduced by a month.

Booster vaccines lower your chances of getting very sick from COVID-19 and ending up in hospital. In turn, this also means our hospitals are less likely to be overwhelmed.

All New Zealanders aged 18 or older can now receive the booster three months after completing their primary course of vaccinations. That means the booster is available 93 days after a second vaccine dose (or third for those who are immune compromised).

By reducing the interval, an additional one million New Zealanders will be eligible to receive their booster before the end of summer.

What this means for mandated vaccination dates

The change in interval from four months to three months will not impact the mandated dates in the Order and will provide you an extra month to meet the mandated six-month timeframe.

We are seeking advice from Ministry of Health about the need for boosters for employees who some additional immunity because they have contracted COVID-19 already. We will update you on this next week.

Advice for tamariki with asthma

Starship Hospital has advised that there is a greater risk of hospitalisation in children with poorly controlled asthma.

“Poorly controlled” is anyone with an admission in the last two years or anyone with two or more courses of steroids in the last two years. Therefore, it’s important that children take their preventative medications and see their GP if their asthma is not well controlled.

Children experience many coughs and colds and respiratory viruses in the course of childhood, and these can result in asthma exacerbations for children with poorly controlled asthma.

Vaccination can provide strong protection for children with asthma to prevent hospitalisation.

It is not recommended that children with asthma are shielded by missing school. Instead, the advice is to get asthma under control. If whānau are still concerned about severe or poorly controlled asthma,

they could consider bringing the second vaccine dose forwards on parental request. This would be preferable to the child missing school.

Protecting our tamariki from Omicron

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, public health advice has noted that our experience in New Zealand and overseas with COVID-19 shows that it does not affect children and teens in the same way it does adults.

While the role our tamariki play in transmitting COVID-19 is still unclear and is changing as new variants evolve and older populations become increasingly vaccinated, as of 28 January the Ministry of Health has advised “no new evidence has emerged yet on the transmission risk to or from children in light of Omicron ... it is likely that children continue to pose a lower risk of transmission”.

As such, the Ministry of Health’s current advice is that transmission within school settings continues to be limited and is influenced by broader transmission in the community and household settings. That is, although children are susceptible to infection, transmission is more likely to occur between adults and from adults to children; the risk of child-to-child or child-to-adult transmission is considerably less.

COVID-19 key information – Ministry of Health

Commonly, children have mild or no symptoms of COVID-19 with a short duration of illness that includes headache, fever, cough, nasal congestion and fatigue. Those more at risk are those living with pre-existing health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and obesity and socioeconomic barriers to accessing health care.

We can protect our tamariki through key interventions such as wearing masks, good ventilation, spatial distancing, ‘stay at home if sick’ policies and good hand hygiene. Encouraging good behaviours that will adhere to the COVID-19 Protection Framework outside of school hours, will also help to reduce risk for tamariki, their friends and whānau.

COVID-19 Protection Framework – Unite Against COVID-19

For more detailed information about the Omicron variant go to the Ministry of Health website.

Variants update – Ministry of Health

Reminder: Translated and accessible information on COVID-19

A reminder that you and your parents and whānau can find a wide variety of COVID-19 information in 27 languages and four alternate formats on the Unite Against COVID-19 website.

Key information includes:

- COVID-19: Our Isolation Plan
- getting your booster dose
- protecting your tamariki from COVID-19
- wearing a face covering
- testing
- support for if you get COVID-19
- support for individuals and families.

COVID-19 Our Isolation Plan – Unite Against COVID-19

Translations – Unite Against COVID-19

Alternate formats – Unite Against COVID-19

Translated information will continue to be updated regularly.

Planning and reporting for 2022

Given the significant disruption faced last year and the outbreak of Omicron this year, we understand that turning your attention to charters and analysis of variance has not been a priority for everyone.

If this is the case for you, we encourage you to focus on your action plan 2022, rather than a full charter review. We are also relaxing due dates – if you are not able to provide your charter by 1 March 2022, just do so when you are able.

Information about how to submit your documents can be found on our website.

School charter overview – Ministry of Education

2022 calendar of key dates

A reminder that you can view and subscribe to our calendar of dates containing information that we know now and/or will be notifying you about in 2022.

2022 key dates for schools – Ministry of Education

It's not exhaustive but we will keep you informed through these bulletins or with updates to the calendar throughout 2022.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 8 FEBRUARY 2022

08 February 2022

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FOREWORD

Kia ora koutou,

I hope you all enjoyed a restful long weekend.

One of the concerns I've heard expressed in the last week has been about the potential impact of roll reductions as a result of COVID-19. If this is something that you believe may affect you, please find information below.

An update on mask orders: since our website went live last Monday, we have received 2,463 orders and have dispatched 2,622 cartons of medical-grade masks. An additional three million masks arrived over the weekend and the stock is currently being processed and distributed. This is enough masks to see us through until the next supply arrives in mid-February – please find a further update on mask supply below.

A reminder that masks can be used safely over a period of time. This reduces the number of masks you need and reduces landfill, too!

Hei te Rāpare, you can expect the next bulletin on Thursday,
Iona

Further information on booster vaccines

As we detailed in our bulletin on 25 January, COVID-19 booster doses are now required for all people who are affected by the mandatory vaccination requirements.

Mandatory booster doses – School Bulletin 25 January

As we previously advised, workers who received their second vaccination on or before 30 August 2021 will need to have had their booster by 1 March 2022 to continue working on site. Workers who received their second vaccination from 31 August 2021 onward will need to receive their booster shot within 183 days of their second shot.

As you will know, the minimum time between receiving a second COVID-19 vaccination and a booster dose has been reduced from four months to three months.

We encourage everyone to have their booster after three months, but this does not change the legal requirement that everyone who is covered by the mandatory vaccination requirements must have their booster by 1 March 2022 or 183 days after their second shot.

We understand this may put your school under pressure to determine when a person must have received their booster dose and we appreciate your mahi.

We have attached a template letter that you can provide to your employees, contractors, and volunteers outlining these requirements.

Template letter: Mandatory vaccine booster requirements for staff of schools and kura [DOCX, 17 KB]

Below are two examples here to help show how the booster requirements apply in practice.

Scenario 1

Maria's second COVID-19 vaccination was on 20 August 2021.

Maria is required to have received a booster dose by 1 March 2022 as more than 183 days have passed since her second vaccination.

Scenario 2

Lincoln's second COVID-19 vaccination was on 15 December.

Even though the mandated date for Lincoln's booster dose is 1 March, Lincoln is not required to receive a booster by this date. Instead, Lincoln must receive a booster dose by 16 June 2022, 183 days after receiving the second vaccination. Lincoln can continue working onsite during this period.

Lincoln will, however, be eligible to receive his booster dose any time from 15 March 2022, three months after his second vaccination.

Update: Supply of masks to schools

Our limited supply of masks (2,000 cartons) from the Ministry of Health has now been distributed.

The ordering system was set up to receive and process orders with instructions on calculating usage based on schooling staff. For some schools, the calculations were incorrect, and the order was therefore rejected. In those instances, schools should have been advised that their order was rejected and to re-submit with revised number(s).

However, due to a glitch in the system the automated message was not pushed out and this was picked up on Thursday 3 February. If you haven't received your order or have not heard from us, please make contact.

Please know our team has been working hard in the background and the affected schools have been prioritised for delivery. All of the MOH-provided stock has left the three distribution centres for delivery.

We are receiving another consignment of 1,500 cartons today and the team is working to process and distribute this as soon as is practicable. Our supplier is working with their courier network to include additional runs.

For more information, please email askus.procurement@education.govt.nz.

Use of masks throughout the day

An additional reminder that the Ministry of Health has also advised that there is no specific time limit for how long a single-use mask is effective, and you do not necessarily need to change your mask regularly throughout the day.

School staff are able to wear a medical mask until it is damp, soiled or damaged.

Your current stock should be sufficient until we have our supply chain fully stocked and running.

Practical advice for schools and teachers as we adjust to mask wearing

As you and your ākonga return to the daily routines of teaching and learning, mask wearing will mean some changes to your daily routines.

We know that some ākonga will be more impacted by mask use and have developed some ideas to support these changes, particularly for those supporting students with additional learning or sensory needs, including ākonga who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

Additional tips for schools and kura around mask wearing – Te Mahau

Concerns regarding the potential impact of roll reduction

If you are in a position where you believe your funding may be temporarily impacted by more than 10% due to an increase in home schooling applications, please contact our resourcing team at resourcing@education.govt.nz and we'll work with you on a solution.

Please note, provisional staffing entitlements provide schools with a guaranteed minimum number of staff for the coming year so that they can plan and make staffing decisions with confidence.

These entitlements are not adjusted downwards during the year if the actual March roll generates less staffing than the provisional roll. Staffing entitlements will be adjusted upwards during the year if the roll significantly increases – that is, for the 2022 year, schools will not face a reduction in their staffing entitlement if their roll is lower than their provisional roll due to a temporary increase in home schooling.

Class border exception changes

In July 2021, Minister Hipkins announced a class border exception to allow up to 300 overseas-qualified teachers to come to New Zealand to work in eligible early learning services, schools and kura.

Each successful employer application provides a critical purpose visa for one teacher, along with their partner and children.

Following Cabinet approval in late December 2021, the initial eligibility criteria has been widened to include:

- all state and state-integrated schools and kura regardless of their decile
- teachers of all subjects, not just STEM.

We have also removed the cap of two applications per school and we have advised both existing border exception applicants and employers who have previously been in contact but did not meet the initial eligibility criteria.

Approximately half of the 300 border exception places remain available.

Updated information is available on our website and inquiries can be made by contacting border.exceptions@education.govt.nz.

Border exceptions for teachers – Te Mahau

2021 financial reporting: School payroll information

Each year we provide payroll information to help you prepare your financial statements.

The 2021 annual reporting guidelines provide guidance on how to record the information from your school annual accrual report (SAAR) in your financial statements.

2021 annual reporting guidelines – Ministry of Education

Once you have received your SAAR, you can complete your draft financial statements.

We encourage you to complete your draft financial statements as soon as possible after receipt of your SAAR, to enable you to meet reporting deadlines.

Key dates:	
4 February	The following reports will be available through Novopay Online using the authorised user's username and password: • SAAR • Leave liability reports The following reports will be available through the Secure Data Portal: • Over-payments error schedule • Stop pays error schedule • Funding code error schedule
11 March	Payroll exception schedules will be provided to schools through the Secure Data Portal. A complete set of payroll reports and exception schedules will be provided through our appointed auditor Microsoft Teams file-sharing portal to auditors for the schools they will be auditing.
31 March	Statutory deadline for schools to submit draft financial statements to their auditors.

31 May Statutory deadline for schools to submit their annual reports, including audited financial statements, to the Ministry.

Note: Payroll files are password protected and the password is your school principal's MOE employee number.

- Where a new principal has started in 2022, the password will be the MOE employee number of the most recent principal in 2021.
- The password does not include any preceding zeros of the MOE employee number.

Additional financial information required to complete your financial statements

If relevant to your school or kura, the following transactions and balances need to be included in your financial statements:

- intervention costs paid directly by the Ministry
- Ka ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunches programme paid directly by the Ministry
- free period products in schools and kura paid directly by the Ministry
- the balance of any debt owed to the Ministry at 31 December 2021.

This information will be made available via the Secure Data Portal on Friday February 4. This is important information for inclusion in your financial statements and should be provided to your service provider or business manager.

Need help?

If you have any questions about the payroll data provided, please email support@novapay.govt.nz with 'School audit' in the subject line.

If you have any questions about preparing your 2021 annual financial statements, please contact your school finance advisor.

Contact details for managing school finances – Ministry of Education

End-of-year withdrawals in ENROL

Thank you to all schools that have done their 2021 end-of-year withdrawals in ENROL.

If you have not completed this yet, please do this as soon as possible – it is difficult for other schools to enrol these students if they are not withdrawn from their previous school.

Prior to doing this, please give attention to the following.

- Only select students who were leavers last year.
- Enter the actual last day of attendance and select the actual leaving year level as it would have been at the end of last year.
- Only withdraw your excluded students if they are now enrolled at another school or have turned 16.
- Let Attendance Services know if you are wanting to withdraw a student with an unjustified absence.
- Tick the 'teaching and learning notes' in ENROL or in your student management system if you want to communicate notes about a student to a future school.

Term 4 2021 attendance collection is underway

We are currently collecting attendance, absence and truancy data for Term 4 from all state and state-integrated schools with an electronic attendance register (eAR).

This is an important aspect of our work on absenteeism and truancy by using evidence from schools to monitor trends, understand drivers and target resources. To achieve the best results, we need data from as many schools as possible, including schools who have good attendance records.

Thank you to all schools who have already sent their Term 4 2021 attendance data. By now you should have received an attendance (Every Day Matters) report tailored to your school, which can be helpful in identifying students and groups who might benefit from targeted interventions to improve attendance.

If you have not yet submitted your attendance, please create the attendance file from your student management system (SMS) for all of Term 4 and send it to us via your SMS (instructions have been emailed to your administrator).

This data is due by Friday 25 February.

2021 notional lease now available

The 2021 notional lease information is now available through the property portal.

2021 notional lease information [PDF, 747 KB]

This information is required by your accountant or the person(s) that prepare your year-end financial statements. The information is for accounting purposes only – you do not need to pay this amount.

Lease charges should be treated as an expense in your 'statement of comprehensive revenue and expense', offset by a corresponding income entry in the same statement. The net impact on the "bottom line" is zero.

How the lease amount is calculated

The 'notional' lease amount is calculated by applying a % rate determined by the Ministry to the value of Ministry-owned school property. This figure is then adjusted by any lease costs directly paid by the Ministry.

This year, the underlying factors which are used to calculate the notional lease have changed significantly. Therefore – you would expect some changes from last year.

Generally, you may see a decrease in your notional lease number as we decreased the notional rate from 8% to 5% to reflect the latest Government capital charge rate.

In the event there is an increase in your notional lease number, this could be caused by:

- the creation of new school property assets
- the disposal of school property assets
- a significant uplift of valuation for school land and buildings (due to increase in construction costs)
- a re-evaluation of the remaining useful life of those assets
- any impairment or any changes in lease costs directly paid by the Ministry.

For further information please email EISfinance.mailbox@education.govt.nz.

Term 1 and 2 ESOL funding applications

Applications for Terms 1 and 2 are due by Tuesday 1 March.

See the ELLP guidelines, student assessment forms and application forms on our website.

ESOL funding – Ministry of Education

Please update the 2021 Period 2 (Terms 3 and 4) status list and update lists for new students.

Additional information explaining the ESOL funding application process can be seen on the following flow chart and FAQ.

ESOL funding flowchart 2022 [PFD, 179 KB]

FAQs and additional guidelines 2022 [PDF, 405 KB]

Schools who received ESOL funding in August 2021

Use the Secure Data Portal to submit your updated status list by Tuesday 1 March.

Secure Data Portal – Applications & Online Systems

Ask your school's Secure Data Portal user to upload the updated status list in Excel format.

If you are not sure who your school's Secure Data Portal user is, please check with a colleague, your principal or office manager.

Schools who did not receive ESOL funding in August 2021

Use this form to apply for ESOL funding:

ESOL funding application [XLSX, 69 KB]

Upload the updated form in Excel format through the Secure Data Portal by Tuesday 1 March.

We will inform your school of the ESOL funding allocation via email and upload the 2022 Period 1 status list with the details of all the students funded for Terms 1 and 2 on the Secure Data Portal approximately five weeks after applications close.

Please ask your Secure Data Portal user for access to the status list.

Zoom sessions to help with ESOL applications

Our ESOL team will be hosting two optional Zoom sessions explaining how to apply for ESOL funding.

These sessions are targeted at those who are new to the role of applying for ESOL funding or those who would like a refresher.

Please note we will also include information about the use of the Secure Data Portal.

These are open sessions and registration is not necessary. The sessions will cover the same content, so it is not necessary to attend both.

Join a support session

Wednesday 16 February from 3:15-4pm

ESOL application support – Zoom

Meeting ID: 886 6489 4486

Passcode: 343408

Thursday 17 February from 3:15-4pm

ESOL application support – Zoom

Meeting ID: 870 8643 7993

Passcode: 031777

TeachNZ scholarships open

If you know someone looking to complete a teaching qualification, TeachNZ scholarships are open.

Scholarships – TeachNZ

Scholarships pay for their recipient's course fees and provide a \$10,000 total allowance over the duration of study.

- Applications for Te Huarau and Te Tipu Whakarito scholarships can be made for any teaching subject or sector. Priority is given to applications for:
 - science, engineering, technology, maths and te reo Māori
 - Early learning and Māori-medium.
- Kupe scholarships are open to Māori and Pacific high achievers who wish to study in any teaching subject or sector.

Applications opened on Tuesday 1 February and close on Monday 28 February.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 17 FEBRUARY 2022

17 February 2022

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FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te Rāpare,

One of the key challenges I've heard many of you are working with this week is parents and whānau who are frustrated that many sporting or cultural associations and venues are asking for vaccine passes – particularly when these are perceived to have an educational purpose.

In today's bulletin we have provided information that clarifies the current policy and outlines the situations in which a vaccine pass may be required. Obviously, all school-based curricular activities are offered without reference to vaccine status – in those cases where you want to access other providers, I encourage you to select those that support all of your students to participate regardless of their vaccine status.

I am aware that you are continuing to receive objectionable, challenging or threatening correspondence. We have provided advice on ways to deal with that.

Kia ora rawa atu,
Iona

Extra-curricular sport and cultural activities

While curriculum-related activities on school grounds will never require My Vaccine Pass, many sporting or cultural associations and venues providing extra-curricular activities will require evidence of a pass for

participants due to the gathering size necessary for it to go ahead safely.

At Red, you can have up to 100 people within a defined space with the use of My Vaccine Pass. If the provider/venue chooses to not require the My Vaccine Pass, they are limited to 25 participants in any defined space.

Anyone aged under 12 years and three months cannot be required to show evidence of vaccination and must be able to participate in any activities, whether curriculum-related or not.

Your students can do (extra-curricular) team trainings at school. However, you will need to ensure you meet the COVID-19 Protection Framework for those activities. This will mean deciding whether you will require a My Vaccine Pass or not.

If you want more than 25 people at team practices (in any defined space), you will need to require My Vaccine Pass, which, as you know, will prevent those students not yet fully vaccinated from participating.

We encourage you, wherever possible, to choose activities, providers and venues for extra-curricular activities that will support all your students to participate regardless of their vaccine status.

Curriculum-related activities

There are no limits on gatherings for curriculum-related activities, although we continue to strongly recommend that large gatherings of students are avoided when at Red.

This is based on advice from public health with large events at risk of becoming super-spreader events.

There is greater risk of spread of COVID-19 when indoors and when not wearing masks and undertaking physical activity. It is for these reasons that public health advice is very clear that curriculum-related physical activities should not be held indoors when at Red. Nor should singing or playing wind instruments.

We will keep you updated in the event this advice changes at any stage in the future.

With Omicron cases rapidly increasing, we continue to advocate for a cautious approach to any events and activities.

What is a curriculum-related event or activity?

Some examples of school-based curriculum-related events and activities include:

- assemblies

- physical education classes (including swimming)
- parent-teacher meetings
- examinations
- school plays or performances during class time
- cultural activities during class time
- pōwhiri (for example, start of year/new student or staff welcomes)
- music during class time
- inter-school events during class time (such as inter-school sport events)
- science fairs.

A reminder that as soon as you bring others on site (who are not receiving or providing education services) for curriculum-related events, including parents and caregivers, you will need to follow the relevant rules which apply to all events and activities in the Red setting.

What is a non-curriculum related event or activity?

Generally, events and activities are not curriculum-related if they occur outside of class time – particularly where attendance is optional.

Some examples of events and activities that are not curriculum-related include:

- prize-giving events involving the wider community (parents and whānau)
- school balls and leavers' dinners
- weekend sports
- community use of swimming pools or other facilities
- out-of-hours music and art, and sporting and cultural activities held out of school hours
- school fairs and fundraising events
- PTA meetings
- religious instruction during school hours (state schools only).

Education outside the classroom

A reminder that providers of education outside the classroom (EOTC) activities can choose to not require the My Vaccine Pass. See more information in our bulletin on 3 February.

EOTC providers are able to offer curriculum-related activities/services to a registered school without requiring all children to be vaccinated (even if this is a requirement for other users of their facilities).

The provider will need to meet a number of conditions, including:

- working with a registered school to deliver curriculum-related activities/services
- the activity is held in a defined space (either sole use of the venue or a separate defined space for the entire period the service is provided)
- all staff delivering the service are fully vaccinated.

Communicating with your community about sport

Unsurprisingly, many parents find the distinction between extra-curricular and curricular sport confusing. You will know the importance of clear communications with your community about this issue.

In short:

- all tamariki under 12 years and three months can participate in curriculum-related and extra-curricular activities, on site and off site, regardless of their vaccination status
- ākonga over 12 years and three months are able to access all education-related activities when at school regardless of their vaccination status
- ākonga over 12 years and three months may need to show their My Vaccine Pass in order to participate in non-curriculum-related sports and activities you hold on site
- this may also apply to any offsite activities (curriculum-related or not) and will depend on decisions made by you and by the providers of those activities.

Links to guidance

How sport and recreation will operate under the CPF – SportNZ [PDF, 210 KB]

Guidance for school sport and recreation – SportNZ

Gatherings and visits at Red – Unite Against COVID-19

Update: Close contact exemption scheme

In our bulletin on Tuesday, we provided information on the close contact exemption scheme. As indicated, we are generally not anticipating schools and kura will need to access the scheme for staff (other than those employed in critical roles in school hostels).

Close contact exemption scheme – School Bulletin 15 February

However, there may be some situations where it will be necessary for schools and kura to access the scheme – for example, in instances where you have insufficient staff able to come on site to supervise children who need to be there as they do not have suitable care at home. Any decision to access the scheme will need to be balanced against the health risks for students.

To access this scheme, your school or kura will need to be registered a critical service on MBIE's critical services register. If you think you may need to access the scheme, you can either register now or register at the time that your staff need access.

Close contact exemption scheme – Te Mahau

You will need to sign in using RealMe, but the process to register is very straightforward once you are logged in.

When you are asked for your primary business activity, please select 'miscellaneous' from the drop-down list. Once you have registered, you will receive a confirmation email with more information.

We understand that this process creates extra work for you and anticipate that we will be able to improve the process to make this easier shortly.

Dealing with challenging or threatening correspondence

We're aware that school leaders are continuing to receive challenging correspondence about COVID-19 measures from members of their community and/or the general public.

Any aggressive, threatening or intimidating behaviour or communications should be reported as part of your school systems and to the police.

As always, if you think that you or someone else is in danger, you should call 111. Non-emergency situations can be reported by calling 105 or by making an online 105 report. Reports made to police are logged and assigned to an officer for follow up – this could be to a community police officer or a frontline officer, depending on whether a prevention approach or response is appropriate.

105 non-emergency – NZ Police

We understand that receiving threatening messages can be upsetting and worrying. We encourage you to access the free and confidential support for debriefing through EAP Services. Call 0800 327

669/1800 726 474 or visit our website for information.

Workforce wellbeing: EAP Services – Te Mahau

Our best advice remains not to engage with these correspondents. We know that this may not always be possible, particularly if the correspondence is from a parent or caregiver of a child at your school.

However, if you do choose to reply, we have prepared a basic acknowledgement template that you may want to use to respond to such correspondence.

Template letter for acknowledging correspondence

Template letter for acknowledging correspondence [DOCX, 18 KB]

Please note, the template also includes draft lines that you can use to respond to some of the common issues being raised in the instance a more substantive response is appropriate.

Managing cases of COVID-19: Process in Phase 2

Isolation periods and transitioning to Phase 2

As you will be aware, in Phase 1 of the response to Omicron, close contacts of people with COVID-19 were required to self-isolate for 10 days.

In Phase 2, the isolation period has been reduced to seven days.

This means that any close contacts can now return to schools and kura on day eight if their test day five was returned negative and they are symptom free.

Contact tracing upload tool

There have been changes to how the National Investigation and Tracing Centre (NITC) receives information from schools and early learning services.

Previously a spreadsheet is completed and emailed to NITC. While this spreadsheet is still useful for identifying close contacts, there has been an update to the process and the NITC will now also send an email link asking you to use the contact tracing upload tool (CTUT) when there is a positive case of COVID-19.

Contact tracing upload tool – Ministry of Health

- This link requires you to register with CTUT. Once you've registered, a spreadsheet is downloaded, and close contact details are added to the spreadsheet. This is a generic spreadsheet for all businesses to complete.
- You only need to fill out the information that you would normally know about (for example, there are some optional fields such as NHI number, which schools are not required to know or provide).
- Once you have completed the spreadsheet you will need to upload it to CTUT. CTUT is interactive and will advise what you need to do at each step.

We understand that this process creates extra work for you and anticipate that we will be able to improve the process to make this easier shortly.

COVID-19 relief funding for schools

As indicated in our bulletin on 10 February, changes have been made to relief funding for Term 1 where absences relate to a staff member that:

- has tested positive for COVID-19
- is caring for a dependent that is suffering from COVID-19
- is confirmed as a close contact and are directed to self-isolate by health authorities and are unable to work from home.

Supporting schools to support staff – School Bulletin 10 February

For teachers, the additional relief teaching funding (ARTF) policy has been reduced from eight days to four days, so you are now able to apply for ARTF where relief has been employed to cover COVID-19 teacher absences greater than four days.

For non-teaching staff, funding is available from the first day of absences where relief has been employed to cover COVID-19 non-teacher absences.

Information on how to claim is now available on our website.

Additional relief teacher funding – Te Mahau

Vaccine mandate relief support scheme

Schools who had to work through employment processes with staff who have not met the vaccine mandate requirements may be eligible for additional funding to fund part of the costs incurred.

The costs must relate to relief teachers that have been hired during paid notice periods directly related to staff members not meeting the vaccination mandate.

The funding is retrospective and is only available for relief staff employed during Term 4 2021 (18 October to 20 December 2021).

Eligibility criteria

- The school must have entered an employment process which has resulted in termination of employment due to non-compliance with the COVID-19 vaccine mandate.
- The school must have incurred actual additional relief teacher costs. That is, a reliever was hired during the terminated employee's paid notice period.
- This fund will only provide support for the notice period, that is up to four weeks for non-teaching staff or up to eight weeks for teaching staff.
- The affected staff must fit into one of the following six categories: principals, teachers, teacher aides, relief teachers and casual staff, caretakers and cleaners or administration staff.
- The cost is not related to contractors and other tradespeople, service managers, caregivers and other staff. It is considered these positions will be replaced on a contractual basis and therefore do not require inclusion for back-fill of costs to employ relief staff, or may be volunteer staff members, thereby negating the school incurring any costs.
- The cost must have incurred between the dates of 18 October 2021 and 20 December 2021.
- If the paid notice period took place while the school was closed, no funded relief cover would be available.

Applying for the scheme

To apply for this funding, please go to our website to download an application form.

Forms for resourcing – Ministry of Education

Applications must be received by Thursday 14 April.

Please note, as applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis eligibility cannot be confirmed prior to an application being submitted.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to this, email our resourcing team for further assistance: resourcing@education.govt.nz.

Continuing to support initial teacher education placements

Several initial teacher education (ITE) providers have contacted the Teaching Council with concerns that some schools are hesitant to host ITE students on their professional experience placements under the Red setting.

While non-essential visitors are to be excluded from visiting school premises under the Red setting, fully vaccinated staff, support people, and volunteers are allowed onto school grounds.

We encourage schools to continue hosting ITE students on their professional experience placements as they are covered by the vaccination mandate and do not pose an additional health risk to students.

The professional experience placement is an important component of ITE and should continue with as little disruption as possible to maintain the pipeline of qualified teachers entering the profession.

Support for self-isolating households

As you may be aware, under the traffic light system, people with COVID-19 will self-isolate in the community.

In November, the Government announced funding for the welfare support and resources needed to support individuals and whānau who contract COVID-19 and need extra support while they self-isolate.

Additional support for people isolating at home – Beehive

The funding enables supporting agencies and providers to deliver on the 'Care in Community' welfare response.

If you are aware of any whānau self-isolating and who need additional support, we have included a list of the food providers and community connectors available in each region.

Food providers and community connectors – MSD

Positive parenting during COVID-19

To support mental health, resilience and emotional wellbeing for our tamariki and rangatahi, the Ministry of Health has partnered with Whāraurau to offer parents, whānau and caregivers free online versions of the Triple P: Positive Parenting Programme across the country.

Register for a positive parenting programme – Triple P

There are three free Triple P online programmes available to help positively support children to reduce anxiety, build emotional resilience and life skills and cope with challenges:

- Fear-Less Triple P Online for parents and caregivers of children and teenagers (aged six to 14 years) who have significant anxiety
- Triple P Online for parents with toddlers to 12-year-olds
- Teen Triple P Online for parents with 'tweens' or teenagers aged 10 to 16 years.

These programmes will also provide whānau a toolkit to help them to guide behaviour positively and encourage children's learning.

Update: Out-of-zone enrolment guidance

We will be updating our guidance to boards to clarify offers of enrolment to out-of-zone students.

When an offer of enrolment is made to an out-of-zone student and accepted by the parents or caregivers of that student, it may not then be revoked by the board due to unexpected in-zone enrolments.

Further information

Last year there was a case where parents had made application for their child to enrol as an out-of-zone student prior to turning five.

The school made enrolment offers to this student and several other out-of-zone students, and these offers were accepted. However, the school subsequently received a large and unprecedented number of in-zone enrolments and, as a result, rescinded the out-of-zone offers.

One student's parents challenged the decision and the High Court initially ruled that the withdrawal of the offer to enrol was valid. However, the parents appealed, and the Court of Appeal ruled that the student was entitled to enrol at the school as per the initial offer.

Consultation open: Electronic school board elections

In our bulletin in October we let you know that the 2022 Triennial school board elections would take place between 5 to 23 September 2022.

Triennial school board elections – School Bulletin 27 October 2021

Moving the elections was to help reduce pressure in the early part of 2022 and help to increase participation in the elections. It also allowed time to make changes to the current election regulations to enable an electronic option.

You are now invited to give feedback on the draft Education (Board Election) Amendment Regulations 2022.

Enabling electronic school board election – Kōrero Mātauranga

Enabling electronic school board elections consultation – Ministry of Education

These regulations propose an update to the existing Education (Board Election) Regulations 2000 and include a major change to enable the option for school board elections to be held electronically.

Consultation is open until Friday 18 March.

If you have questions, want to hear more about the changes or to express your interest in attending a webinar, please email legislation.consultation@education.govt.nz.

Extension: Supporting Afghanistan evacuees to enrol in schools

Since August 2021, the New Zealand government has supported approximately 1,000 Afghan evacuees to arrive in New Zealand. Around 274 of these are school-aged children with half of primary age and half of secondary age.

To ensure these children have access to education, we are granting them status as domestic students for the remaining 2022 school year.

We have updated The Education (Domestic Students) Notice 2022 with a new clause as follows:

o) For the remainder of the 2022 school year only, a child who arrived in New Zealand on or after 17 August 2021 after being evacuated from Afghanistan.

Please note, if your school enrolls a number of these children, you may be eligible to receive additional staffing through the extraordinary roll growth process.

Staffing for roll growth – Ministry of Education

If you're aware of children from Afghanistan who have recently arrived in your community who wish to enrol at your school but are not currently able to do so, please contact your regional Te Mahau office. They will support you through the enrolment and funding process.

Further information about students entitled to enrol in schools can be found on our website.

Circular 2020/08: Eligibility to enrol in New Zealand schools – Ministry of Education

The re-design of Te Mārutanga o Aotearoa

As you will recall, in February 2021 Associate Minister of Education Jan Tinetti announced that the national curriculum, including Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, will be refreshed over the next four to five years.

The approach for refreshing Te Marautanga o Aotearoa has included genuine and authentic design by Māori, with Māori, for Māori, from a te ao Māori perspective.

The resulting re-designed curriculum will ensure Te Marautanga o Aotearoa remains fit for purpose for te reo Māori education pathways.

Find more information on the changes to Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and how to get involved here:

Refresh of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa – Kauwhata Reo

Te Rōpū Whāiti

Since the announcement, we have formed Te Rōpū Whāiti, an advisory group made up of Māori education experts. These experts will provide advice and guidance to the Ministry and to working groups from the sector throughout the re-design of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

Read individual profiles on Te Rōpū Whāiti members on the Kauwhata Reo website:

Rōpū Whāiti – Kauwhata Reo

You will hear more about Te Rōpū Whāiti and the working groups as we begin engaging with the sector and with whānau, hapū and iwi.

We will keep you informed with regular updates in bulletins and on the Kauwhata Reo website.

Adult and Community Education (ACE) in schools funding

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has announced a new opportunity in 2022 for schools to apply for Adult and Community Education (ACE) in Schools coordination funding.

ACE in Schools coordination funding – Tertiary Education Commission

The purpose of this funding is to help expand ACE in Schools delivery, either by having more schools delivering programmes, by expanding the number of classes available, or by expanding into target areas. Funding can be used to support setup costs such as programme coordination salaries and administrative costs.

If you wish to become a new provider of ACE in Schools, contact a TEC customer service advisor on 0800 601 301 or email customerservice@tec.govt.nz.

Last-chance opportunities

VLN Primary School 2022 registrations

Nau mai, haere mai, all New Zealand children are welcome to learn with VLN Primary.

Extend curriculum choices for your learners and increase your school's confidence and capability in online and distance learning.

A wide range of language programmes available including te reo Māori, Kapa Haka, digital technology, gifted and talented creative arts, literacy, and science and maths.

Find out more and register your interest online or contact primary@vln.school.nz with queries.

VLN Primary in 2022 – VLN Primary School

Kia tere, hurry. Registrations close this Monday 21 February. Classes start the week of 14 March.

Apple Education back-to-school learning sessions

Did you miss January's back-to-school live learning sessions? For a limited time only, these sessions are available on-demand for registered attendees.

Back-to-school learning sessions – Apple

You'll discover new ways to enhance the classroom with iPad and Mac – exploring fun apps, lesson ideas, time-saving tips, free learning materials and more.

Karawhiua, go for it. Registrations close this Tuesday 22 February.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 24 FEBRUARY 2022

24 February 2022

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

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Medical exemptions

FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te ahiahi,

You'll be aware that this afternoon the Government announced that New Zealand is moving into Phase 3 of our response to Omicron from 11:59pm tonight Thursday 24 February.

In Phase 3, only household contacts of confirmed cases are required to self-isolate. The isolation period will be 10 days. All other contacts of COVID-positive people are not required to isolate, but they will

need to monitor for symptoms. Rapid antigen tests will become the primary testing method.

This is a decision that has been made based on public health advice – the high vaccination rate across the country will do its job in protecting us from transmission during the next surge of cases. If you haven't already, I encourage you to get your booster.

I'm aware that one of the biggest challenges you will face in the coming weeks is attendance and working with those parents and whānau who may have concerns about their child/ren being at school.

Attending school has so many benefits for the learning and wellbeing of our tamariki and ākonga. We encourage you to work to understand whānau reasons for keeping their tamariki and ākonga away from school, assure them that we have very good systems in place to keep everyone as safe as possible, and to support their return to school.

You are doing a truly impressive job of maintaining learning as well as providing up-to-date health information and assurance to your students, staff and parents that everything that needs to be done is being done – and that their safety and wellbeing is the top priority. Mahi tika ana, keep up the great work, and please get in touch with your local Te Mahau office if you need any additional support.

In today's bulletin, please find our guidance for Phase 3 and some important information on your March roll return.

Ngā manaakitanga,
Iona

Information on moving to Phase 3

Although New Zealand is moving to Phase 3 of our Omicron response, we are still at Red under the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

As such, the same mitigation measures to reduce spread of COVID-19 remain in place: vigilance about symptoms and staying away if unwell continue to be a priority.

Moving to Phase 3 will ease some of the pressure on our testing and contact tracing services over the next three to six weeks, while helping to ensure critical services and supply chains remain operational and our economy keeps moving.

Because so many of us are now vaccinated and Omicron is less severe, we can have a more devolved response and much greater self-management. Care and support will continue to be there for those who are most vulnerable to COVID-19.

Below we've outlined what Phase 3 will mean for you.

Contract tracing changes for your school

This will become much easier because only household contacts of a case must isolate. All other contacts should continue to monitor for symptoms. If any arise, they should stay home from school and get a test.

We recommend that you remind all staff, students, children, parents and caregivers to monitor for symptoms at all times. This will remove the need to individually remind people who may have come in contact with a case to do so (that is, you will no longer need to use the letter templates for contacts of a case).

Cases themselves are now asked to undertake their own investigation to identify close contacts. As such, your staff, students, parents and caregivers should notify your school if they or their child was positive while at school.

While you may want to keep your community informed of every case, there is no expectation that you do so. You will know your communities best and what works for them.

The close contact exemption scheme continues to be available for any household contacts who are required to isolate. Again, this would be a last resort for you, but will support you to keep operating onsite for those children who need to attend.

Close contact exemption scheme and access to RATs – Te Mahau

Isolation period for cases and household contacts

A case will need to isolate at home for 10 days, as will anyone else in the household.

Rapid antigen tests are now being used as a diagnostic tool

There will be a lot more rapid antigen tests (RATs) used at Phase 3.

PCR testing will be prioritised for people who are unwell and people who are more susceptible. For example, this will include those in hospital or who are immunocompromised or pregnant – people for whom it is very important to have a clinical diagnosis. It will also continue to be used for border testing.

Anyone who tests positive with a RAT will need to self-report their positive result and then isolate for 10 days. There is no longer a need to follow up with a PCR test to confirm that result.

Contact management

Cases will now receive a text notification advising they have COVID-19. The text will outline what the case and their household need to do.

You will need to advise your regional Te Mahau contact about any positive cases connected with your school. You will need to let us know if they are a student, teacher, another staff member or parent. Schools will no longer need to identify and keep records of close contacts in schools.

Regional contacts for schools and early learning services – Te Mahau

Schools connected to a confirmed case – Te Mahau

Transitional arrangements for close contacts isolating prior to 25 February

People who are currently self-isolating as close contacts and are not household contacts can stop isolating and return to school from tomorrow Friday 25 February if they are asymptomatic.

They are not required to produce a negative test result.

School hostels and Phase 3

Your requirements and processes for managing cases will not change at Phase 3 from those currently in place.

The same health mitigations required at Red under the COVID-19 Protection Framework remain in place.

The Ministry of Health have confirmed that rather than identifying everyone in the hostel as a household contact if you were to have a confirmed case, it is sensible from a risk-perspective to continue to use the 1.5 metre distance as your main guide for identifying close contacts of the confirmed case.

Using poorly ventilated rooms will increase numbers identified as a close contact and therefore required to isolate if there is a case in your hostel.

You will still need to advise your regional Te Mahau contact about any positive cases connected with your hostel.

Regional contacts for schools – Te Mahau

We are revising the guidance sent to you last week regarding safely isolating in your hostel, but the key change is updating the table for contact categorising on page 12. We will send the updated guidance to

you as soon as possible.

School camps and overnight trips

We will provide further advice about school camps or other overnight trips in a bulletin next week.

Communicating Phase 3 to parents and whānau

As noted by Minister Hipkins, the traffic light system aims to keep people safe, with as little disruption to their day-to-day lives as possible.

We all know how important being at school is for ākonga. We also know that schools continue to be lower-risk settings for transmission of COVID-19 because of all the mitigations you have in place.

We have drafted a letter template to support your communications to parents, whānau and caregivers which can be edited to suit your needs.

Phase 3: Letter template for parents and whānau – English [DOCX, 18 KB]

Phase 3: Letter template for parents and whānau – te reo Māori [DOCX, 21 KB]

Roll return eligibility

There has been some confusion about attendance coding and how this may relate to roll return eligibility.

The coding of absences does not have a direct correlation to roll return inclusion. For example, unjustified absences do not mean that students should be automatically excluded from inclusion on a roll return. See below for more information.

March roll return 2022

This year the March roll count date is Tuesday 1 March with returns due no later than Tuesday 8 March.

Two requirements must be met before a student is included on a roll return. These are:

1. the student must be enrolled or attending the school for tuition on the roll count date
2. the student must also meet the eligibility criteria of being a domestic student.

Distance learning

Students studying from home are still attending for tuition and remain eligible to be included in your roll return as per normal.

New enrolments

Domestic students who have delayed starting at your school due to risk of exposure to COVID-19 can still be included in your March roll return student numbers, provided your school has enrolment information (paper-based or electronic) confirming the students enrolment with an intent to start prior to or on the roll count date (1 March).

Overseas enrolments

Domestic students who are temporarily overseas can be included for resourcing, provided that your school has a statement of their intention to return to your school, and their absence does not exceed 15 consecutive weeks in the current school year.

Students who are absent on the roll count date

Students who are absent on the roll count date can be included on the March roll return, but only where the absence is considered temporary, and the student will return to school after the roll count date.

Reminder: Booster vaccines required by 1 March

As detailed in previous bulletins, everyone who is covered by the mandatory vaccination requirements must have their booster by Tuesday 1 March or 183 days after their second shot (whichever is later).

As previously advised, this means that:

- workers who received their second vaccination on or before 30 August 2021 will need to have had their booster by Tuesday 1 March 2022 to continue working on site
- workers who received their second vaccination from 31 August 2021 onwards will need to receive their booster shot within 183 days of their second shot
- the booster requirements apply to everyone under the coverage of original vaccination requirements who is over the age of 18, that is, people working or volunteering at or for early

learning services, schools and kura who may have contact with children or students or will be present on site at a time when children and students are also present. This includes teachers, teacher aides, support staff, relief and casual staff, caretakers and cleaners, volunteers, and contractors. Information about how the vaccination mandate applies to each role can be found here, including examples that help show how the booster requirements apply in practice

- if a worker has not received their booster by Tuesday 1 March or within 183 days after their second vaccination dose, they will not be able to have contact with children or students or be present at a time that children or students are also present.

More information on managing implications for staff impacted by the vaccine requirements on our website.

COVID-19 Vaccination Order – Te Mahau

Learn about booster doses for COVID-19 vaccines – Unite Against COVID-19

Medical exemptions

People who hold a valid temporary medical exemption issued by the Ministry of Health which prevents them from being vaccinated against COVID-19 are also exempt from the booster dose requirement.

Medical exemptions are usually only available for the length of time that people need to arrange for a medically tolerable vaccination.

All medical exemptions expire no later than six months of being issued and upon expiration of a person's medical exemption they are subject to all vaccination requirements including the booster requirement. Alternatively, they need to obtain a further medical exemption.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

COVID-19 UPDATE - 1 MARCH 2022

01 March 2022

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FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te ahiahi,

Welcome to the first day of autumn.

As expected, cases of Omicron have grown exponentially. I know that this will be placing additional pressure on you, your staff, ākonga and communities. Thank you for your leadership in volatile times.

Please continue to let your regional Te Mahau teams know when you are informed of positive cases of students and staff in your school. This information provides all important context for policy and practice responses.

Despite the rise in numbers of cases it is really important that all children who need to can come to school. Your leadership and management to enable this is highly valued – thank you.

In today's bulletin, we step through the changes planned to allow children to access school arranged extracurricular activities. I know that this does not free up access to a range of other provision – such as sports clubs or ballet classes, but it does address the concerns raised by many of you.

We have also provided information on managing contacts in situations such as school hostels, overnight trips, and camps, and how to manage children or staff returning to school from their 10-day isolation.

Ngā manaakitanga,
Iona

Changes to requirements for school activities

As indicated by Minister Hipkins, all children and young people will soon be able to participate in all school-organised teams and groups regardless of their vaccination status.

An amendment to the health order will now be needed and we anticipate these changes will take effect no later than Tuesday 15 March.

This will apply to onsite and offsite activities for both curriculum-related (including offsite education outside the classroom) and extra-curricular activities offered by a registered school.

This change will apply to intra-school and inter-school competitions/activities as well as competitions/activities where school teams/groups compete against other teams/groups which are not from a school. For example, the school's First XI competing in a local senior club competition or the school kapa haka group competing against adult groups in a regional competition.

We will advise you when these changes to the health order occur and will update our website information to reflect the above information and advice at that time.

For now, the existing requirements/permissions under the health order remain in place.

What will this mean for children and young people?

This change will mean that after that date, children and young people who are in a school-organised team or group cannot be asked for a vaccine pass.

Activities held off site will still be able to have up to 100 participants in any defined space when at Red, as long as spectators and adult participants (coaches, referees etc) are required to provide vaccine passes.

There is no change to the vaccine requirements for staff and volunteers supporting any school activity involving children and young people – they must be vaccinated and may be asked by venue staff to provide evidence of their vaccination.

This change will support all children to participate fully in school life, regardless of their vaccination status.

Vaccine passes where activities are not school-based

Unvaccinated children aged over 12 years and 3 months may continue to be prevented from participating in some activities if they are participating in a team or group not from their school.

For example, a student playing for a senior club hockey team will still need to provide a vaccine pass if the competition or venue requires evidence of vaccination from all participants.

A reminder those aged under 12 years and 3 months are already able to participate in school activities both on site and off site regardless of their vaccination status.

Vaccination for children aged 5 to 11 – Unite Against COVID-19

Education outside the classroom

Once the legislative changes are made, an offsite education outside the classroom (EOTC) provider will not be able to ask children and young people participating in school-organised activities for evidence of vaccination.

Importantly, EOTC providers will no longer have to provide a separate space to host school groups with unvaccinated students. This may open up more options to access EOTC for all students.

Please note, an EOTC provider will still be able to choose whether to accept school groups onsite, so please continue to work closely with your provider to agree the requirements of any visits.

Key messages you can use to support your engagement with EOTC providers

- Overall, secondary-aged students are a well-vaccinated group. As of Wednesday 23 February, over 95% of 12 to 17-year-olds have received one dose of the vaccine, while 92% have received two doses.
- As is required, all our staff and volunteers are fully vaccinated and are also required to be boosted when they become eligible.
- We have very good practices in place to minimise spread of COVID-19 including:
 - anyone feeling unwell is asked to stay at home
 - we monitor closely for symptoms
 - we keep a physical distance from people we don't know and from other groups
 - students, staff and volunteers are reminded regularly about having good hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette
 - we have a supply of hand sanitiser for teams and groups to use offsite.
- We have a strong mask culture in our school and will be able to adhere to provider/venue mask requirements.

Important public health mitigations that remain

We have checked in with public health to see whether there is any change to their advice for schools.

Whether on site or off site, activities held indoors – especially those involving physical exertion, singing and playing wind instruments – remain a higher risk for spread of COVID-19.

Current public health advice is that wherever possible, these activities should be held outdoors.

If you do decide to go ahead and hold these types of activities indoors:

- it must be in a well-ventilated space
- there should be at least one metre of space per person
- participants should be physically distanced by at least one metre where practicable, and at least two metres apart for singing and when using wind instruments
- gatherings of large numbers of students should not go ahead unless outdoors
- if bringing parents and caregivers on site for non-curriculum events and activities, the rules under the COVID-19 Protection Framework for events and gatherings will apply.

Recent High Court case regarding vaccination mandates

You may have seen the recent decision regarding vaccine mandates for the New Zealand Police and Defence Force personnel.

The Court's decision applies only to affected people who work in these sectors. The mandates requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for all education staff who may interact with children and students remain in place and are not affected by this judgement.

A claim challenging the education sector mandates will be heard in March and we will provide a further update when the outcome of that challenge is known.

There is no change for schools, kura, hostels and licenced early childhood services. Everyone who works for a school who may have contact with children or will be present at a time when children are also present will continue to be covered by the mandatory vaccination requirements.

They will need to continue to have their booster by today Tuesday 1 March or 183 days after their second shot, whichever is later.

Vaccination information for schools and kura – Te Mahau

Managing contacts in group accommodation situations

We have had a number of requests for guidance on contacts in situations such as school hostels, overnight trips and camps.

The Ministry of Health has confirmed that a household contact is someone who shares a house or flat with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (a case) on a permanent or part-time basis (for

example, shared custody) and has spent at least one night or day (greater than eight hours) in that residence while the case was infectious.

COVID-19: Information for household and close contacts – Ministry of Health

However, this definition excludes group accommodation (aged residential care facilities, halls of residences, boarding houses, school hostels, backpackers, and so on).

This means that if there is a case connected with a school hostel, school camp, other overnight trip or when providing home-based care, no one involved would be classified as a household contact.

Instead, there will be a number of close contacts of that case who may choose to self-isolate but are not required to do so. At a minimum they should be asked to monitor closely for any symptoms for 10 days.

A reminder that anyone who is a close contact and symptomatic should already be isolating and seeking advice about getting tested.

We have provided advice to school hostels over the weekend to reflect this advice, which is now available on our website.

Guidance for school hostels – Te Mahau

Overnight trips and camps

The following principles and actions can be applied to overnight trips and camps.

- Planning will need to include how to respond to cases, whether they are staff, volunteers, children or students.
- Schools will need to implement robust infection control measures to minimise the spread of COVID-19. This is likely to include grouping children/students so that they do not intermingle with other groups, staggering mealtimes, airing out rooms in between use by different groups, or only using rooms which are well-ventilated.
- Anyone who is identified as a confirmed case will be required to isolate for 10 days.
- Anyone from the overnight trip/camp who is a close contact of that case is not required to isolate. However, as a precaution you may choose to ask them to isolate for a period of time following their last exposure to the case. There is no legal requirement for this to occur. A period of seven days from their last exposure to the case is recommended should they choose to isolate (this assumes they are isolating separately from the case).
- Anyone in the group, including close contacts of a confirmed case, who is symptomatic (even if only very mild symptoms) must be encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.

- When cases do arise, they can travel back to their homes to isolate. However, public transport cannot be used to do this.
- Planning must consider how cases will be returned safely to their homes to isolate. If returning home is not possible then you will need a plan for cases to isolate in-situ.
- Where cases need to isolate in-situ:
 - they should be separated as much as is practicable from others
 - cases can isolate together
 - close contacts choosing to isolate should be separated as is practicable from others, but they may isolate together
 - close contacts can isolate with the case, but there is an obvious risk of transmission of the virus if sharing the same room while the case is infectious.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing for all members of the group, including staff and volunteers, continues to be a priority.

The guidance for isolating safely in school hostels provides some very helpful information to support people to isolate safely and can be applied to overnight stays and camps.

Infection prevention and control for school hostels – Te Mahau

Returning from isolation as a household contact

We've had a number of queries regarding instances where students have completed their required 10 days' isolation but have had family members subsequently test positive.

Currently there is no legal requirement for family members to remain in isolation beyond the initial 10-day period, once they have returned a negative Day 10 test.

What does it mean if I'm a household contact? – Ministry of Health

To manage this risk, it is important that if the student develops symptoms they stay at home until they are symptom-free and have returned a negative test result. Alternatively, they could be managed as a case without any need for testing.

It's important that anyone with symptoms remain at home until they are symptom-free for at least 48 hours.

Please be assured that the current measures in place (masks, physical distancing and ventilation of rooms) in schools continue to provide high levels of protection from infection in a school environment.

What type of contact are you?

This graphic will be helpful in identifying whether you are a household contact and what steps you should take.

Contact tracing – Unite Against COVID-19

 What type of contact are you?

Testing positive for COVID-19

If you test positive for COVID-19, everyone else in your household becomes a household contact and you need to isolate together for at least 10 days.

Download the brochure:

Testing positive for COVID-19 [PDF, 220 KB]

The information covers:

- managing symptoms
- rapid antigen tests (RATs)
- steps to take if you test positive
- what to do when isolating
- support that is available in isolation.

Reminder: EAP services

A reminder that we have extended centrally funded counselling services through EAP Services.

All teachers, relievers and support staff across early learning centres, kura and state and state-integrated schools are able to access these services.

We're aware that some schools already offer support services to their staff through EAP Services. The centrally funded counselling services apply to staff who register as new users from 24 August 2021 and this funding arrangement will continue through to June 2022.

Charges for pre-existing clients may still be chargeable to your school. If your school or centre has questions about invoices for services delivered through EAP Services, please email accountmanagement@eapservices.co.nz in the first instance.

You'll find further information about these EAP services on our website. If you any questions call 0800 327 669/1800 726474 or visit the EAP website.

COVID-19 employee support – Te Mahau

Employee assistance – EAP Services

Help for whānau who are self-isolating

If you know any whānau who need extra support while they are self-isolating because of COVID-19, Work and Income may be able to help.

Help while you're self-isolating – Work and Income

Many people will be able to self-isolate with help from whānau, family and friends, but there is help available for whānau who need it.

If help is needed, they may be able to get:

- money to pay for urgent and essential costs, like food, medicine, and some bills
- things that are needed to be delivered.

New border exception for international students

A new cohort of up to 5,000 international students was announced by the Government on Thursday 3 February as part of a five-step plan to reopen New Zealand's borders.

Fourth cohort of international students as a border exception – Education New Zealand

Student numbers will be allocated across the sector based on the proportion of international students who were attending each type of education provider pre-COVID in 2019. The school sector will receive an allocation of 1,000 places for students studying at Year 9 and above.

Although the detailed criteria for this border exception are yet to be determined, students will need to meet living cost requirements. Education agencies will update education providers as soon as this has been confirmed.

Visa processing for this cohort will open from 11.59pm Tuesday 12 April. Students are expected to begin arriving from mid-2022 onwards.

Operational funding notification

The Quarter 2 operational funding entitlement and instalment notices will be available via the Secure Data Portal on Thursday 31 March.

Visit our website for more information and instructions on how to access the Secure Data Portal.

Education Sector Logon – Applications & Online Systems

While schools' funding entitlements are being prepared, staffing entitlement notices will not be updated on the Secure Data Portal from Monday 14 March to Thursday 31 March.

Circular 2022/02: Initiation of bargaining notice

Circular 2022/02 has been published on our website and is about the initiation of bargaining for the renewal of the School Caretakers', Cleaners' and Canteen Staff Collective Agreement.

Circular 2022/02: Notice to initiate bargaining – Ministry of Education

Employers must let any employees who may be covered by this collective agreement know about the upcoming bargaining.

Further information on the bargaining is available from the NZSTA.

Resources to help you understand changes to NCEA

Regardless of whether your school or kura is taking part in any of the four NCEA pilots this year, we are encouraging teachers and school leaders to start thinking now about how they can prepare for the NCEA changes.

We have developed resources to help schools and kura as well as parents and whānau to understand the changes that we are implementing to strengthen NCEA.

These include a 'Kaiako Wānanga NCEA Facilitation Guide' to help teachers prepare for conversations with learners and their parents, a 'Whānau Pocket Guide' to help whānau understand the NCEA changes and consider ways of supporting their tamariki to succeed and an 'Ōku Wawata/My Aspirations Pocket Guide' for ākonga to support conversations between parents and their tamariki about their aspirations through and beyond NCEA.

These resources have been sent to schools. They can also be downloaded from our website and used for your NCEA information evenings.

Understanding how NCEA requirements are changing – NCEA Education

What resources are available to help understand the NCEA changes? – Ministry of Education

For queries, email us at ncea.review@education.govt.nz.

Support for NCEA change through regionally allocated PLD

We'd like to encourage schools or clusters of schools to apply for regionally allocated PLD (RAPLD) to support the implementation of NCEA changes in their schools. Please apply under the 'Local curriculum design' priority.

In December 2021, RAPLD updated our facilitator database to include a specialisation category to assist secondary schools to identify facilitators who can lead PLD in specific subject areas to support the upcoming NCEA changes.

Schools can choose multiple facilitators across multiple provider organisations to work together to deliver their PLD if required. For example, a facilitator with NCEA science as a specialisation and a facilitator with mātauranga Māori as a specialisation might work together to plan and facilitate your PLD.

Apply for regionally allocated PLD – Professional Learning & Development

Facilitator search tool – Professional Learning & Development

Upcoming mathematics and statistics PLD support

We will be introducing PLD to support high-quality teaching and learning of mathematics and statistics and promote effective use of existing resources, with a focus on nzmaths.

NZ Maths – Te Kete Ipurangi

This mathematics and statistics PLD support is an extension of the Just-In-Time Maths model piloted last year. The support will be delivered in a blended model which includes both virtual and face-to-face delivery, comprising of cluster workshops and facilitators modelling best practice.

It is designed for up to two teachers from a school or kura to participate.

The mathematics and statistics PLD support will be available to teachers of learners in Years 4 to 8.

This support will be contextualised for pāngarau for kura in Māori-medium settings.

How do I apply?

Applications for schools and kura to apply for this support will open on the PLD website from Monday 14 March.

Just-In-Time Maths PLD support – Professional Learning & Development

Teachers and kaiako of learners in Years 4- to 8 can be nominated to participate by their principal or in-school PLD lead.

The PLD is scheduled to begin in Term 2 and will run until the end of Term 4.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

UPDATE - 15 MARCH 2022

15 March 2022

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

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Additional support for teaching maths

FOREWORD

Ngā mihi o te Rātū,

Thank you for the continued feedback, it helps us adapt our processes to provide what you need.

Many of you have indicated that the volume of information you are having to process can be overwhelming. You will be pleased to hear that from next week you can expect to receive just one bulletin a week on a Tuesday afternoon. As always, we will provide urgent information out of cycle if necessary.

In today's bulletin, information about the change to vaccine pass requirements for school-organised extra-curricular activities, and some advice on how you might record leave in different situations.

I know that you are all flat out managing the impact of teacher and student absence, but as you are probably aware there are discussions underway around when and how vaccination mandates may be lifted. It is timely to think about planning for that as you will need to make your own health and safety policies.

Kia kaha,
Iona

Health and safety planning around vaccines

In the event the vaccination mandates in education are lifted, school boards will be required to take the implications of this into account in decisions about their own health and safety settings.

As initial guidance we have updated our risk assessment and business continuity planning template. You'll also find further information about undertaking a health and safety risk assessment on our website.

[Risk assessment and planning for Omicron \[DOCX, 42 KB\]](#)

[Risk assessment and planning – Te Mahau](#)

This will help you to monitor and review health and safety policies around COVID-19, as you re-assess these in consultation with your staff and the wider schooling community.

Early and good engagement with your staff will be of critical importance as you consider future policy settings.

Your Te Mahau advisors, New Zealand School Trustees Association and Te Rūnanga Nui are available to provide advice and support regarding health and safety planning.

Changes to vaccine pass requirements for teams and groups

As noted in our bulletin on 1 March, changes have now been made to the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Protection Framework) Order.

Changes to requirements for school activities – School Bulletin 1 March

All children and young people enrolled in a registered school are now able to participate in all school-organised teams and groups regardless of their vaccination status. This change took effect from 11.59pm Saturday 12 March.

This change will also apply to any individuals representing their school at an event or competition – for example, an individual representing their school at a debating competition (think of them as a team/group of one).

For education outside the classroom (EOTC), this will mean that an offsite provider will not be able to ask children and young people participating in school-organised curriculum-related activities for evidence of vaccination.

Social events, fund-raising events or other activities where student participants are not in a school-organised team or group are not included in this exemption from vaccine pass requirements – for example, school balls, school fairs, quiz nights.

COVID-19 guidance on events and activities – Te Mahau

Scenarios for managing staff leave

The spread of Omicron in our school communities is resulting in instances of leave scenarios that may have been unpredictable in earlier planning.

Our 'managing staff leave due to COVID-19' page now includes advice and scenarios of why a staff member may be absent and unable to work from home for COVID-19 reasons.

Managing staff leave due to COVID-19 – Te Mahau

The scenarios indicate how the leave can be recorded (for example, as disregarded sick leave or discretionary leave).

Additional relief teacher funding

Additional relief teacher funding for COVID-19 absences can be claimed for relief cover for eligible sick leave, dependent leave, discretionary leave and disregarded sick leave.

Additional relief funding for Term 1 – Te Mahau

Please also see our previous bulletins.

Supporting schools to support staff – School Bulletin 10 February

COVID-19 relief funding for schools – School Bulletin 17 February

Additional support when backfilling a reliever

There may be instances when a short-term reliever becomes sick with COVID-19 while contracted to work at your school or kura.

You may need to backfill their absence and cover their sick leave. In this case, please contact your Te Mahau office to apply for special reasons support to backfill a reliever due to a COVID-19 absence.

If you are struggling to manage your school's financial situation and require further support please contact your school financial adviser or your Te Mahau office to work through what options might be available.

Contact details for managing school finances – Ministry of Education

New downloadable learning packs available

In February we released a trial set of downloadable learning packs covering the curriculum theme of 'creativity'.

The final creativity packs with two weeks of learning activities are now available and we have also released draft packs with one week of activities covering the curriculum theme of 'curiosity'.

2022 downloadable learning packs – Learning from Home

The final curiosity packs with two weeks of activities will be published next week. Further learning packs covering three additional curriculum themes will be released from the end of March until early May.

These learning packs target learners in Years 1-3, 4-6, 7-8 and 9-10. They are designed flexibly to be used in the classroom and at home, with and without digital devices.

Ventilating teaching spaces in cold weather

We have updated our guidance for schools on ventilating teaching spaces in cold weather.

Ventilation on colder days – Te Mahau

Natural ventilation performs better in colder weather, which means you can partially open windows and doors when it's cold outside and achieve the same or better ventilation than fully opening windows and doors when it's warm outside.

The goal is still to allow the flow of fresh outdoor air to minimise the risk of COVID-19 airborne transmission, while balancing this with maintaining a comfortable temperature in indoor spaces.

Our advice has been endorsed by a panel of independent experts and includes operational changes you can make that will help to strike this balance.

Additional classroom ventilation toolkits

We will soon have more portable CO2 monitors available for schools with rolls over 250 students.

We are expecting these to be ready for distribution in April. If your school has more than 250 students and is eligible, we will get in touch with you once they are ready to ship.

If you have any questions or concerns about ventilation, please contact ventilation.mailbox@education.govt.nz.

Border exception for international students: Application process

The Implementation Framework for the fourth border exception for international students has been finalised and contains information about the allocation of places to schools, the criteria required for nomination of students to these places, and all associated processes.

Border class exception for international students – Ministry of Education

Information has been provided to peak body representatives to distribute to their members. If you are a school that is not aligned to SIEBA or ISNZ, you can request a copy of the Implementation Framework, application for places forms, and information sheets from Education New Zealand at c4schools@enz.govt.nz.

Applying for places

The application for places is an opportunity for schools to indicate the number of places they wish to use. This will be used to confirm the number of places each school will be able to use.

The deadline for applications is 5pm Tuesday 22 March.

We plan to notify applicant schools of the outcome of the allocation of places process in the week beginning Monday 28 March. It is also planned for the nomination process to open for those places during this week.

COVID-19 website information has moved

As you know, Te Mahau is a part of Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga | The Ministry of Education and provides localised services and support through your local Te Mahau office.

The COVID-19 information and guidance previously housed on our main Ministry of Education website has been moved to the Te Mahau website.

COVID-19 – Te Mahau

Pages related to COVID-19 on our main site will be automatically redirected to the COVID-19 landing page on Te Mahau. Please update your bookmarks.

New look: Learning Management System

We are pleased to announce the new-look Learning Management System (LMS) will be available **tomorrow 16 March**.

Login – Learning Management System

New features available include:

- access to learning content via a catalogue
- new classifications to enable filtering of learning content
- easier access – you can now use your Education Sector Logon (ESL) to login.

Applications opening for mathematics and statistics PLD

Applications for Just-In-Time Maths (JITM) support will open this Thursday 17 March.

Teachers of learners in Years 4 to 8 are eligible to participate in this programme. Schools and kura can nominate up to two teachers to receive this support.

Your school's PLD Leader (with the corresponding permissions in ESL) will be able to apply for your school.

For key dates and information about this support and access to the application form, please visit the PLD website.

Just-In-Time Maths PLD support – Professional Learning & Development

Delivery is scheduled to begin in Term 2 and run until the end of Term 4.

Māori-medium support

For Māori-medium settings, Mauri Tū Mauri Ora is also available.

Mauri Tū Mauri Ora is a suite of education initiatives available nationally and focussed on accelerating progress and achievement of ākonga in te reo Māori education pathways in te reo matatini and pāngarau.

Mauri Tū Mauri Ora providers work alongside kaiako, kura, whānau and community to identify and support ākonga who require extra support to accelerate te reo matatini and pāngarau learning.

To request support or for further information, contact Tereo.Programmeoffice@education.govt.nz.

Additional support for teaching maths

To ensure teachers and leaders are able to access quality guidance and support for teaching maths, we are rolling out a support package for use during 2022.

This will include written guidance and workshops for school leaders around leading maths effectively.

This will be available in Term 2.

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

UPDATE - 22 MARCH 2022

22 March 2022

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FOREWORD

E ngā ringa raupā, kei ngā whare ako puta noa i te motu, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Greetings and acknowledgements to all of you working hard in your learning environments.

Amongst everything else going on, those of you in Tāmaki Makaurau and Tai Tokerau have also had to combat heavy storms and rain over the last few days. I know some have been impacted heavily by this, so I hope today finds you safe.

Late last week I understand many of you received an Official Information Act request regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. In today's bulletin we have guidance for responding to OIAs.

We also have information about the online process for applying for disregarded sick leave, and a message from Pouarataki. Pouarataki has been established to provide proactive, strategic support and guidance.

Although we had the very best of intentions to move to one bulletin a week, you'll know that tomorrow there are announcements being made by Cabinet on the COVID-19 Protection Framework, My Vaccine Pass requirements and vaccination mandates. We'll send a bulletin with guidance on any changes which impact you and any other COVID-related matters.

Hei āpōpō,

Iona

Applying for disregarded sick leave

As noted in our bulletin on 10 March, disregarded sick leave is available to teachers and principals who have contracted COVID-19 and who are required to take sick leave during the period they are instructed

to isolate.

Using disregarded sick leave for COVID-19 – School Bulletin 10 March

Disregarded sick leave – Te Mahau

How to apply

When the teacher or principal returns to work, your school or kura (the employer) will need to request disregarded sick leave for COVID-19 on their behalf.

An online application form has been created to make this process easier. Please use this form for future applications.

Online application form for disregarded sick leave – Te Mahau

Schools and kura will need to hold a record of the evidence that the period of leave was due to the teacher or principal contracting COVID-19.

Assistance with your Education Service Login

To access the application form, schools and kura will need to have up-to-date Education Service Login (ESL) credentials.

Step-by-step instructions on how to update your ESL [PDF, 809 KB]

If you need any further assistance with the Education Service Login (ESL), email service.desk@education.govt.nz or phone 0800 422 599.

Reminder: PLD for hybrid learning

We are continuing to offer up to 25 hours of additional professional learning and development (PLD) to any school or kura that needs it to enable the continuation of quality learning both in school and off site.

Hybrid learning PLD support – Professional Learning & Development

These hours are outside of the normal regionally allocated PLD rounds to ensure you can get immediate support for hybrid learning. To access the PLD, please contact your Te Mahau PLD team to discuss your request for support.

Contact details for regional PLD teams – Professional Learning & Development

In agreement with your Te Mahau team, you'll need to write a short proposal outlining your request. Once you've received confirmation of approval, you'll be able to allocate the hybrid learning support hours to your chosen facilitator and begin organising delivery of the PLD.

If you have any questions or to let us know you've completed a completed proposal, email PLD.enquiries@education.govt.nz. Please include your proposal number (that is, PROP-00xxxx).

Ministry-funded internet connections

As you know, all learner households who have been provided with internet access as part of the COVID-19 support plan have had their free access extended until 30 June.

Now, as part of our ongoing support to help learners stay connected during ongoing disruptions, we want to confirm which learners still require connectivity support.

What do you need to do?

If your school or kura is in the programme, you will have received an email last week containing a spreadsheet that lists all your learners who have been allocated a household connection.

Please update and return the spreadsheet by Friday 8 April. If there are no changes, send us a short update by email: eda@education.govt.nz.

Please note, we acknowledge the current COVID-19 outbreak has put significant pressure on you. As such, we have tried to minimise the effort required for this request. If you are too busy to provide an update at this time, we will continue to fund all your existing learner connections until 30 June.

Get in touch

If you need help with this return or have students who require internet connections to support their home learning, please contact our Equitable Digital Access team on 0800 783 744 or eda@education.govt.nz.

Update on booster shots for people under 18

We've had a number of enquiries about access to boosters for under 18s.

The Ministry of Health has provided the following information.

- COVID-19 booster vaccines are not yet approved by Medsafe for people under 18 years of age and are not currently part of our COVID-19 national vaccination programme.
- Pfizer has recently applied to Medsafe to reduce the age threshold for boosters for the Pfizer vaccine, which is the preferred booster vaccine for use in New Zealand. A decision is expected shortly. We will tell you more about this as soon as we have more information.
- In the meantime, tertiary students under the age of 18 might be able to get a prescription for a booster from their GP. As with other medicines, vaccines can be used outside of Medsafe approval (that is, 'off label') if they are prescribed by an authorised prescriber.
- It's recommended that you discuss your situation with your GP or specialist. Appointments to discuss COVID-19 vaccine options, and all COVID-19 vaccines, are free.

Household contacts testing positive at different times

The Ministry of Health has provided further clarity on when household contacts should isolate.

What does it mean if I am a household contact? – Ministry of Health

For households where someone has COVID-19, the Ministry of Health recommends you apply the following guidance.

- If someone becomes a confirmed COVID-19 case, then that case and all other people in their household must isolate for seven days.
- If someone else in the household then tests positive for COVID-19 during those seven days:
 - the isolation period for that person only re-sets – that person must isolate for an additional seven days from the day they test positive or symptoms begin
 - other household contacts who do not test positive are still able to leave isolation after the original case has completed their seven days isolation.
- For the next 10 days after a household completes seven days isolation, evidence shows that due to their exposure to COVID-19 they are less likely to catch or transmit the virus This means:
 - if someone else in the household tests positive within those 10 days, the whole household will not have to re-isolate, only the positive case
 - if someone else in the household tests positive and it has been more than 10 days since the household completed isolation, household contacts should re-isolate along with the new case for seven days.

- Any person who has had COVID-19 within the last 90 days/three months will not need to isolate as a household contact unless they become symptomatic and test positive again. This is because reinfection rates for people who have had COVID-19 are low for the three months after they have the virus.

Remember, Day 0 for isolation is the day symptoms began or the day the positive test was taken (whichever came first). You should then count your seven days from there.

Official Information Act request on sexual orientation and gender identity

We're aware that an Official Information Act (OIA) request has been sent to some schools seeking information about sexual orientation and gender identity. It requests information about external organisations, groups or individuals who have provided advice on these topics.

As you will all be keenly aware, schools and kura are required to provide and promote a safe and inclusive environment for all students, including rainbow students.

We know it is a responsibility you take very seriously – and this responsibility also includes protecting the privacy of individual students.

What can you do with the request?

Any person or organisation in New Zealand can request information held by a school board under the Official Information Act 1982.

If a request is overly broad or the scope is unclear, boards have the option of seeking clarification or refinement from the requestor. Note, if you do so within seven working days of receipt of the request, the timeframe for responding to the request 'resets' on the date that you receive further clarification.

The Official Information Act also provides grounds for refusal in instances where responding would involve substantial collation or research. For example, this may be in instances where there is a large amount of information to search through or it's not readily available in a single system.

However, it's good practice to seek a refinement of the scope of the request before you pursue that option – the Ombudsman notes that refusing a request on these grounds should be a last resort.

If there is no information in the scope of the request for your school, the Act provides grounds to refuse the request on the basis that the information requested does not exist.

It also provides various grounds to withhold information, such as where release would breach the privacy of a 'natural person'.

We would be very concerned about the release of any information which might identify or breach the privacy of individual students in this context. As such, it's important to consider very carefully what information is held in scope and what may need to be withheld or refused under one or more of the grounds in the Act. Additionally, it's important to note that withholding under Section 9 of the Act needs to be weighed against the public interest in releasing the information.

Further support for boards who receive an OIA

We encourage any schools or kura who receive this request to contact NZSTA or Te Rūnanga Nui as the appropriate bodies to provide case-specific advice and support to boards on meeting their governance obligations.

1 April 2022 settlement funding

As part of the 1 April 2022 operational grant instalment, schools and kura will be receiving their next instalment of funding for the support staff in schools and teacher aide pay equity settlements.

Funding instalments 2022 – Ministry of Education

Letters will be available on the School Data Portal from this Friday 25 March outlining the following:

- final 2021 wash-up including a breakdown of the calculation
- Quarter 2 instalment for 2022
- teacher aide exceptional translation funding (ETF), including a breakdown of the calculation.

For any queries about the settlement funding, please contact teacheraide.payequity@education.govt.nz.

Managing school finances: Internal control checklist

It's important for your school to have a strong system of internal controls around your finances. Internal controls reduce the risk of fraud and theft, prevent and detect errors and ensure the integrity of your school's financial information.

We have produced an internal control checklist and a segregation of duties matrix which you may find useful when assessing the adequacy of your internal controls.

Managing school finances and internal control resources – Ministry of Education

Further guidance on internal controls can be found in section 7.2.5 of the Financial Information for Schools Handbook.

Financial Information for Schools Handbook [PDF, 2.1 MB]

If you have any questions on these tools or internal controls in general please contact your school finance advisor.

Working with Ministry-contracted building inspectors

In May this year, more than 600 schools will have building warrants of fitness (BWOFs) due.

Building warrants of fitness for school facilities – Ministry of Education

Our contracted building inspectors will work with you to identify a convenient time to visit your school site, but to complete the required inspections it is important that they have access to your school during normal school hours.

Inspections are a requirement of the Building Act and by law. They are also an essential part of ensuring that school buildings are safe to occupy so that your board can continue to meet its health and safety responsibilities. A BWOF inspection will need to happen approximately six weeks before it expires.

All our contracted building inspectors must comply with vaccine mandate requirements and are police vetted. Be assured that they will work with you to ensure minimal disruption to classes and minimise risks around COVID-19.

New leadership group: Pouarataki

Te Mahau is providing one day of release time per week for a group of principals to provide proactive, strategic support and guidance to the education sector in response to and learning from COVID.

Pouarataki is self-guided and has prepared the information below.

Note, this was previously released by Directors of Education.

Pou Arataki | Pouarataki

The concept of a 'pou' is premised on the pou as a significant marker – a recognisable pillar or signpost. Pou are significant also because they are pillars of learning.

Each marae has pou that are storyboards for both past and future. They connect the present to the past and direct into the future. The power of pou is about learning.

Arataki is to lead. Therefore, Pou Arataki or Pouarataki is to lead learning.

What is the purpose of Pouarataki?

Among the challenges, many schools have also experienced a great deal of success in dealing with learning throughout the pandemic. The Pouarataki leadership group will amplify these successes and provide and encourage pedagogy that will help grow our capacity to deal with uncertainty.

We will also provide support with deliberate crisis leadership strategies that are tailored to align with balancing community needs, teaching and learning approaches, and the wellbeing of ākonga, whānau and staff.

Please note, this group is not aimed at answering specific questions – it's not a helpline. There are many avenues for support and guidance that are specific to COVID-19, and the first port of call for specific questions is always your education advisor.

NZEI, PPTA, SPANZ, NZSTA and Te Rūnanga Nui are there for employment and human resource matters, and your principal organisations and clusters continue to be available for collegial and mentoring support.

Who is in Pouarataki and what does the group do?

We are leaders from a variety of contexts across the sector. Many of the group have navigated our way through the challenges of the past few years with direct experience of the issues at hand.

We meet regularly and are supported by Ministry of Education staff in an example of Te Mahau and the education sector collaborating closely, and learning from and with each other.

The group is:

- Ripeka Lessels, Te Whata Tau o Putauaki
- Marian Caulfield, Mt Albert Primary School
- Davida Suasua, Tangaroa College
- Saane Faafo-Oldehaver, Weymouth Primary School
- Wayne Jenkins, Ross Intermediate School

- Maurie Abraham, Hobsonville Point Secondary School
- Bruce Jepsen, Te Akau ki Papamoa School
- Sandy Hastings, Beckenham Te Kura o Pūroto
- Stephen Lethbridge (group convenor), Point Chevalier School | Rangi-mata-rau
- Bronwyn Cheyne, COVID-19 Response Advisor, Te Mahau | Te Tai Raro
- Alan Munro, Principal Advisor, Te Mahau | Te Tai Whenua
- Garry Williams, Manager Education Renewal, Te Mahau | Te Tai Runga

We will provide more information in the coming weeks about how we will share the many good examples and approaches from around the country that have been successfully implemented to meet the hybrid learning challenge.

We are also working through how we will engage with leaders, clusters and regional organisations.

If you have any questions or needs, please email pouarataki@education.govt.nz.

New NCEA literacy and numeracy resources now available

As part of the comprehensive package of changes that are being implemented to strengthen NCEA, new standards will credential foundational literacy and numeracy or Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau.

Understanding how NCEA requirements are changing – NCEA Education

These standards are currently scheduled to become a mandatory part of NCEA from 2023.

To help teachers and learners prepare for the changes, we have developed new teaching and learning resources for literacy and numeracy, including subject-specific guidance for teachers and a students' guide to the new NCEA co-requisite.

New video content and action plan templates for Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau can also be accessed from our website.

See the relevant pages for more information:

Literacy – NCEA Education

Numeracy – NCEA Education

Te Reo Matatini – NCEA Education

Further support NCEA literacy and numeracy

Below are two tools in a range of options that are available to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

Additional tools include the Learning Progression Frameworks, e-asTTLe, and PATs, and further resources will be made available on the NCEA Education website in Terms 2 and 3.

Supporting teaching and learning in Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau – NCEA Education

Teachers should choose the tool most appropriate for their learners.

Progress and consistency tool (PaCT)

The Progress and Consistency Tool (PaCT) has updated functionality to help kaiako gauge whether learners are ready for the new standards.

Supporting progress – Curriculum Progress Tools

For more support, you can access online resources and PLD on the curriculum progress tools support page, speak to experts in your school support networks, or speak with your education advisor about accessing regionally allocated PLD.

Support – Curriculum Progress Tools

Pathways Awarua

Pathways Awarua is available for all secondary schools to use free of charge to build the literacy and numeracy capabilities of their learners.

Literacy and numeracy pathways – Pathways Awarua

Pathways Awarua includes interactive and contextualised reading, writing and numeracy modules, levelled where applicable to The New Zealand Curriculum.

Pay equity claim update: Librarians and science technicians

Alongside NZEI Te Riu Roa and as part of the pay equity claim process, we have been investigating the work done by librarians and library assistants and science technicians in schools and kura around the country.

So far, we've completed 64 research interviews with librarians, library assistants and their supervisors and 52 research interviews with science technicians and their supervisors.

We have analysed this data to come up with a draft 'general areas of responsibility' (GAR) document for each claim. These documents attempt to capture the range of work these staff do.

Did we get it right?

We are now seeking feedback from you to check whether there are any significant gaps in our findings.

It's important that we capture the broad range of responsibilities and activities carried out by these workforces, so that they are represented in the assessment of these pay equity claims.

You can view the draft general areas of responsibility and add your feedback online on our consultation space.

Have your say: Librarians and library assistants – Ministry of Education

Have your say: Science technicians – Ministry of Education

All feedback must be submitted by Tuesday 5 April.

If you prefer, you can delegate this task to someone who works closely with your librarian, library assistant or science technician, for example, your school's head of department. Or feel free to delegate to your librarian(s), library assistant(s) or science technician(s) to fill in on behalf of your school.

For assistance or if you have any questions, please contact the Pay Equity Team on 0800 PAY EQUITY (729 378) or school.payequity@education.govt.nz.

Join us: New digital security webinar series

Our Digital Security team are hosting a series of online webinars to guide your school on best practice security configurations.

Register your interest – Microsoft Forms

Throughout the series, you'll be equipped with information that will help you reduce risk and potential security breaches and assist in keeping staff and students safe online. Google and Microsoft have been

working with us to collate security recommendations and will advise how to configure settings for your school domain during the webinar.

The series is aimed at school leaders and both internal and external school IT administrators, with the first webinar covering identity and authentication.

You can choose from one of two dates for this presentation:

- Tuesday 5 April 3:30-4.30pm
- Thursday 7 April 3:30-4.30pm.

Presentations will be recorded and made available later.

Microfocus software is expiring

The current Ministry-funded software agreement with Microfocus expires in June – please pass this information onto your school IT administrators as soon as possible.

If your school currently uses this software, can you please email ictvendor.agreements@education.govt.nz and include:

- your school's name and number
- the products and quantity you are using
- your contact details.

We are exiting this agreement and will work directly with any impacted schools.

 MOE branding

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

CHANGES TO THE COVID-19 PROTECTION FRAMEWORK

23 March 2022

IN THIS BULLETIN ISSUE

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Orange

Green

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Implications for your employment processes

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FOREWORD

Tēnā koe i tēnei ahiahi,

This morning the Prime Minister announced changes to the COVID-19 Protection Framework which will take effect from 11.59pm this Friday 25 March, and to vaccine mandates and My Vaccine Pass, which will take effect from 11.59pm Monday 4 April.

These changes reflect the science and public health advice, and where New Zealand has moved to in our Omicron response.

Overall, we are now a highly vaccinated country. While cases remain high, the timing for change reflects that New Zealand is moving into a post-peak phase and our hospitalisations are anticipated to be in a similar position very soon.

New Zealand remains at Red. However, Cabinet will review the framework colour level on Monday 4 April.

We know that for some in your community, these changes may cause some angst. As the Prime Minister noted, everyone is safer as a result of New Zealand's COVID-19 response, but everyone is tired and fatigued.

We will continue to support you to have conversations with your community starting with further information below about how these changes will impact you.

The details of the changes will be confirmed through a Health Order. If there are any changes that occur through the Order we will update you through future bulletins.

In discussion with education sector representatives this morning, Minister Hipkins passed on a message of thanks to you. He noted how well you have adapted to the changes and challenge.

I echo this message. Thank you all for your continued focus on keeping children and young people engaged in learning and as safe as possible.

Ngā mihi maioha,
Iona

Overview of the key changes

The key changes are as follows.

COVID-19 Protection Framework, My Vaccine Pass and vaccination mandates

- The removal of vaccination mandates for education workers will take effect from 11.59pm Monday 4 April.
- On the same date, removal of the My Vaccine Pass from the COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic light system).

- There is no requirement to display QR code posters (although we encourage you to retain them) or have other processes, other than your regular processes, to support people to check-in. This system may need to return if case numbers rise.

Red

- There is no change to masks in education settings from the existing Red setting: Medical-grade masks remain a requirement for staff working indoors with children and young people in Years 4 to 13.
- For all New Zealanders, including in school settings, masks will not be required outdoors.
- Capacity limits will be removed for outdoor events and activities.
- Indoor capacity limits for extra-curricular activities increase to 200 people, or a maximum capacity based on the maximum number of people who could occupy the space if each person was one metre apart (whichever is lower).

Orange

- There is no change to masks in education settings from the existing Orange setting. Masks are strongly encouraged to be worn when indoors and are required for children aged 12 and over on school transport.
- As at Red, there will be no requirement to wear masks when outdoors.
- There will be no outdoor capacity limits.
- Indoor capacity limits are also removed. However, for non-curriculum related events and activities you are strongly encouraged to use allocated seating for large events (such as those with more than 500 people) or apply a maximum capacity limit based on the maximum number of people who could occupy the space if each person was one metre apart.

Green

- There will be no face mask requirements and no capacity or gathering limits in any setting, indoors or outdoors.

Guidance on mandatory vaccination requirements ending

From 11.59pm on Monday 4 April, all workers in early learning services, schools and kura will no longer be required to be vaccinated to work with children or students, or to work on site where children and young people might be present.

Volunteer workers will also no longer be required to be vaccinated.

Why this change has been made

High rates of vaccination are effective in keeping our tamariki in our schools and kura protected from COVID-19.

The vaccine mandates have been central in getting us to this point, but mandates need to be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain fit for purpose and are proportionate to the risks, as well as reflecting the other safety measures that are in place.

The Government's decision is based upon the assessment that the mandates are no longer appropriate given where New Zealand is at in our Omicron response.

Moving forward

Given this context, including that your workforce is highly vaccinated, your school will need to consider what work, if any, will continue to need to be undertaken by a vaccinated worker.

There may be some specific roles within a school where vaccination is needed to provide the greatest level of protection for those most vulnerable – an example of this may be where staff work in close contact with an immunocompromised child or young person. There may also be other work that, after careful consideration, your school board considers requires vaccination.

It is unlikely that many schools would determine through this risk assessment process that all workers (paid and unpaid) will need to be vaccinated. It is important that you work with your staff and their representatives when identifying health and safety risks and how these will be managed. Your community is likely to want to understand if vaccinations are required and, if so, why this is the case.

You can continue to ask workers about their vaccination status if you have a good reason to do so – for example, they are undertaking work which your health and safety assessment has identified requires vaccination as one of the measures to control these risks. However, as vaccination is personal information employees will no longer be required to disclose this to you.

Assessing whether roles should require vaccination

Further advice around assessing if specific work requires a vaccination is available from WorkSafe.

How to decide what work requires a vaccinated employee – WorkSafe

MBIE and WorkSafe are also updating their guidance to reflect the removal of vaccine mandates, to support your risk assessment process. We will provide that updated information to you as soon as it becomes available.

The risk assessment guidance we have provided can also support you to look at other measures outside of mandating vaccinations where you have identified some areas where your children, students and staff might be more vulnerable to severe illness from COVID-19.

Risk assessment and planning for COVID-19 – Te Mahau

Continuing to encourage and support vaccination in your community will certainly be one measure you can use to add to those other layers of protection, and we will work with the Ministry of Health to support you to do that.

Implications for your employment processes

The vaccine mandate removal has implications for your employment practices.

Once the mandatory vaccination requirements are removed, any employment processes which are underway because an employee is not vaccinated should cease.

If your school board is currently involved in such an employment process, please seek advice from NZSTA, Te Rūnanga Nui or your employment advisor.

We acknowledge that it will be a difficult period as we move away from the vaccination requirements.

To help with this we have provided answers to anticipated questions about the management of staff when vaccinations are no longer mandatory.

Further information and FAQs – Te Mahau

Other changes to the COVID-19 Protection Framework

My Vaccine Pass (MVP) requirements will be removed from the framework at 11.59pm Monday 4 April.

However, it may still be used by some businesses to allow only vaccinated people on premises (but only following a risk and health and safety assessment process).

Passes will be updated to reflect boosters and existing prohibitions from using My Vaccine Pass will continue to apply for education and other settings (for example, supermarkets, pharmacies).

Other more minor impacts for schools are primarily related to managing non-curriculum related events and activities under the different colour settings of the framework, such as capacity limit changes and revised mask requirements.

We will provide further information on these changes once the health order amendments are confirmed and Government advice is updated for businesses and services in regard to removal of the MVP from the framework.

 Bulletins COVID logo

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO

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FOREWORD

Ahiahī mārie,

This week we have entered the latest phase of Aotearoa New Zealand's response to COVID-19.

Although the new Red is a more simplified version than what we knew last week, it's a good time to remember that we are still in Red.

Although South Island numbers are continuing to climb, it is good to see the overall decline.

But with winter approaching, there is, however, potential for more pressure on the health system, not just from COVID-19, but from the flu and other diseases such as RSV and measles.

Please encourage your communities to get their boosters, to get flu vaccinations, and to make sure childhood immunisations such as MMR are up to date.

Kia maiea tō rā,

Iona

Changes to the COVID-19 Protection Framework

A reminder that although milder than Delta, Omicron is not a mild illness and we continue to see high daily case numbers. More than 800 people are currently in hospital with COVID-19.

As such, we remain at Red. All your existing layers of protection will need to stay in place.

The risk assessment guidance we have previously provided summarises the measures needed at each colour setting of the framework.

Risk assessment and planning – Te Mahau

You can use the guidance to determine whether, in your context, there are any other measures you may wish to use to mitigate risk for your community.

Guidance is expected this week from Employment New Zealand (MBIE) and Worksafe which will support you to review whether any roles in your school will require someone to be vaccinated. We'll let you know as soon as this information is available.

What the key changes are

The key changes to the COVID-19 Protection Framework impacting schools are:

- removal of My Vaccine Pass from the framework effective from 11.59pm Monday 4 April (see item below)
- and from 11.59pm last Friday 25 March:
 - removal of any outdoor capacity limits at all colours of the framework
 - increased capacity limits when indoors at Red, moving from 100 to 200 (but still allowing for one-metre spacing) and no capacity limits indoors at Orange and Green
 - no requirement to display QR codes at any setting (but be ready to use them again in the future)
 - no need to have alternate check-in systems for COVID-19 beyond your usual visitor register processes
 - no mask requirements when outdoors (but masks remain a requirement indoors for staff and children/students in Years 4-13 when at Red)
 - additionally, masks are strongly encouraged to be worn at Orange.

The information on our website has been updated to reflect the changes to the framework for Red, Orange and Green. This is also summarised in one document for ease of reference.

COVID-19 Protection Framework for schools and kura – Te Mahau

Letter template to support attendance

We have drafted a letter template to support your communications with your community, which can be edited to meet your needs.

Template letter: Update to parents and caregivers – English [DOCX, 21 KB]

Template letter: Update to parents and caregivers – te reo Māori [DOCX, 21 KB]

Webinar: Updating your health and safety assessment

This week we are holding three webinars alongside NZSTA to help you to update your kura or school's health and safety assessment.

The main purpose of this is to review whether any work in your school or kura requires someone to be vaccinated.

When are the webinars happening?

Webinars are happening on Thursday and Friday this week. Each webinar will be an hour long and will include a 40-minute presentation with additional time for questions.

Session one: 10-11am Thursday 31 March

Session two: 3.30-4.30pm Thursday 31 March

Session three: 12-1pm Friday 1 April

You can register for webinars by following the links:

Reviewing health and safety session one – [Eventbrite](#)

Reviewing health and safety session two – [Eventbrite](#)

Reviewing health and safety session three – [Eventbrite](#)

What will the webinars cover?

The webinars will cover the process for completing a health and safety assessment, questions that should be considered, resources available, and your Q&As.

There will also be opportunities in the webinar to ask questions about how this works in practice and what to do if you've determined whether a particular role needs to be done by vaccinated workers.

Please note, the sessions will not cover industrial relations issues and questions.

Further information

The webinar will also be recorded and made available on the NZSTA website.

NZEI Te Riu Roa and PPTA will also be present to help answer your health and safety questions.

As noted above, further guidance from Employment New Zealand and WorkSafe is also expected this week to further support you when considering if work requires vaccination.

Public health advice on indoor activities

As noted in our bulletin on 1 March, the advice from public health is that activities held indoors – especially those involving physical exertion, singing, or playing wind instruments – remain a higher risk for spread of COVID-19.

Important public health mitigations that remain – School Bulletin 1 March

While the preference is to hold these activities outdoors, we do understand there will be times when they need to be held indoors.

When that is the case:

- activities should be in well-ventilated spaces
- there should be at least one metre of space per person (to determine a capacity limit for the room) or ensure the total number of attendees does not exceed 200 (whichever of these two options is smaller)
- participants should be physically distanced by at least one metre where practicable, and at least two metres apart for singing and when using wind instruments.

Putting capacity limits in place will provide reasonable mitigations that will help reduce the risks of transmission and activities becoming super-spreader events.

We will further update the website content when the changes to remove the My Vaccine Pass from the framework and removal of the vaccine mandate for education workers have been made (which takes effect 11.59pm Monday 4 April).

Wearing masks when exercising

Students are not required to wear masks while participating in indoor sports (or other physically exerting activities).

Face masks for schools and kura at Red – Te Mahau

Participating in kapa haka in Red

Many of you have asked about curriculum-related kapa haka being held on school sites when at Red. We can confirm kapa haka activities can go ahead in Red.

We have updated our events and activities guidance on our website to include kapa haka.

Participating in kapa haka in Red – Te Mahau

A reminder that if you are off site, you will need to follow the requirements of the venue/provider in addition to implementing health measures.

Guidance regarding offsite providers still requiring My Vaccine Pass

We're aware that some offsite providers have continued to ask for evidence of vaccination from students who are attending their premises as part of a school-organised team or group.

Some may also choose to continue to ask for vaccine passes after Monday 4 April for their premises.

You will know that changes to the Health Order that took effect from 11.59pm Saturday 12 March should prevent students being asked for their vaccination status.

However, some providers may not be aware that the changes apply to their premises or may not be aware how to best apply the required changes to their existing systems.

The following information may assist your conversations with the provider.

If you need any further support with this matter, please get in touch with your regional Te Mahau contact.

COVID-19 Public Health Response (Protection Framework) Order 2021 – NZ Legislation

Information for providers

- If a provider has a My Vaccine Pass/vaccine mandate policy in place, they now need to treat all young people who are there as part of a school-organised team or group as vaccinated. They cannot require evidence of vaccination.
- This works in the same way as treating those under 12 years and 3 months as vaccinated.
- Your school is not permitted to share an individual's vaccine status because it is private information. (We have seen an example where the provider requested the names of the unvaccinated students.)
- If you need specific information to support your discussion, the COVID-19 Protection Framework Health Order notes:
 - a person in control of premises must not deny entry, on vaccination grounds, to a student participating in an extra-curricular or a curricular activity at the premises.

- premises includes any – (a) commercial premises or private premises (whether indoors or outdoors); and (b) premises owned or managed by central or local government (whether indoors or outdoors); and (c) vehicle
- a student participating in an extra-curricular or a curricular activity means a student who is enrolled in a registered school and is participating in an extra-curricular or curricular activity if –
 - (a) the activity is organised, directed, or facilitated by the school; or
 - (b) the student's participation in the activity is organised, directed, authorised, or facilitated by the school.

Additional measures you have in place

In addition to this, you can assure the provider that from a risk management perspective:

- secondary-aged students are a well-vaccinated group with over 92% of 12 to 17-year-olds having received two doses of the vaccine
- all your staff and volunteers are fully vaccinated (or the majority are, following 4 April changes)
- you have very good practices in place to minimise spread of COVID-19 including:
 - anyone feeling unwell will be asked to stay at home
 - all involved will monitor closely for symptoms
 - you will keep a physical distance from people you don't know and from other groups
 - students, staff and volunteers are reminded regularly about having good hand hygiene and their cough and sneeze etiquette
 - there will be a supply of hand sanitiser for teams and groups to use
 - you will be able to adhere to provider/venue mask requirements.

Please note, providers with a vaccine policy are within their rights to ask that unvaccinated students there for one purpose do not use other facilities at the same venue for a different purpose than the one the school has organised (for example, an offsite provider can ask that an unvaccinated student playing in a school basketball competition does not then use the pool facilities afterwards).

Department of Conservation facilities

The Department of Conservation (DOC) has contacted us to confirm they have updated their advice on their web pages and booking system in relation to their COVID-19 vaccine policy for DOC visitor facilities.

Their advice makes it clear that their policy is for users (of huts, lodges, campsites, visitor centres etc.) to be vaccinated, but that this does not apply to school students taking part in a school-organised or facilitated activity.

School transport: Vaccine mandate removal

The removal of the mandatory vaccine requirement for the education workforce also affects drivers of Ministry-funded school transport services.

From Tuesday 5 April there is no specified level of vaccination required by the Government for drivers of Ministry-funded school transport services.

However, the other COVID-19 prevention measures are still in place, such as:

- regular cleaning of vehicles
- mandatory wearing of masks for all those aged eight and over (or who are in Years 4 and over) on school transport
- ability for ākonga aged five and over to be vaccinated.

Update: Learning from shared experiences of COVID-19

Following on from our bulletin on 22 February, Steve Lindsey and Erika Ross have been identifying the leaders and influencers they will meet with to capture and share their stories and lessons learned during the pandemic.

Learning from shared experiences during the pandemic – School Bulletin 22 February

They will focus on the processes and reflections of leaders during the pandemic, including what influenced their decisions, major issues and how they addressed them, new opportunities or ways of working that emerged, and how they built up their agility and resilience during this time.

Their work will initially start in the Auckland region, with Steve and Erika contacting other regions after that. They'll develop a series of short stories which will initially be shared through these bulletins.

If you'd like to be involved, or know someone you think Steve or Erika should approach, please email stevelindsey400@gmail.com or erika.ross75@gmail.com.

New curriculum strategies launched

'Hei Raukura Mō te Mokopuna' and the 'Literacy & Communication and Maths Strategy' were launched on Friday by Associate Minister of Education Jan Tinetti.

New curriculum strategies released – Ministry of Education

Developed by Te Poutāhū | Curriculum Centre, these strategies pave the way for strengthening:

- te reo matatini and pāngarau in and through te reo Māori with Hei Raukura Mō te Mokopuna
- literacy and numeracy through the Literacy & Communication and Maths Strategy for English-medium settings.

The strategies will provide all tumuaki, teachers and kaiako with clear, evidence-informed guidance on effective literacy, communication and maths teaching and learning within the frameworks of our national curricula.

We will now work collaboratively with you to develop action plans for these strategies.

Kōpaki Ako: Rauemi for Māori-medium kaiako

We have just launched Kōpaki Ako, an online space where Māori-medium kaiako can access learning activities and resources to continue to support flexible delivery of learning programmes in and out of the classroom.

Kōpaki Ako – Kauwhata Reo

There are also links to support teaching in hybrid-learning environments.

The rauemi available in Kōpaki Ako targets learners in Years 1-3, 4-6, 7-8 and 9-10. They are designed flexibly to be used in the classroom and at home, with and without digital devices.

TESSOL further study awards

We are pleased to offer additional awards for further study in the Teaching English in Schools to Speakers of Other Languages (TESSOL) field.

TESSOL further study awards – Ministry of Education

These awards are targeted at teachers who:

- have successfully done the TESSOL scholarship funded courses of a New Zealand TESSOL qualification, but who have not completed it, or
- teachers who have completed a TESSOL qualification and wish to do further study.

Teachers in state and state-integrated schools and kura are invited to apply for an award to study at a graduate or postgraduate level.

Online applications for the awards are open until Sunday 22 May.

NCEA Change Programme: Quarterly update

2022 is another big year for the NCEA Change Programme. Around 400 schools and kura are taking part in the four pilots that we are conducting this school year.

If you'd like to read about our progress in delivering the seven main changes to strengthen NCEA and the resources that we are developing to help kaiako and school leaders prepare for the changes, you can read our newsletter.

NCEA Change Programme quarterly update – Mailchimp

For queries, please email ncea.review@education.govt.nz.

NCEA Education website: What do you think?

Let us know what you think of the NCEA Education website, the new home for NCEA.

NCEA Education teacher use survey – Ministry of Education

We'd like to hear from teachers and kaiako delivering NCEA subjects on how they are using the NCEA Education website. Your feedback will help us understand how effective the website is and identify areas for further improvement.

Feedback closes Friday 8 April.

For queries, email us at ncea.review@education.govt.nz.

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