

# Guidance to support fuel response planning - Phases 1 and 2



## Overview

This document supports education leaders to plan ahead, notice emerging fuel and transport pressures early, and have informed conversations within their communities. It is guidance only and does not set requirements or expectations. Not all considerations will be relevant to every education environment.

This document reflects current conditions at Phase 1 and is intended as a starting point. The Ministry will provide additional information and guidance if conditions change.

Early awareness, clear communication, and proportionate responses can help schools, kura and early learning services protect learning, wellbeing, and operations if challenges arise.

### **This document supports schools and early learning services to:**

- » **understand** potential impacts
- » **prepare** for early impacts
- » **implement readiness planning** using a structured template.

## Understanding potential impacts

Fuel and transport pressures may affect education environments in different ways, depending on local context and circumstances. In some communities, including rural areas where reliance on transport is higher or workforce flexibility may be more limited, impacts may be experienced earlier or more strongly.

Attendance and engagement remain priorities. Fuel disruption may also have wider implications for how learning is provided, beyond attendance alone. Schools, kura and early learning services may need to consider what is prioritised, what may be adapted, and what may be temporarily paused, with the strongest focus on protecting:

- » **safety and supervision**
- » **continuity of teaching and learning**
- » **vulnerable learners and wellbeing**

Education leaders are best placed to make these decisions. Local context, equity considerations, and proportionate responses will support effective decision making.

## Preparing for early impacts

Early awareness and proportionate preparation can help education leaders respond appropriately and maintain continuity of learning if fuel or transport pressures begin to emerge. Onsite attendance remains the priority.

Schools, kura and early learning services may find it helpful to pay attention to a small number of areas where impacts are likely to appear first, including:

- » **attendance and wellbeing**, such as changes in punctuality or unexplained absence,
- » **workforce and service resilience**, including reliever availability and travel-dependent roles
- » **operational cost pressures**, such as utilities, transport, or contracted services
- » **heating, fuel and facilities**, particularly heading into winter
- » **travel-dependent activities**, including EOTC, technology centres and organised sport

Clear communication with communities that attendance remains important, alongside active monitoring of conditions, helps reduce uncertainty and maintain engagement.

Where useful, this early readiness can be captured and documented using the planning template outlined in the next section.

# Implementing readiness planning

This section focuses on how education environments can plan for readiness, using the attached template to capture and organise their approach. The emphasis is on identifying where pressure points may emerge and being prepared to respond in proportionate ways, guided by local contexts and conditions.

## Using the planning template, education leaders are encouraged to:

- » **consider likely challenges** associated with rising fuel and transport costs for learners, whānau and staff
- » **reflect on potential impacts** on learning, engagement, and wellbeing, particularly for whānau or staff experiencing financial pressure
- » **identify and plan potential responses** that support attendance and continuity of learning
- » **clarify roles, responsibilities, actions and review points** so emerging issues can be identified and responded to early.

## Examples of actions that could be considered:

- » Promote or support **car-pooling** arrangements for staff and families
- » Establish or encourage **walking buses** or **park-and-walk** drop-off points
- » **Adjust scheduling** or routines to minimise the need for multiple trips during the day
- » **Communicate early with whānau** about transport challenges and available options.

The planning template supports local decision making and provides a structured starting point that education leaders can adapt to their circumstances. Not all sections will be relevant for every local context, and the template will be revisited or updated if conditions change.