Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Planning and preparing for emergencies

Practical information and guidance for schools and early childhood services

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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Introduction

Each year, children and young people across the world are severely affected by disasters. The type of harm experienced by children and young people will vary according to their age and their personal and social characteristics. Outcomes for children and young people depend on how well you have planned and prepared to keep them safe in an emergency event.

All schools and early childhood services must be prepared and know how to manage an emergency before it occurs. The way we prepare for an emergency event, helps us to get through and affects everyone's recovery and wellbeing.

This document provides practical guidance and information to help schools and early childhood services prepare for emergencies, evacuation, shelter in place, and lockdown situations. This guidance should be read alongside our Emergency Management Plan templates available on our website.

For schools:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

Also on our website, we have a guide to help with people's recovery after a sudden or disruptive event.
Responding to a traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

Responsibilities of school boards

Under the Education and Training Act 2020, one of the board's primary objectives in governing a school is to ensure that the school is a physically and emotionally safe place for all students and staff [Section 127(2)(c)].

Meeting this objective must be the responsibility of not just the board, but the health and safety committee, the principal and all staff. It is in the best interests of all students and staff for everyone to be aware of, and capable of responding to, incidents and emergencies.

This requires maintaining and updating key policies and documents – including the emergency plan. The Health and Safety at Work (General Risk and Workplace Management) Regulations 2016 sets out the duty to prepare, maintain and implement an emergency plan.

The emergency plan must include:

- an effective response to an emergency
- evacuation procedures
- procedures for notifying emergency service organisations at the earliest opportunity
- medical treatment and assistance procedures
- effective internal emergency communications procedures.

Relevant legislation:

Education and Training Act 2020 - 127 Objectives of boards in governing schools – New Zealand Legislation

Relevant regulation:

Health and Safety at Work (General Risk and Workplace Management) Regulations 2016 - 14 Duty to prepare, maintain, and implement emergency plan – New Zealand Legislation

Regulatory requirements for early childhood services

As an early childhood service provider, you are required to meet health and safety standards under the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008. You must take all reasonable steps to promote the good health and safety of children enrolled in the service and ensure that services are prepared for a range of emergencies (Regulation 46). The regulations cover health and safety, emergency preparedness, hazards and risk management.

Early childhood services licensing and certification criteria require an emergency plan to be in place, and supplies must be maintained, to ensure the care and safety of children and adults at the service.

Adults providing education and care must be familiar with relevant emergency drills and carry out each type of drill with children (as appropriate) on an, at least, 4-monthly basis.

The written emergency plan must include, at least:

- evacuation procedures that are specific to the service's premises and the types of emergencies that are relevant to its location and context. These procedures must be consistent with the building's fire evacuation scheme.
- designated assembly areas located outside the building that help keep children and adults safe from further risk
- a list of safety and emergency supplies and resources sufficient for the age and number of children and adults at the service and details of how these will be maintained and accessed in an emergency
- details of the roles and responsibilities of adults at the service that will apply during an emergency situation
- a communication plan for families and support services and evidence of reviewing the plan annually and implementation of improved practices as required.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, early childhood service providers have the same responsibilities as school boards as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). They are responsible for the health and safety of workers and that other people (children, whānau, volunteers and visitors) are not put at risk.

Relevant regulations:
Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 - 46 Health and safety practices standard: general – New Zealand Legislation
Relevant licensing and certification criteria:

Requirements for early childhood education and care centres - Ministry of Education

Requirements for home-based education and care services - Ministry of Education

Requirements for hospital-based education and care services - Ministry of Education

Requirements for Kōhanga Reo affiliated with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust - Ministry of Education

Requirements for playgroup certification - Ministry of Education

The Education Review Office provides guidance to support compliance with criteria on their website:

Licensing and regulatory requirements | ERO

Planning

Planning and preparation are essential to ensure you are ready to deal with an emergency.

Be ready to respond to emergency events that may happen in your location by developing plans, procedures and capability before an emergency happens.

Policies, plans and procedures need to ensure coordination, clarity of roles and responsibilities, including the role of emergency services and other agencies that support your school or early childhood service.

They should be known by everyone, practiced, and regularly reviewed.

To help you, we have emergency planning templates on our website.

For schools:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

Visit the Get Ready website for information about planning for specific hazards.

Get prepared – Get Ready (NZ Civil Defence)

Emergency management group

Have an emergency management group lead planning and preparedness activities for your school or early childhood service. The group will be responsible for:

- the systems/procedures to respond to events that require shelter-in-place (or similar), lockdown, building evacuation, relocation and family reunification.
- operationalising, practising and communicating plans to the community and emergency services.
- ensuring measures are taken to reduce the impacts of emergencies before they occur (e.g. earthquake proofing)
- ensuring communication systems share timely, accurate information to emergency services, staff, and families.
- regularly reviewing, updating and reflecting on the emergency management plan.

Planning considerations

How you plan or prepare for emergencies will vary depending on your unique circumstances. You will need to consider:

- your environment
- security needs
- how to support people with diverse needs
- what backup systems are required.

Environmental considerations

- **Location** – Consider how close you are to emergency services and evacuation centres, and your increased risk of certain emergencies happening. For example, a tsunami (if coastal) or a volcanic eruption. Are you located near any businesses that could cause additional issues in an emergency? For example, a fuel station or factory.
- **Building(s) and facilities** – The size of your building, number of floors and available exits and alternatives (e.g. stairs and elevators).
- **Staffing** – The size and capability of your staff and leadership team will shape how you decide what roles are required to respond to, and practice, emergency planning and procedures, and who does what. The ratio of adults to children will be a key factor in your planning in relation to supervision/assistance to evacuate.
- **Student/child population** – The number of students/children and their age, language proficiency and communications needs, and any additional support needed.

Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) resources

- **Hazard information & scenarios** – get your local CDEM Group's latest hazard assessments and likely scenarios to inform drills, relocation sites, and communications.
- **Planning integration** – incorporate relevant information from CDEM in your plan (e.g. welfare services, public information, evacuation, and recovery arrangements). Include contact roles and after-hours numbers.
- **Community links** – map nearby community assets (marae, halls, sport facilities) and agree mutual support (such as shelter and volunteer support) for extended events.

Go to the NEMA website to find your local CDEM Group.

Local civil defence groups – National Emergency Management Agency

Security considerations

Consider potential harm from individuals or groups of individuals when working on your emergency management plan.

Include how to respond to trespassers or attackers on your premises. See the Emergency Management Plan templates on our website.

For schools:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

Appendix 1 has guidance to support your planning for security-related events that may impact on your school or early childhood service.

Appendix 1 – protecting crowded places

Events planning

When planning events and other large-scale activities you will similarly need to plan for potential harm from individuals. It is good practice to establish 'suspicious activity' reporting procedures and mechanisms that support an effective and efficient incident response and future controls to mitigate acts of this nature.

Security systems and hardware

Regularly test and maintain all electronic security systems and security hardware to ensure they operate as designed. It is recommended that you do this once a term or every 3 or 4 months but check with your system provider for advice. You may want to include systems checks as part of your planned practice drills.

Digital security

It is suggested your emergency plan includes measures to prevent online harm, loss of data and ransomware attacks. Regularly conduct a survey of the publicly available information associated with your early childhood service or school and its facilities – any sensitive personal information identified should be removed.

Contact the Ministry of Education digital services team for support in the case of a cyber attack.

cyber.security@education.govt.nz

Supporting students/children with disabilities

Children with disabilities may be at greater risk during and immediately after emergencies and disasters if they are not considered in emergency preparedness planning and responses.

In an emergency, children with disabilities may face extra challenges. It is vital that you understand what their specific and diverse needs are, and how to address those needs. This may include considering how students may respond to:

- being part of large crowds during an evacuation
- being quiet during a lockdown
- following directions
- noise from sirens.

Individual plans may need to be developed and include things like an emergency kit, sensory items, picture words and schedules, medical needs/equipment and communication supports.

To help teachers be prepared, ensure they understand what is required to help the child(ren) in an emergency.

Assessing additional needs

- Conduct needs assessments and develop safety care plans for each student/child with a disability or high health needs. Do this with their family and teaching and administration staff.
- Assess additional requirements where there are young children who are totally dependent on adults for care and support. For example, under twos.
- Engage with students/children with disabilities or high health needs and involve them in planning, and any high-needs staff or volunteers.
- Add disability-specific procedures to emergency plans.
- Ensure every staff member is familiar with:
  - carrying out evacuation plans and attending to the specific needs of children and young people with disabilities or high health needs
  - asking people to identify and describe their needs and assistance requirements
  - avoiding interfering with a person's movement unless asked to do so or the nature of the emergency is such that absolute speed is the primary concern – if this is the case, tell the person what is needed and why
  - acting as protection for someone. For example, if evacuating by stairs, and the stairs are crowded.

Deaf/hard of hearing

- Consider alternative alert systems for students/children who are deaf/hard of hearing.
- You may need to assign a buddy to alert and communicate with them - have pen and paper in your evacuation equipment kit (for older children) in case the student gets separated from a teacher or friends who can sign.

Blind/low vision

- Assign a buddy to students with low vision to ensure they feel safe and can participate in emergency response and evacuation procedure.
- Be aware that service animals, like guide dogs, may become confused or disoriented in an emergency. Consider how this might impact their owner/student/staff/others.

Physical disability

- It might be difficult or impossible for the student or child to move during an earthquake. If they cannot safely get under a table:
  - immediately Drop, Cover and Hold and call out to the child, tell them to move near an inside wall of the building away from windows and tall items that can fall on them, and then Lock, Cover and Hold if they are in a wheelchair.
  - talk to them in a reassuring voice to help reduce panic and anxiety.

  - stay where you are until the shaking stops. Move with care when you go to check on the child as debris can cause injuries.

- Consider assigning a dedicated person/people to locate each child/student/staff member with mobility issues and help get them to a designated place in an evacuation/shelter in place/lockdown.
- Know their transport needs. If the student receives Special Education School Transport Assistance (SESTA), the transport provider can be contacted to arrange early pick-up and transport home.

For earthquake response messages for people with a physical disability or mobility impairment go to the NEMA website.
Response: What to do in an earthquake – National Emergency Management Agency

Asthma and respiratory problems

- Children/students may be more susceptible to dust, volcanic ash or the stress of an emergency. Close the windows and make sure there are dust masks and sufficient personal medicines available and that these are easily accessible.

Special food requirements

- Make sure there are sufficient stocks of foods to cater for the special dietary needs of your children/students (for example. infant formula or allergy requirements).

High health needs

- Schools and early childhood services should have a supply of any essential medication and/or dietary needs for any child with high health needs. The staff/school nurse should be trained to administer medications.
- Work with parents/caregivers/whānau to agree what will be needed in a range of emergency scenarios.
- Practise different scenarios so children/students are prepared.

Backup systems

Consider what backup systems you will need in the event of a power failure, cell phone tower outage or in rural settings where there is limited cell phone coverage.

Plan for loss of mains power, water, wastewater, and communications for at least 72 hours (and longer in major events).

Consider sanitation and hygiene, including emergency toilets, hand hygiene, and cleaning supplies. Identify greywater and wastewater contingencies.

Make sure that in an emergency, staff have access to information they need about children and students.

Have a backup system in place so that information is securely stored in more than one place in case records are damaged by fire, flood or unreachable following an earthquake. For example, regularly make hard copies of key information and class rolls and keep them secure in an accessible location.

Some schools and early childhood services have a 'Grab Bag' that holds key information on students and items they might need in an emergency.

Suggestions for backup systems

Communications

- Walkie talkie/2-way radio – and a supply of batteries.
- Air horns – to signal fire, lockdown or other emergency procedures.
- Fully charged mobile phones and/or power banks – stored in a known accessible location.
- Phone tree system – a clearly documented call chain showing who contacts who, with up-to-date phone numbers and key information.

Information storage

- Hard copy backup of digital files – including enrolment information, emergency and whānau contacts, medical/allergy plans and group/class lists.
- Primary schools need a backup hard copy of current class (room) lists. For secondary schools the backup hard copy will usually be lists of form-class groups.
- Consider using a system such as alphabetical folders with information and a photo of each child to be kept in the office in case of an emergency event. This could include carers' details.
- You could keep the emergency class rolls in a wall mounted plastic folder or you could use Velcro or Blu Tack. Keep them in a handy position in the classroom ready to pick up if you need to evacuate or give to the Police if some children are missing.

Practical emergency items

- Back-up batteries – for battery powered equipment and a supply of new batteries of varying sizes
- Portable first aid kits.
- Printed evacuation maps and emergency procedures.

What to include in your emergency management plan

The following section explores what could be included in a typical emergency plan.

The plan should include:

- Include the name of your school or early childhood service, including the physical address and contact details.
- a list of key contacts that includes the members of the Incident Management Team (IMT), who will manage the emergency procedures
- an overarching emergency response process including actions to be taken immediately and who is responsible for those actions
- emergency services contact and communication information
- role in a Civil Defence emergency (for example, is your school identified as a civil defence centre)
- evacuation procedures
- shelter in place and lockdown procedures (including access to supplies, medication, etc)
- what to do for specific emergencies e.g. fire, tsunami, pandemic
- information on how key resources will be accessed. That is, keys, site plans, medical kits, emergency supplies, contact information for staff, students/children and other key contacts
- medical treatment sites, medical equipment and storage and assistance procedures, for when someone on site is injured
- communication systems with staff, parents/families/whānau and the community
- reunification procedures
- testing of the emergency procedures like fire drills, including when testing will take place
- review of the emergency plan
- wellbeing considerations for children, students and staff.

We have an emergency management plan template on our website to help you develop your own emergency plan. This can be tailored to suit your needs.

For schools:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

Incident Management Team

An Incident Management Team (IMT) comes together in the event of an emergency to manage and coordinate an emergency response.

List the members of the IMT along with their roles, responsibilities and contact details in the emergency management plan.

Roles and responsibilities are usually determined by the principal or early childhood service provider in consultation with relevant staff.

The size of the IMT will be dependent on the size of your school or service and your staff. Identify those who can provide extra support such as local volunteers, board members or others following an emergency event.

The IMT's first action is to review and understand the emergency management plan and their roles and responsibilities in an emergency or incident. They should meet regularly in business-as-usual circumstances, to plan, review and remind themselves of their responsibilities during an emergency.

Emergencies can affect people differently and impact on decision making and problem solving, so it is important to identify appropriate people for key roles in the IMT. Members should be resilient and able to lead staff and students/children calmly through an emergency event. They should be appropriately skilled and feel prepared.

Training

Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) training is available for IMT members. Civil Defence has a free, online foundation course. CIMS describes how New Zealand agencies and organisations coordinate, command, and control an incident response, how the response can be structured, and the relationships between the respective CIMS functions and between the levels of response.

Online foundation course – Civil Defence

The Red Cross has information about psychological first aid and holds workshops that explore the short- and long-term impacts of disaster events on the lives and wellbeing of affected individuals and communities. Visit their website for more information.

Learn – New Zealand Red Cross

IMT key roles

This list of key roles is scalable depending on resources, the nature of the incident and the size and location of your school or early childhood service.

Role	Description
Incident Controller	Makes key decisions, has overall control and oversight of the emergency/incident and receives information from the IMT
Operations	Manages the procedures and processes relating to evacuation and liaises with emergency services. Tasks include: • directing response operations • ensuring the emergency management plan is implemented • initiating the communications plan with the Communications Manager • supervising operations at the emergency/incident • appointing/delegating actions to staff • recording actions/activities.
Logistics	Maintains facilities, services and materials. Tasks include: • planning for and identifying supplies and equipment (such as communications systems, food and water, medication, first aid, torches and other necessities), • ensuring sufficient phones and ability to handle incoming communications to media/sites, • securing the site (e.g. turning off mains water and power).
Planning/intelligence	Responsible for monitoring and future planning. Tasks include: • collecting and analysing information to inform/make future plans • liaising with emergency services, • management support, • advising what resources are required • making suggestions on what to reasonably expect and plan for • preparing an Incident Action Plan (how to move forward) • conducting planning meetings.
Communications	Coordinates the release of information and manages media enquiries. This role focuses on: • communicating with parents, families, whānau/caregivers • media liaison (i.e. establishing the policies and procedures needed to work with journalists and the media), • communicating with the Ministry of Education and other external groups.
Media (optional)	Responsible for speaking directly to the media. In smaller schools/centres, it is often the principal or manager who has this role. Larger schools could delegate this task to the board chair or staff with similar media responsibilities.
Additional Needs Liaison	Responsible for students/children/staff with additional or high health needs during an emergency event.

IMT member considerations

When considering who should be on the IMT, think about these questions:

- Who are the key people required to manage the emergency response? Identify their backups if they're sick or absent or cannot perform.
- What are the skills required to perform a role on the IMT?
- Who will communicate with emergency services, and other relevant agencies/media?
- Who are the key people required to keep the essential parts of the organisation running, including any key people and key systems (consider stand-alone vs multi service and involvement of the organisation as well)?
- What business continuity procedures are in place – Is there sufficient skilled backup for people if there is a high level of absence due to an incident such as a pandemic?
- Are there other people (including volunteers and retirees) who could be called upon if necessary? Is it possible to coordinate and communicate with them remotely?

Information management during an incident

During an emergency event, you may need to manage sensitive or private/personal information. Make sure you use this information in an appropriate way and continue to meet your obligations under the Privacy Act 2020.

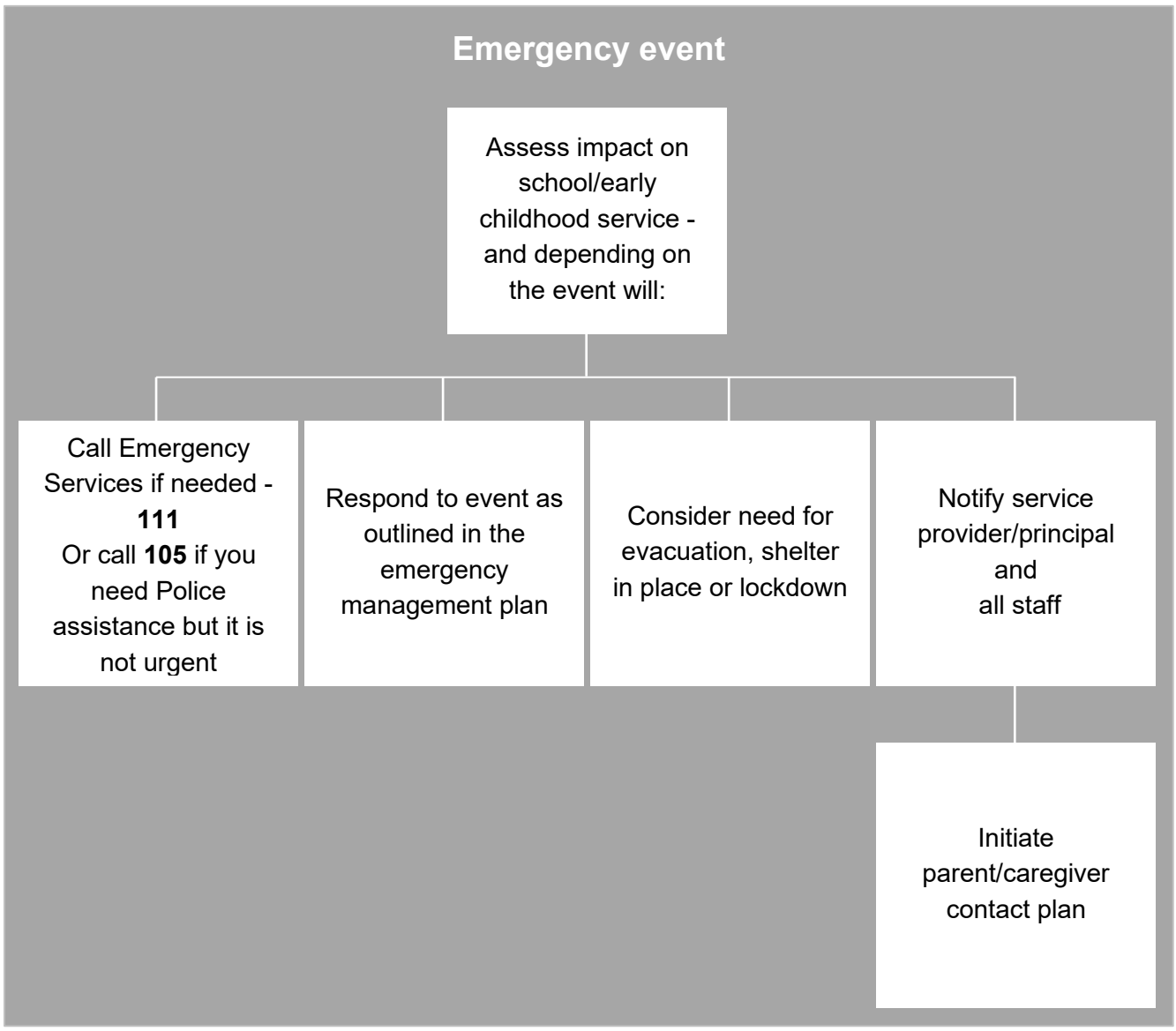
Go to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner's website to understand more about information management for the education sector.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner – Children's Privacy Guidance for the Education Sector

Basic emergency response process

While every event is unique, you can include in your plan an initial high-level process. There are some basic steps that can be followed when responding to emergencies.

Example emergency response process



Site map

Include a site map of your premises that shows the location of:

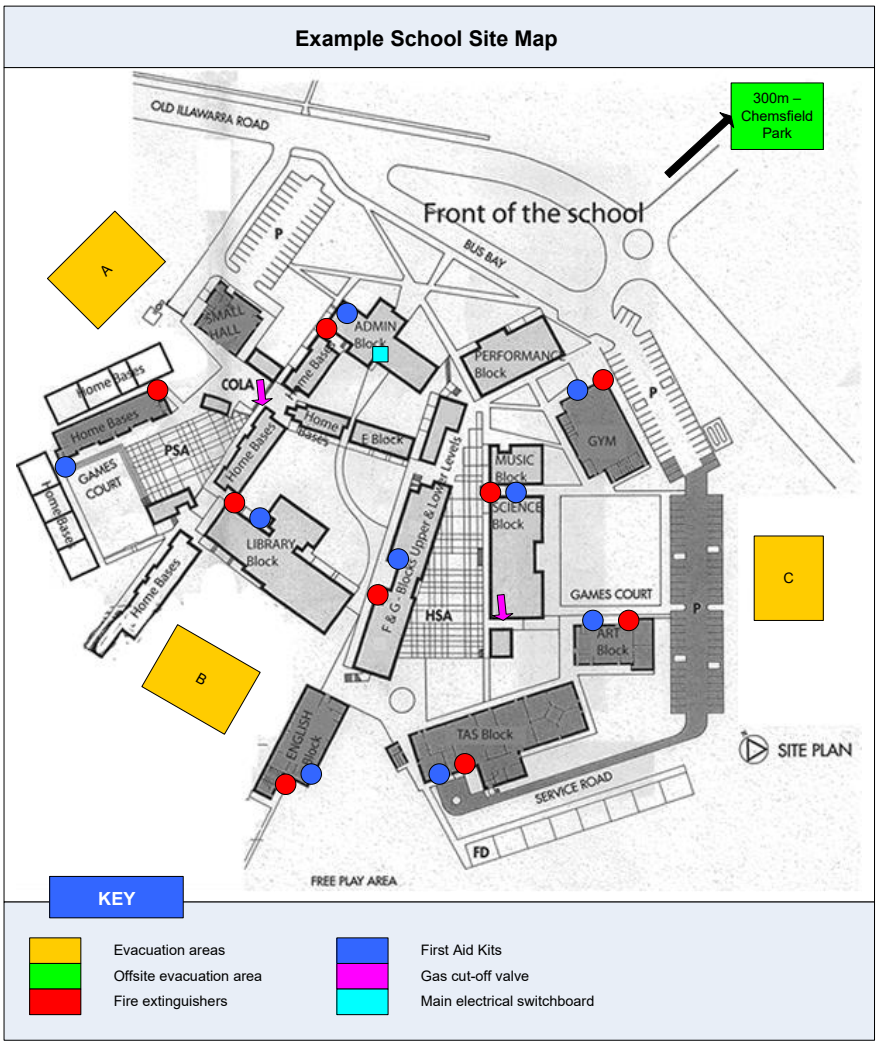
- onsite and offsite evacuation areas
- alarm panel
- access points to the property
- water mains and gas cutoff valves
- main electrical switchboard
- fire extinguishers
- first aid kits.

Share your site plan with Police before an emergency, so they can use it to get help to you faster in an emergency. Email your plan to the Police at:

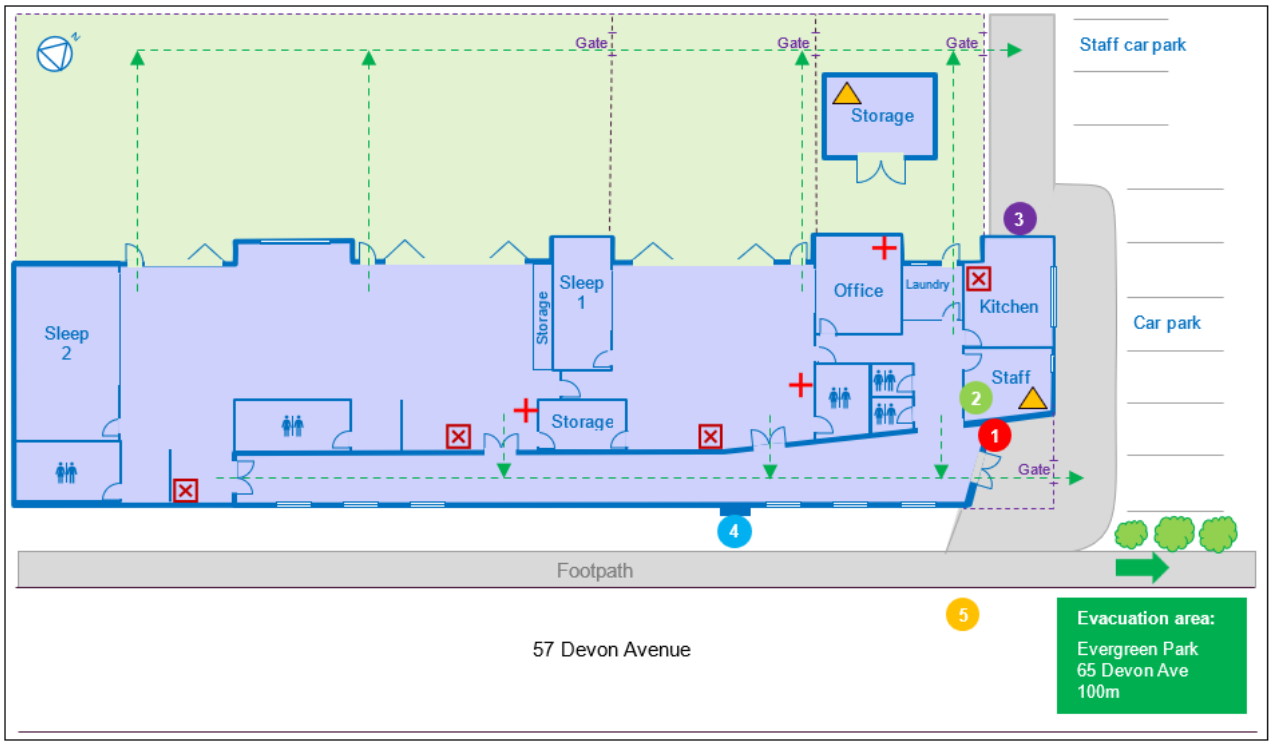
plans@police.govt.nz

Do **not** publish this map on your website.

School example map



Early childhood centre example map



1 Fire alarm panel

2 Power switchboard

3 Gas cut-off valve

4 Water mains

5 Fire hydrant

Fire extinguisher

First aid kit

Emergency supplies/Civil Defence kit

Evacuation routes

Evacuation area

Calendar

Have a calendar with the times and dates of when you plan to have drills and training, and details of meetings where emergency management is on the agenda.

Have details of what type of drills you will be practising.

Include dates you plan to share information about the emergency management plan with parents/caregivers and how you will do that. For example, an article in your newsletter for parents.

Example calendar – Schools

Add the date for planned activities and tick (✓) when completed.

Activity	Term 1	✓	Term 2	✓	Term 3	✓	Term 4	✓
Fire drill	10 Feb – 2.00 pm				29 July – 10.15 am			
Earthquake drill			5 May – 11.45 am				Coincide with ShakeOut	
Shelter in place/lockdown drill			7 May – lunchtime				12 Oct – 1.30 pm	
Other drill Eg Tsunami	2 Mar – 10.30 am							
Incident Management Team refresher	No later than 31 Jan							
Board standing agenda item	Monthly meeting [date]		Monthly meeting [date]		Monthly meeting [date]		Monthly meeting [date]	
Staff refresher training (eg regular item at staff meetings)								
Parent and caregiver updates and reminders	Orientation pack newsletter [date] web content updated [date]		**With newsletter [date] -** Reminder to update emergency contact details		**With newsletter [date] -** Update after practice drill		**With newsletter [date] /website -** Info about Shake Out drill. **With newsletter [date]** -Remind families and whānau to review their own emergency plans. Reminder to update emergency contact details.	

Example calendar – Early childhood services

Add the date for planned activities and tick (✓) when completed.

Note – Adults providing education and care are familiar with relevant emergency drills and carry out each type of drill with children at least every **four months.**

Activity	Jan - Feb	✓	Mar - April	✓	May - June	✓	July - Aug	✓	Sep - Oct	✓	Nov - Dec	✓
Fire drill	10 Feb – 2.00pm				8 June – 10.00am				4 Oct – 1.30pm			
Earthquake/ tsunami drill	18 Feb – 10.15am				17 June – 1.45pm				Oct to coincide with ShakeOut			
Shelter in place drill			16 Mar – 11.10am				15 July – 11.10am				8 Nov – 1.00pm	
Lockdown drill (staff only participating)			14 Mar – before/after opening hours				12 Jul – before/after opening hours				10 Nov – before/after opening hours	
[Other drill – e.g. volcanic eruption]												
[Other drill – e.g. gas leak]												
Staff refresher training (eg, regular item at staff meetings)					Emergency Mgmt training – [Provider, date and time]							
Parent and caregiver updates and reminders	Update contact details reminder in New Year newsletter				Include update about the fire drill in newsletter						Update contact details reminder in Christmas newsletter	

Your role in a civil defence emergency

Civil defence preparedness generally falls into:

- ensuring the safety of children and staff at your service before and during a civil defence emergency
- **where appropriate**, helping the wider local community during a civil defence emergency, as part of a response coordinated by the local territorial authority.

If your school or early childhood service has agreed to be identified as a Civil Defence Centre, note this in your emergency management plan. The local Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group will provide advice about:

- what you are required to do
- what equipment may be required and provided.

External contacts list

It is useful to have a list of external contacts and their contact details in your emergency plan.

Include contact details for:

- Local radio station – the radio station you would listen to for regular updates
- Emergency services – the emergency number (111), local emergency services like Civil Defence and medical services
- Essential agencies/services – include your local Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Education, CDEM group and other relevant agency contacts
- Essential utilities – e.g. power company, gas company, electrician and plumber
- Essential security – details about what security service you may use, alarm monitoring and who provides fire alarm/equipment maintenance
- Other – other contacts you may want to contact in an emergency e.g. bus company, insurance company, bank, local marae and local church.
- Local early childhood service and schools – other schools and services in your community that you can reach out to for assistance and support.

Safety and emergency supplies

Include details of your safety and emergency supplies.

- Where supplies and resources are stored – include locations on your site map
- How to access the supplies

  Include a list of supplies and resources appropriate and sufficient for the age and number of children and adults at your school or service. e.g. if you have infants you will need formula – consider how much you would need to cover at least 24 hours. Depending on your circumstances and location, e.g. remote locations, you may need to consider having enough supplies to cover at least 72 hours.

Plan how often you will check your safety and emergency supplies. Document this process and keep it on file.

Grab bags

If you have grab/go bags:

- note their locations
- how to access them
- how often they are updated and checked.

Communicating in an emergency

A communication plan helps identify who (i.e. stakeholders or services) needs to be contacted, how to contact them and the information that needs to be communicated to them. State Integrated schools will need to ensure they notify their proprietors as appropriate.

In an emergency affecting your school, early childhood service or community, consider:

- who you will need to contact
- how you will contact them
- when you will contact them
- what information they will need

To help stop misinformation or rumours spreading during an emergency, consider how you will ensure your messaging is clear and consistent.

Communicating with staff

Communication with staff is a critical part of managing the response to an emergency.

In addition to the alert signals to evacuate, lockdown and shelter in place, you will need a plan to keep staff up to date throughout the emergency.

Ensure you have communication systems in place and know who is responsible for staff communications.

Communication methods

Work out what communication methods work best for you and your staff.

- Intercom system
- Phone tree or group messaging systems/apps
- Text messages
- Email
- Social media channels
- Extra cell phones and who ensures they are charged and ready.

Communicating with students and children

During an emergency event, it is important to consider what you tell students and children. Consider how information is provided to ensure it is understood and you avoid causing unnecessary anxiety or concern.

This may require discussing potential scenarios in an age-appropriate manner with students and children prior to an event. (see the section on Sharing the contents of your emergency plan)

For schools

As part of your "phone away for the day" process, you may want to consider student mobile phone usage during an emergency event. Phone use may:

- alert an intruder to the location of students/children and staff in hiding
- overwhelm local communication networks
- expose children and students to distressing information relating to the event.

Communicating with parents/families/whānau

Have a plan to communicate with parents and caregivers during an emergency. Think about:

- who you will need to contact and what information they will need
- how you are going to get messages to them in a timely fashion
- who is responsible for managing the channels and sending out the communications
- how to access the messaging systems if you are not at your premises.

Content of messages

Consider the best messaging to send to parents/caregivers during different stages of an emergency. Develop some message templates that cover:

- what is happening.
- how are their children affected.
- what you are doing about it.
- when they can collect their child(ren)/initiating your reunification plan.

Example message templates

Initial alert (evacuation)

URGENT: We have evacuated the centre/school due to [reason]. All [children/students] and staff are safe. Please do not come to the centre/school at this time. Updates will follow via text.

Initial alert (lockdown/shelter in place)

URGENT: The centre/school is currently in lockdown due to [reason]. All [children/students] and staff are safe. Do not come to the centre until advised. We will send updates when possible.

Post-emergency update

The emergency has ended. All [children/students] and staff are safe. We will [remain open/close for the rest of the day]. Please collect your child [time or instructions].

Closure notice

Due to [event], the centre will be closed on [date]. We will inform you when we can reopen. Please stay safe and follow official Civil Defence advice.

Communication risks to consider

- Document school protocols about the use of cell phones and other devices in an emergency and make sure students know they are to advise their teacher if they have contacted their parents or caregivers. This is particularly important if the child/student is going to be collected by their parent or caregiver.
- Encourage students (and others) to avoid posting potentially misleading or incorrect messages on social media. This also reduces the load on the mobile network during emergencies.
- During an EOTC/excursion event, ask parents beforehand to provide the school or early childhood service with their contact details for that day, in case of an emergency.

Reuniting children/students with parents and caregivers

Prior to an emergency event parents and caregivers need to know that your school or early childhood service has a well-documented and practised reunification process. (see the section on reuniting students)

When you are sending parents and caregivers messages for them to come and collect their child(ren), reinforce the reunification process. This will help remind parents and caregivers what is required of them.

Communicating with families of international students

If you have international students, you may need to contact their families in the event of an emergency. Keep in mind there may be language barriers and you may need an interpreter. There is also likely to be media interest from New Zealand and overseas if an international student is involved.

- **Have a plan in place:** For each international student know next of kin and contact details, what language(s) they speak, insurance policy number, medications, host family contacts, guardianship.
- **Critical illness:** A staff member will need to accompany the student to hospital or while in care/hospital, and one for contact with hosts and parents overseas/to contact insurance/keep notes.
- **Interpreters:** Have a contact list of interpreters who can communicate with students and their families in their first language.
- **Students in hostel accommodation:** Identify students who can't return home in case of hostel closure and make alternative arrangements (through local care, billeting, hostel arrangements or agencies such as Oranga Tamariki).
- **Pastoral care:** Remind international students and their caregivers about responsibilities under the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016.

External communication

It is important to manage the content and flow of information to and from the school or early childhood service and the wider community throughout an emergency.

Informing and establishing links with your local community beforehand will mean these can be drawn on for support in the event of an emergency. By knowing what's going on in your community, you may be able to link with other services.

- **Local services**: Establish relationships with groups local services such as Civil Defence and Emergency Management, Police, Fire and your local ambulance service, Health New Zealand and Oranga Tamariki – they could help in the event of an incident or emergency.
- **Local emergency services**: Consider how you could work with local emergency services to plan and be prepared and share information about your emergency management plan.
- **Local support services**: Think about how groups such as Victim Support and Lifeline can support you, and how to access their support.
- **Other schools and early childhood services**: Contact other local schools or early childhood services to establish processes that could be used in an emergency including transport and shelter contingency plans. For example, you might agree to send regular update emails or urgent emails to your local schools or early childhood services with updates during an emergency event.
- **Local Iwi**: Establish/maintain a relationship with your local Iwi. Kaumatua or kuia may be able to provide support to your children/students following an incident.
- **Mental health agencies**: Establish relationships with community mental health and Māori mental health agencies for referrals of children and young people if needed.
- **Interpreter services**: Identify language or interpreter services within the community.
- **Community communications**: Identify who in the community should be notified in the case of an incident, for example, volunteers' families and other members of the community involved in your school or early childhood service.

Communicating with the Ministry of Education

Mataara 8707

The Ministry operates Mataara, an emergency contact system.

We use Mataara to connect with schools and early childhood services as quickly and simply as possible. We will text and email your emergency cell phone number and email address if there is an emergency in your area. If you wish to use this service, you should let us know if your contact details change at any time.

We send the first message and you can reply after the first message is received. You cannot initiate contact.

Messages will come from 8707 – a number only used by us. We recommend you save this number to your contacts list so that you know the messages are from us.

See more information on our website:

Additional support

In the event of an emergency, we can provide support via our local offices, the regional Director of Education, and trained staff who can provide additional support where required.

After a sudden and disruptive event, our traumatic incident teams work alongside you. Together, they will help you put processes in place for the safety and wellbeing of children and staff.

That includes returning to normal operations as much as possible so children and young people can be supported by the people they know and trust.

Emergencies and serious incidents at an early learning service – Ministry of Education

Respond at school to an emergency or traumatic incident - Ministry of Education

Emergency responses

In any emergency event, there is no 'one size fits all' response. There are many potential scenarios and circumstances where an event could occur. Having an emergency management plan in place that is prominent, practiced and regularly reviewed will support management and staff to make appropriate decisions at the time of an emergency event.

If you are on the same site as another school, early childhood service or business, ensure emergency response planning is coordinated with the other site users.

For early childhood services

For early childhood services, this section should be read in conjunction with licensing and certification criteria for fire evacuation schemes and emergency drills.

Relevant early childhood services criteria:

HS104-HS106 (Early childhood education and care centres)

HS204-HS205 (Home-based education and care services)

HS303-HS304 (Hospital-based education and care services)

HS4-HS8 (Kōhanga reo affiliated with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust)

HS2-HS4 (Playgroups)

The Education Review Office provides guidance to support compliance with criteria on their website:

Licensing and regulatory requirements | ERO

Alarms and signals to evacuate, lockdown or shelter in place

Consider these things when planning how to raise the alarm and signal an evacuation, lockdown or shelter in place.

- Do you have distinct alert signals or warning systems which can be heard both inside and outside, including, for example, the swimming pool and gymnasium?
- Is there one warning system for evacuating out of the building and another system for returning to or remaining in the building in a lockdown/shelter in place situation?
- In the case of an intruder/attacker it may not be appropriate to sound any type of alarm – how will you communicate with staff?
- How will you communicate with staff once everyone is inside? They will need to know whether it is a shelter in place or lockdown event and respond accordingly.
- Do staff members have cell phones to send and receive texts, if a trespasser or attacker is nearby and they are hiding?
- Do staff have access to email to send and receive messages from?
- Who has access to systems to support messaging with staff?

- How will you signal the end to a lockdown or shelter in place instruction?
- Consider turning off alarm bells to avoid confusion. You will need to ensure staff, children, students, or visitors do not assume the situation has been resolved when the automatic alarm stops ringing.

Evacuation

A range of events may require evacuating children, students, and staff from one location to another.

In an evacuation, ensure everyone in the building gets out and makes their way to a pre-arranged location. Have a backup location, in case the original location is unsuitable because of the nature of the event.

Consider what locations would be suitable or unsuitable for specific events. For example, the school gym may be unsuitable in a fire but an appropriate location if there's a chemical spill. The playground may be unsuitable for a tsunami or volcanic eruption but may be suitable if there is a fire.

If you do have to evacuate:

- know your evacuation routes
- take your emergency kit with you
- know which radio stations to listen to during an event for announcements and regular updates from your local emergency management officials (this is if there is no internet or mobile coverage available). In an emergency tune in to these stations - Radio New Zealand, The Hits, NewstalkZB, and MoreFM
- have a way to remotely identify where staff/students/children are, their cell phone numbers, etc
- have a way to remotely access social media/email/e-text systems to communicate directly with parents/caregivers and staff as may be required

Tsunami evacuation

Anyone near the coast who feels a long or strong earthquake should self-evacuate as soon as the shaking stops. Do not wait for an official warning.

- Move immediately to the nearest high ground or as far inland as you can, out of tsunami evacuation zones.
- Walk, run or cycle, if you can. This reduces the chances of getting stuck due to damaged roads or traffic congestion.

Find more information about tsunami preparedness on the Get Ready and NEMA websites.

Tsunami – Get Ready (NZ Civil Defence)
Readiness: Get prepared to respond to a tsunami – National Emergency Management Agency

Evacuation equipment kit

Have an evacuation equipment kit with useful items and equipment that you can easily grab and take with you during an evacuation.

When planning for an evacuation consider what might assist emergency services at the time of an emergency. For example:

- a master key/or information on how to gain access
- detailed floor plans of the site (showing entrances, windows, roof hatches and ventilation systems)

- the estimated number of staff, children and young people on site and their locations.

Planning for evacuations – key considerations

- contact emergency services and practise evacuations in consultation with appropriate services
- keep records of practice evacuations
- set up procedures for people to sign in or out, so you know who is on site
- have a system in place for issuing visitors with identification badges (and a system for their return)
- have signs that direct visitors to the school or early childhood service entrance points
- determine safety/danger alarm signals
- ensure plans for children/students with additional or high health needs have been considered
- develop a site plan and liaise locally with police about information they may require.

Relocation

Evaluate other facilities that you could use in the event of an evacuation and/or not being able to return to your school or early childhood service. Include options for sites you could relocate to that could be repurposed into teaching spaces. For example:

- gymnasium
- church
- marae
- nearby schools or early childhood services
- community hall
- community centres.

When assessing your relocation/re-purposing options, include how you will transport everyone there on the day of the emergency and afterwards. Also consider important equipment that you will need to make it a practical venue. For example, equipment, medication, food and water supplies, first aid and other basics.

For early childhood services

Early childhood services will need to apply to the Education Review office to temporarily relocate.

Contact ERO:
Email: Enforcement@ero.govt.nz
Please include the service name and number in your email.
Call ERO at: 0800 376 800

Have a plan to communicate this alternative facility to necessary staff and community, transport providers and other relevant services like the local fire brigade and Police. Police will need to update a tool they use called Realtime Intelligence for Operational Deployment (RIOD). This helps them to respond to your school quickly if needed.

Shelter in place and lockdown

A shelter in place or lockdown instruction can help prevent harm when a serious threat arises. When activated, children, students, staff, volunteers and visitors must quickly move inside the facility and remain there for safety.

The difference between shelter in place and lockdown is:

- **Shelter in place** – issued when the threat is external and not directed at your school/centre. For example, if there is a swarm of wasps, toxic smoke, chemical spill, or a threat from an offender nearby
- **Lockdown** – issued when the threat is directly related to your school/centre. For example, an attacker on your property/grounds.

Initiating a shelter in place or lockdown

Instructions to shelter in place or lockdown may be initiated by:

- the New Zealand Police
- the school principal or delegate
- the early childhood service manager or person responsible
- other emergency services
- the Ministry of Education (at the direction of the Police or other emergency service).

Once initiated, staff should activate their emergency management plan, alerting everyone on site of the situation, including visitors and contractors. If parents and caregivers are also onsite, they will be required to follow staff instructions.

You must ensure everyone moves to and remains at the required location until the further notice. This may include locking/securing doors/entrances and not using the bathroom unless it is deemed safe, and the child is accompanied by an adult.

The Ministry may also be asked by the Police or other emergency services to direct schools and early childhood services to lockdown and will provide further information as soon as it becomes available.

If you have limited information at the time you are advised of an incident/event, implementing a lockdown is advised until you get further information from the Police or other emergency services.

On receipt of further information and where appropriate, you could choose to move to a shelter in place response which could allow for the controlled movement of staff, students and children to their usual classrooms and continue with usual inside activities where possible.

Lifting a shelter in place or lockdown

Who lifts the shelter in place or lockdown depends on who initiated the shelter in place or lockdown.

If you made the decision to shelter in place or lockdown, you would lift the directive yourself.

If the Police initiated the shelter in place or lockdown, they would provide advice on lifting the shelter in place or lockdown directive through the principal or early childhood service manager directly or through the Ministry of Education.

Once the directive has been lifted, follow the steps set out in your emergency management plan.

Shelter in place and lockdown equipment

Consider the following when planning for a shelter in place or lockdown directive.

- Are school building, classroom, or early childhood service doors lockable and who can lock them?
- Can contact be made quickly across campus, including external buildings off the main building site, e.g. Teen Parent Units, Health Schools?
- Can ventilation and air conditioning systems be quickly shut down?
- Is each classroom equipped with an emergency lockdown kit?
- Managing the toileting needs of children/students.
- Having a supply of containers/lunch boxes that could be kept in the classroom with water, muesli bars and other age-appropriate food items.
- Access to medications (for example, inhaler or EpiPen).
- Keeping blankets and supplies accessible to the classroom/block of classrooms.
- Having a supply of games, cards in the classroom to keep students/children occupied.

Escape. Hide. Tell.

An attacker on your premises may require a combination of responses.

Escape - If you see a safe way out leave the area immediately.

- Move quickly and quietly away from danger if it is safe to do so.
- Take your mobile phone with you if you can, but do not go back to get it if it puts you in danger.
- Leave other belongings behind.
- Encourage others to go with you, but don't let their hesitation slow you down.

If you cannot escape completely…

Hide - stay out of sight

- Silence your mobile phone.
- Secure your environment by locking doors and windows and barricading entries where possible.
- Stay away from doors and be as quiet and still as possible so you do not give away your hiding place.
- Note any potential exit points.

As soon as it is safe to do so…

Tell - police by calling 111 when it is safe.

The more information you can give about your location, surroundings, the attackers and the events that have occurred, the better.

More information and resources are available on the Police website.

Know what to do: Escape. Hide. Tell – New Zealand Police

Escape. Hide. Tell. – things to consider

- Depending on the size of your site/campus, and the ages and capability of your children and young people, can some groups move away from potential harm (escape)?
- What messaging can be used to signal some groups could escape? Consider a verbal warning system directing people away from the area where the danger is. For example, at a secondary school “intruder in C block… move away from this area.”
- Do staff members know how to silence their phones if they are hiding and know to direct others with phones to put them on silent mode?

Protecting our crowded places from attack

See Appendix 1 for more guidance to support your planning for security-related events including trespassers and attackers.

The guidance has been developed with NZ Police and aligns with the New Zealand strategy for crowded places. Protecting Our Crowded Places from Attack: New Zealand’s Strategy guides owners and operators (school boards and early childhood service providers) to protect the lives of people working in, using, and visiting their crowded place.

Protecting Our Crowded Places from Attack: New Zealand’s Strategy - NZ Police

Procedures for different types of emergencies

Identify possible types of emergencies including potential environmental risks.

Have a clear procedure for each type of emergency you identify. They could include:

- fire
- earthquake
- tsunami
- flooding
- storms
- landslides
- volcanic eruption and ashfall
- wildfires
- space weather (power cuts)
- pandemic
- gas leak
- chemical spill
- suspicious letters and packages
- bomb threats
- trespassers
- attacker on site
- serious injury or death
- missing child or student

Add procedures for other emergency situations that may happen in your location.

See our Emergency Management Plan templates on our website to assist you with this process.

For schools:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:
Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

Transport management

Transport management involves the development and coordination of procedures that support bus safety, traffic flow, emergency and public access before, during and/or following an emergency. This may involve contact with external groups such as the local Police, Fire Brigade, Ambulance Service, Victim Support or Civil Defence, as well as other community groups.

For schools	For early childhood services
For schools and students that receive Ministry contracted services, transport providers may have one generic emergency management plan that is focused on its operations but adjusted for local service runs and school services. Liaise with your transport provider to familiarise yourself with each plan. Schools and the Ministry are responsible for supporting transport operators to respond to and manage emergencies. School emergency response plans should include transport operator plans and take account of Police and NZ Transport Agency investigation processes.	If your early childhood service provides private transport to and from your service, you will need to consider how to manage transport during or following an emergency. You will need to consult with parents about how to proceed during or following an emergency.

Transport management considerations

Everyday vehicle access and parking

- Assign staff to parking areas during arrival and dismissal times.
- Develop appropriate signs and messages regarding visitor parking.

Vehicle fleets/bus transport

- Establish and use a vehicle identification system.
- Maintain contact details for your local fleet operators. Note if they can operate outside of usual hours.
- Conduct regular safety checks of vehicles owned by your school or early childhood service.
- Maintain systems for checking everyone on and off transport.
- Maintain passenger lists on site and on transport.
- Have route descriptions for all bus routes (including field trip routes) – have hard copies available.
- Consider what other routes or roads could be used to get your students/children to school/early childhood service or home safely in the event of a storm, flooding, road closure, police cordons.
- Consider whether permission to private roads/land is required
- Require staff (and for schools, students) to carry identification with them on field trips.

Emergency services vehicles

- Provide clear ways for emergency vehicle access. Keep entrance/exit areas and driveways free.
- Locate emergency landing sites for rescue helicopters, if needed.
- Consult with your local police and fire brigade to support traffic management plans.

Responding to a vehicle fleet/bus transport incident

In the event of a crash or incident involving a transport provider's vehicle(s), the transport provider is responsible for contacting emergency services.

The transport provider must follow their own emergency procedures.

They must also contact:

- bus controllers at the schools serviced by the route
- contact the regional Ministry of Education transport contract manager.

The bus controller will contact principals at any affected schools.

The Police notify caregivers or next of kin where there has been serious injury or death as soon as possible.

For children/students with less serious injuries, the early childhood service manager, principal or bus controller immediately notifies their parents or caregivers.

Consider using your emergency communications plan to update parents and caregivers about the situation.

There are several steps for parties to undertake following the incident. See our website for more information about reporting requirements.

Reporting accidents and incidents on school transport – Ministry of Education

The principal or service provider will need to bring together the Incident Management Team of the school or early childhood service to help as needed.

Education outside the classroom and excursions

Education outside the classroom (EOTC) and excursions are curriculum-based learning and teaching that happens outside of your premises.

You can prepare to respond to an emergency during an EOTC event by planning ahead and preparing for significant, foreseeable risks. You will need to ensure you have appropriately trained, qualified and competent personnel attending. Emergency plans should include:

- specific incident management plans for each identified risk associated with an EOTC activity
- incident recording, reporting and analysis procedures
- a school/early childhood service-wide emergency response plan that includes a communication plan. For example, if an emergency occurs on your premises during the EOTC you need to know how to communicate to those attending the EOTC and stop them from returning to the school/service.

For more information on planning for emergencies for EOTC go to the Education Outdoors NZ website:

EOTC Guidelines – Education Outdoors New Zealand

To keep up to date with current good practice for EOTC ensure your school's EOTC co-ordinator is registered on the EOTC network database.

EOTC Coordinator Network – Education Outdoors New Zealand

For early childhood services

Early childhood services may take children on excursions. You are required to:

- undertake risk assessment and management planning
- ensure ratios are not less than the required adult:child ratio
- get prior written approval from parents:
  - for their child to attend
  - the proposed adult:child ratio
  - location
  - method of travel
- have systems in place so adults can communicate with others as necessary
- ensure first aid requirements are met
- have approval from the person responsible
- keep documentation of the excursion.

Relevant early childhood services criteria:

HS113 Excursions (Early childhood education and care centres)

HS210 Excursions (Home-based education and care services)

HS306 Excursions (Hospital-based education and care services)

HS17 Excursions (Kōhanga reo affiliated with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust)

The Education Review Office provides guidance to support compliance with criteria on their website:

Licensing and regulatory requirements | ERO

Extracurricular activities

Similar considerations apply to activities outside of usual school or service hours, such as music, art or drama classes both on-site and off-site. These situations should be planned for alongside EOTC and excursions.

You should have confidence that others using the site, for example after school programmes, have been inducted into your health, safety and security systems and have appropriate plans in place should an emergency arise.

Reuniting children/students with families

After an emergency, you will need a process to reunited children and young people with their parents/caregivers/whānau.

Collection process

Each child or young person can only be released to the parent or usual caregiver, or someone identified/approved by the parent or usual caregiver.

For early childhood services

For early childhood services, the person collecting the child must be either the person providing day-to-day care or be authorised in writing.

Relevant Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008

58 Collection of children from centres and home-based education and care services – New Zealand Legislation

- You will need a system to record who has taken the child and evidence that the parent/guardian has given authority for the adult to pick up the child.
- Consider organising children and young people into class groups and moving them to an assigned area before they are picked up. Thinking about how they can be picked up by parents and caregivers, consider vehicle parking, access and location constraints and how to minimise any further disruption.

For this to work, everyone needs to know the process and where the evacuation and reunification points are.

Consider testing the reunification process during your emergency plan testing.

Additional authorised people

You may want to record up to 10 people who are pre-authorised to collect each child. These can include people who are not immediate family, like a neighbour or close friend.

Following the Christchurch earthquakes, it was very difficult for parents to get to the school or early childhood service quickly and easily. Practices changed so that other adults who lived or worked nearby were added to the list of authorised people.

If a child cannot be safely collected

If for whatever reason, a child cannot be safely collected, the school or early childhood service will need to take responsibility for their care until appropriate arrangements are put in place.

In a civil defence emergency, any child or young person who cannot be reunited with their parent/usual caregiver or approved emergency contact within a reasonable time will need to be registered as unaccompanied and the school/early childhood service, along with Police and/or Oranga Tamariki, will determine a plan to care for that child or young person.

When a reunification process is not needed

A school may make the decision that it is appropriate and safe for a student to make their own way home following an event or may do so following contact with a parent or caregiver.

You will need to ensure the student has appropriate support at home following an emergency event and they have a safe route home. For example, in heavy rain events, it may not be safe for the student to travel home as roads and paths may be flooded and transport cancelled.

Also consider if the student is going to an empty home. They may be safer remaining at school until a parent or caregiver will be home to support them or can collect them from school.

Testing your plan

Testing your emergency plan is important. It allows you and your team to assess, check and understand your emergency management plan and procedures and see if they work as expected.

Testing your plan might involve carrying out a drill or readiness check. A typical example is a fire, earthquake, lockdown, or shelter in place drill. Consider holding drills on different days of the week and at different times of the day.

Routine practise and review of emergency procedures will help you determine how well they work and identify any gaps and necessary changes.

If you share your facilities or grounds with others, ensure your planning is aligned. Do others who regularly use your premises, like after school programmes, conduct drills and/or readiness checks?

Practise drills

Drills and scenario testing can provide the opportunity to validate/test your emergency plan and help:

- develop the capability of your Incident Management Team
- staff and students learn what to do in an emergency and about the importance of a quick response.

It is a legal requirement for fire evacuation drills to be carried out in accordance with the premises' Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) approved evacuation scheme. You are encouraged to do other practice drills that are appropriate for your risk environment.

Fire evacuation procedures for schools | New Zealand School Property Agency

Follow the licensing criteria requirements relating to evacuation schemes for your service type.

Licensing and regulatory requirements | ERO

You are encouraged to do other practice drills that are appropriate for your risk environment.

For early childhood services

To meet licensing and certification criteria requirements, adults providing education and care need to be familiar with relevant emergency situations for their location and carry out drills with children (as appropriate). Drills need to be carried out at least once every 4 months and align with your emergency plan.

Relevant drills could be fire evacuation, earthquake, shelter in place and tsunami, as outlined in your procedure depending on your location.

There may be some overlap between different drills, so you can count procedures from 1 drill as counting towards another in some situations. For example, if elements of multiple drills hold the same risks. Clearly record if you count some procedures for multiple drills.

Use this information to help you with the annual review of the service's emergency plan.

You must keep a record of the emergency drills carried out:

- the time and date of each drill
- the specific drill carried out
- the duration of the drill
- who participated in the drill, including children
- any issues you encountered
- positive and negative outcomes during and after the drill
- an assessment about how effective the drill was, areas for improvement.

Early childhood services licencing criteria:

HS106 Emergency drills (Early childhood education and care centres)

HS205 Emergency drills (Home-based education and care services)

HS304 Emergency drills (Hospital-based education and care services)

HS8 Emergency drills (Kōhanga reo affiliated with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust)

HS4 Emergency drills (Playgroups)

The Education Review Office provides guidance to support compliance with criteria on their website:

Licensing and regulatory requirements | ERO

Try to do drills and other practice-type events for a range of scenarios and at different times. For example, class time, lunchtime or at assembly. Ideas and guidance on simulation and practice activities are available on the Get Ready website.

Get Ready (Emergency preparedness in New Zealand) – NZ Civil Defence

New Zealand ShakeOut

Civil Defence organises ShakeOut, New Zealand's national earthquake drill and tsunami hīkoi (evacuation walk) every year. To register your school, or to be notified when this year's drill will be, visit the Get Ready website.

GetReady.govt.nz

ShakeOut takes place across the world to remind people of the right action to take during an earthquake. You can start the drill in whatever way works for your school or early childhood centre. It is a self-run drill, all you need to do is Drop, Cover and Hold for 60 seconds and practice your evacuation if you are in a tsunami evacuation zone.

There are resources and guidance available on the Get Ready website to help schools and early childhood centres run their own shakeout drill.

How to ShakeOut – NZ Civil Defence

Lockdown and shelter in place drills

For schools	For early childhood services
Drills for lockdown/shelter in place should be practiced with students present. To minimise anxiety in students, all practice drills should be explained, and scenarios used should be age appropriate. For example, a bee swarm or chemical spill.	Children should participate in all drills, except lockdown drills. To prevent distress, confusion or fear in young children, you are expected to hold lockdown drills without the children present.

For safety planning, New Zealand Police advise that schools and early child services should have more detailed/realistic drills without students present.

Debriefing

Following your practice drill or an actual event, you will need to debrief and evaluate the effectiveness of your emergency management plan.

In a debriefing session discuss:

- what worked well
- what did not work well
- assess the effectiveness of people's roles and actions
- are the documented procedures fit for purpose and reflect what happens in real life.

Post-incident evaluation has been found to work well when it is led or coordinated by people not directly involved in the incident. You could involve the Police to help you assess, and if involved, invite Ministry of Education Traumatic Incident Team members to participate.

Communicate key findings of the debrief to your staff, board, service providers, and community. Include any resulting changes to your plans and procedures that will impact future emergency management.

Training

Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) training may also be useful for your Incident Management Team, with a free foundation course available online through Civil Defence.

Free foundation course – Civil Defence

Ministry traumatic incident coordinators and experienced traumatic incident staff can provide incident management training to schools and early childhood services if requested (contact your local Ministry office).

Sharing the contents of your emergency management plan

Ensure that all staff, parents/caregivers, children and visitors know what to do in an emergency. Share what is in your emergency management plan.

Staff

Your staff need to know what is in the emergency plan and what to do in an emergency.

- Inductions should include what is in the emergency management plan and clarify staff roles and responsibilities.
- Put emergency planning on the agenda of regular meetings.
- Have regular drills to help staff and children understand and be prepared for emergencies.
- Debrief/update staff after a drill.

Children and young people

- Discuss potential scenarios in an age-appropriate manner with students and children prior to an event.
- Teach your students/children about emergency preparedness – the Get Ready website has some resources to help you.
- Use your regular drills as teaching opportunities – see the Get Ready website for ideas.
- Consult with students when reviewing and updating your emergency plan.

Get your school ready for an emergency – Get Ready (NZ Civil Defence)

Parents and caregivers

Make sure parents and caregivers know you are prepared. Let them know:

- how you will communicate with them if there is an emergency (e.g. text, social media, email or phone calls etc)
- what to expect in an emergency (and after an emergency event)
- what your evacuation, lockdown and shelter in place procedures are
- the outcomes of drills and any changes to emergency procedures.

Use a range of methods to communication with parents/caregivers/whānau. Each household will likely have access to different services.

Consider:

- encouraging parents/caregivers to create their own family emergency plan, including who and how to pick up their child(ren) in an emergency.

- a beginning of year information pack/newsletter sent to all parents and caregivers.
- sending a specific ‘Emergency Management Information for parents and caregivers’ newsletter out quarterly, including a reminder to update their emergency contact information and who is approved to collect their child after an emergency.
- using your social media channels.
- having an information night at the start of the year.

Consult with staff, parents/caregivers when making changes to your emergency plan.

Visitors

Let visitors know what to do during an emergency.

- When they sign in make sure they are aware of what to do in an emergency and they must follow the direction of wardens, etc.
- Have emergency signage and information displayed throughout your premises.

Police

Share your emergency plan, including the site plan, with Police so they can use it to get help to you faster in an emergency. Email your plan to the Police at plans@police.govt.nz.

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Support and resources

Further planning support is available from:

- Ministry of Education: Traumatic Incident Team, cyber security and digital services team.

  Regional offices – Ministry of Education
- New Zealand Police

  Find Police stations by map – New Zealand Police
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand

  Contact us – Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- National Emergency Management Agency and Civil Defence NZ

  Contact Us – National Emergency Management Agency
- your local council.

  Council websites - LGNZ

Helpful resources

Ministry of Education

On our website we have an emergency management plan template to help you start your planning process.

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident (schools) – Ministry of Education

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

We also have guidance for responding to a traumatic incident.

Respond at school to an emergency or traumatic incident – Ministry of Education

See our web content on cyber security and digital support.

Cyber security and digital support for kura and schools programme – Ministry of Education

Cyber security in early learning – Ministry of Education

National Cyber Security Centre

The National Cyber Security Centre is New Zealand's Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT NZ). They have information about strengthening cyber security and advice for reporting cyber security incidents.

Welcome to the National Cyber Security Centre – National Cyber Security Centre

Civil Defence

The Get Ready website from Civil Defence has information to help you prepare for an emergency.

Get your school ready for an emergency – NZ Civil Defence

What's the Plan, Stan? is a resource to support schools, teachers and students to develop the knowledge and skills to prepare for natural hazard emergency events.

What's the Plan, Stan? – NZ Civil Defence

The National Emergency Management Agency has nationally consistent messages about preparing, responding and recovering from civil defence emergencies. This may be helpful when putting together emergency plans and communicating to the wider school community.

Consistent Messages for CDEM – National Emergency Management Agency

Information for parents and caregivers.

Get your household ready for an emergency – Get Ready (NZ Civil Defence) – Emergency preparedness in New Zealand

Find your local Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group.

Local civil defence groups – National Emergency Management Agency

Red Cross

The Red Cross website has practical information to help you care for yourself and others after disasters and emergencies.

Caring for yourself and others – New Zealand Red Cross

They hold workshops that explore the short- and long-term impacts of disaster events on the lives and wellbeing of affected individuals and communities. Visit their website for more information.

Learn – New Zealand Red Cross

The Red Cross have also published guidance to help you develop a psychosocial support framework – a roadmap to help people feel safe, connected, and capable of managing their lives again.

Psychosocial support framework – Red Cross New Zealand PDF | 7.28 MB

Example checklist - planning and preparation

Checklist to help you prepare for an emergency	Yes	No
1. Our emergency management plan is up to date and has been reviewed within the last 3 years.		
2. We have selected an Incident Management Team (IMT) and assigned key roles to staff.		
3. Our Incident Management Team have had training. They understand their roles and have undertaken drills and practise scenarios.		
4. We have a communication plan that identifies who we need to communicate with and how.		
5. An emergency reunification procedure to reunite children and students with their families has been developed.		
6. Transport management is included in our plan.		
7. We assess our school or early childhood service environment on a regular basis to identify and assess new risks.		
8. We have backup systems/hard copies of important information securely stored in more than one place in case of damage in an emergency.		
9. We have emergency response warning systems to alert everyone when evacuation, lockdown or shelter in place is required.		
10. We have considered what is required for people with additional needs.		
11. Our evacuation equipment kit is up to date and readily accessible.		
12. We are carrying out practice drills appropriate for our risk environment on a regular basis.		
13. We have a reasonable and appropriate amount of food/water/medicine in our emergency supplies.		
14. We have assessed the effectiveness of our procedures.		
15. Emergency preparedness, along with health and safety are standing agenda items at meetings.		

Example procedure - lockdown/shelter in place

Lockdown/Shelter in place checklist	
Instruction to lockdown/shelter in place received from: [Police/emergency services/we initiated it ourselves]	
Initiate lockdown/shelter in place using [insert method in the emergency management plan e.g. sounding airhorn 3 times]	
Check that everyone is inside. Note any names of anyone who is unaccounted for.	
Secure your lockdown/shelter in place location(s) as required.	
Notify Police or other emergency services (if relevant) and keep communication open for updates both ways.	
Use the emergency staff communication channel to give updates and provide information to the emergency management team.	
Inform groups/individuals currently off-site that we are in lockdown/shelter in place (and to stay away until advised otherwise) – prepare to update them regularly.	
Inform parents/caregivers/community of the situation and to stay away until advised otherwise. [clarify what facts and information you want to give them]	
Advise the Ministry of Education local office about the situation.	
Maintain direct communication with emergency services/Police (or Ministry of Education where Police have asked them to direct schools and services to lockdown) to get updates about the event.	
If needed, organise safe access to the necessary toileting facilities, first aid, food and water supplies etc.	
Advised by Police/emergency services/other that we can safely move from lockdown to shelter in place.	
Advised by Police/emergency services/other to come out of lockdown or shelter in place.	
Initiate reunification process and notify parents and caregivers about where and when they can collect their child. **or** Advise parents and caregivers that the lockdown/shelter in place has ended and we are resuming with our usual activities until the normal end of day.	

Appendix 1 – Protecting Crowded Places

The content of appendix 1 aligns with the New Zealand strategy for crowded places, *Protecting Our Crowded Places from Attack: New Zealand's Strategy*. The strategy provides guidance about how to protect the lives of people working in, using and visiting their crowded place.

Protecting crowded places – New Zealand Police

Guidance for schools and early childhood services to accompany *Protecting Our Crowded Places from Attack: New Zealand's Strategy*.

Introduction

The New Zealand Government's *Protecting Our Crowded Places from Attack: New Zealand's Strategy* guides owners and operators (school or early childhood service management and governance groups) how to protect the lives of people working in, using, and visiting their crowded place.

The strategy explains what crowded places are and what risks they pose. It outlines the responsibilities of central and local government, owners and operators of crowded places, public security providers and the public in relation to keeping crowded places safe.

Crowded places are locations that large numbers of people access easily and predictably. A crowded place is not necessarily always crowded. The density of the crowd may vary between day and night, and between seasons. The crowd may be temporary (such as during sporting events, festivals, concerts or one-off events).

Many schools and early childhood services will be considered crowded places, as can the events they host both on-site and off-site.

The following information will support your planning for security-related events that may impact on your school or early childhood service and aligns with the New Zealand strategy for crowded places.

Go to the strategy for further information and resources – www.police.govt.nz/crowdedplaces

Security considerations

Potential harm from individuals or groups of individuals will be a consideration when planning for an emergency. How to respond to a trespasser or attacker on your premises should be included in your emergency management plan (see our Emergency Management Plan template for more information on trespassers and attackers). Preventing online harm should also be a key consideration, for example to prevent significant loss of data, ransomware attacks, etc.

You will also need to consider security risks when planning events on-site and off-site.

How you plan or prepare for emergencies will vary depending on your unique context and any other risk factors that apply in your setting.

Consider how you might deter, detect, delay, and then respond to a security threat or act of violence.

Deter

Prevention through community connection

Prevention is the best form of defence. One natural deterrent to reduce or prevent harm is an engaged and connected community. When people feel included and supported, there is less risk of individuals becoming disengaged, isolated, or distressed in ways that could lead to harm.

Building trust between staff, students, children, parents, and other agencies is fundamental to creating a safe environment.

Safe and inclusive learning environments

Schools and early childhood services play a vital role in preventing harm by supporting children and young people to feel connected to their learning environment.

Connections are strengthened when children are in safe, respectful, and inclusive settings. In these environments, children and students are more likely to feel comfortable sharing concerns with trusted adults.

Staff in safe environments support diversity, encourage open communication with parents and whānau, intervene early in conflict, and actively work to prevent teasing and bullying.

There are several resources available that help to build safe and respectful policies and practices:

- PB4L initiatives – Te Kete Ipurangi
- Inclusive – Te Kete Ipurangi
- Respectful Relationships – School Kit
- Netsafe New Zealand's online safety organisation – Netsafe

Schools also need to provide social and emotional support when students need it. Everyone has a role to play in noticing and responding to signs of concern.

Students may express distress in different ways. Friends, parents, teachers, and other adults need to know that their concerns will be taken seriously and that appropriate support will be provided. This is particularly important when students make concerning or threatening statements in person, online, via text messages, or through unusual written content.

In most cases, a trespasser or attacker is likely to have an existing connection with the school or service (for example, a former student or staff member, or a parent or caregiver). Attacks by random strangers are rare.

Encouraging reporting and information sharing

Consider how you will encourage staff, students, parents, and whānau to report concerns if something feels “off”.

Harm can often be prevented by not ignoring or rationalising unsettling behaviour, and by not assuming someone else has already reported it. Safe and trusted information sharing is therefore critical.

People providing information need to know that their concerns will be handled confidentiality, or that they can report anonymously. Anonymous reporting options include Crime Stoppers on **0800 555 111**.

Managing access to buildings and grounds

Managing access to buildings and grounds is another important deterrent.

Practical measures may include:

- clear signage directing visitors to the office to sign in
- clearly marked public access routes
- visitor parking signage
- visible CCTV signage (where CCTV is installed).

Consider what practical steps can be taken to deter unauthorised vehicle access, particularly to areas where children may gather.

Establishing a "Challenge Culture"

A strong "Challenge Culture" helps maintain safety. Staff should feel confident to approach individuals who are:

- walking around unsupervised
- not wearing a visitor pass
- unknown to staff and not clearly associated with the school or service.

If the visit appears legitimate, the person should be escorted to the office. If the person is aggressive or raises concern, follow your trespasser or attacker procedures.

Further guidance is available in the Emergency Management Plan templates on our website. If confronted by an attacker, always prioritise **ESCAPE. HIDE. TELL.**

For schools:

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident (schools) – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

Protecting frontline staff

Frontline staff, particularly those in administration areas, may be more exposed to risk. Consider whether the design of the administration area helps deter or minimise threats.

Key considerations include:

- doors that open outward, where possible
- more than one exit point for staff
- duress alarms and clear procedures
- reception counter design that reduces direct exposure.

Any locks installed on fire exits must comply with relevant regulations. Always consult the fire door manufacturer before installing additional hardware.

Balancing safety with being welcoming

Your existing security measures help deter trespassers, attackers, and cyber threats. These may include:

- visitor sign-in procedures and visitor passes

- a strong challenge culture
- sensor lighting
- locks, alarms, and CCTV
- neighbourhood Support NZ or Community Patrols NZ
- regular network updates and patching
- strong password systems.

It is important to balance security measures with maintaining a welcoming environment that supports positive interactions with legitimate users of the school or early childhood service.

See the Further information section below for additional resources to support your planning.

Further information

Detect

Some of the best people to spot things that are out of the ordinary in your early childhood service, school or neighbourhood are people who are there every day. As they go about their daily activities, they can keep an eye out for anything that may seem unusual or suspicious. Whether or not something is suspicious can depend on the circumstances. Look at the situation as a whole and look out for unusual or different behaviours.

A would-be attacker or trespasser may:

- walk through the premises, e.g. planning or doing reconnaissance
- access areas unsupervised, which could indicate ill intent
- show cognitive stress behaviours, e.g. anxious thoughts, poor concentration, difficulty with memory, tension, irritability, restlessness, inability to relax, depression
- wear unusual clothing for the location or season, e.g. bulky jacket in hot weather, sunglasses on at night
- carry lots of items, e.g. heavy-laden backpack, or sports bag
- display unusual body language, e.g. head down so can't be identified
- set off fire alarms or test other security systems
- demonstrate obsessions or inappropriate interests, e.g. display drawings, photos or other footage of guns or people using them, have a search history for hatred, hate speech, isolating behaviours, animal cruelty, depression etc.

Remember **HOT** when moving around your location.

- **H**idden
- **O**bviously suspicious
- or not **T**ypical to its environment.

Anything that is HOT could be deemed a security risk.

Are there items that are unusual, suspicious, or unable to be accounted for? Do your staff know what to do if they find a HOT item?

There is an accepted and predictable behaviour in your environment. Spotting behaviour that is different to your baseline is key to detection. If unusual behaviour is detected, what is your plan to respond and how will you notify children, students and staff? Is this a growing risk, or an immediate issue? Your response plans need to cover this.

It is good practice to establish 'suspicious activity' reporting procedures and mechanisms that support an incident response.

Signs of potential cyber-attacks include passwords unexpectedly changing, unknown software appears or suddenly begins installing, internet searches are being redirected or standard programmes and files will not open or work. What is your response plan should this type of activity be detected?

Regularly test and maintain all electronic security systems and security hardware to ensure they operate as designed. At least termly is recommended but check with your system provider for guidance. You may wish to include systems checks as part of your planned practice drills.

Regularly conduct a survey of the publicly available information associated with your early childhood service or school and its facilities – sensitive information should be redacted or removed.

Delay

If an incident does occur, are there simple ways to impede or slow down trespasser or attacker access to potential victims?

Your existing security measures, crime prevention and access control systems will also contribute to delaying your trespasser attacker or cyberattacks. For example:

- all visitors must sign-in protocol and display visitor pass
- having a challenge culture
- lighting
- locks
- alarm systems
- CCTV
- Neighbourhood Support NZ or Community Patrols NZ
- regularly applying network updates/patches
- strong password systems.

Consider changing your visitor passes regularly, e.g. change the colour, so they can't be easily re-used later.

Respond

Evacuation, lockdown, or shelter in place are all emergency responses which may be required if there is a security-related incident including a trespasser or attacker on your grounds. The Emergency Management Plan template has further information to support your response plan.

For schools:

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident (schools) – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

It is likely you will call the Police (or other emergency providers depending on the nature of the incident) who will lead the response and will be situation specific. It is vital you provide Police and other emergency services with the best information possible.

> Contact the Ministry of Education digital services team for support in the case of a cyber attack.
>
> cyber.security@education.govt.nz

Contact the Ministry of Education digital services team (cyber.security@education.govt.nz) for support in the case of a cyber attack.

Enable your staff to make the best decisions on the day of an event by communicating and exercising your plan (e.g. security is a part of your emergency management standing agenda item at staff meetings, conducting tabletop exercises, practise drills etc). Plans and exercises should reflect that staff need to respond to the situation itself, not the plan. Children/young people should not be included in drills for responding to violent situations, as they may cause undue fear and anxiety.

Note that where a student, staff member or parent/caregiver has been identified as a risk, the Police can assist with a preventative response.

Escape. Hide. Tell.

When responding to an attacker on your grounds you may need to consider a combination of responses. In addition to a lockdown, key messaging from New Zealand Police for people at a crowded place that is attacked is to:

- Escape - Move quickly and quietly away from danger, but only if it is safe to do so
- Hide - Stay out of sight and silence your mobile phone
- Tell - Call the Police by dialling 111 when it is safe.

Know what to do: Escape. Hide. Tell – New Zealand Police

Increasing resilience

Having a resilient school or early childhood service can help reduce the damage caused by an attack and enable resumption of normal activities more quickly. Building a strong security culture will increase a crowded place's resilience to attacks and other types of criminal activity including:

- making physical and digital security a regular agenda item
- understanding the risks that could result from inadequate protective security
- giving staff clear, succinct, and jargon-free guidance about security systems and procedures
- promoting good security practice to staff and visitors through internal-communication systems, posters, message boards and newsletters
- adopting effective and lawful staff-screening processes during recruitment, and ensuring contractors and vendors have adopted similar processes

- undertaking physical and digital security scenario exercises with staff
- testing security breaches to assess protective security measures
- sharing information about any security breaches with staff
- encouraging and supporting staff to identify and report security vulnerabilities and incidents.

Recovery

When a traumatic incident impacts on a school or early childhood service community, the way it is managed strongly influences people's recovery and can minimise further risk.

Traumatic incidents

School and early childhood service staff and management are in the best position to respond to traumatic incidents in their community. They have the appropriate knowledge, expertise and experience, and most importantly, the depth and range of relationships needed to help children, young people and staff recover from an incident. However, being in a crisis state can affect an individual's ability to manage an incident as they may experience:

- a temporary state of distress and disorganisation
- inability to use their customary methods of problem solving
- general upset or inability to maintain a state of emotional equilibrium
- difficulty 'directing' emotional reactions
- feeling lost, disorientated, and powerless.

After an incident occurs, you may wish to phone the local Ministry office to talk with someone from the traumatic incident (TI) team, to run something by them or have what you have already done affirmed, and to discuss what you might need to do next. In bigger events you can request that a team (usually two or three people) come to the school or early childhood service to support your management team.

The Ministry TI teams do not take over and manage the incident for you; rather they can help your management team to respond.

The Ministry's traumatic incidents and emergencies guidance can support you to develop a policy about how you will manage the wellbeing of children, students and staff following an emergency event.

For schools:

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident (schools) – Ministry of Education

For early childhood services:

Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education

To contact the Traumatic incident team phone 0800 848 326.

Traumatic incident team – Ministry of Education

Property damage

The Ministry also has Emergency Response Coordinators (ERC) who are available 24/7 to respond to property related damage. The ERC will work with the school and the Ministry to coordinate the response effort with the relevant emergency services (Fire Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) or Police). The ERC will inspect the damage and arrange any urgent work to be done to make the site safe and get the school functioning as quickly as possible.

Please go to our website for contact information.
Get help to manage an incident or emergency | New Zealand School Property Agency

Further information

- Protecting Our Crowded Places from Attack: New Zealand's Strategy – www.police.govt.nz/crowdedplaces
- There is also information in the Part 1 - National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in New Zealand and Part 2 - National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in New Zealand - (CPTED). These guidelines outline how urban planning, design and place management strategies can reduce the likelihood of crime and deliver numerous social and economic benefits in the long-term. While it is primarily targeted at local authorities it is also relevant to those managing publicly accessible places such as schools and early childhood services.
- The National Cyber Security Centre has guidance to support you keep your network safe - Welcome to the National Cyber Security Centre
- Netsafe has a large range of resources and supports for schools and early childhood services to support online safety and wellbeing - https://netsafe.org.nz/our-work/education
- Ministry of Education has a range of advice for manging online security, privacy, and safety Safe and responsible use of digital technology in schools guide - Ministry of Education
- Emergency Management Plan template; Ministry of Education, New Zealand: Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident - Ministry of Education
- Planning and preparing for emergencies: Practical information and guidance for schools and early childhood services; Ministry of Education, New Zealand
  - Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident (schools) - Ministry of Education
  - Prepare for an emergency or traumatic incident in early learning – Ministry of Education
- Traumatic Incidents - Respond at school to an emergency or traumatic incident - Ministry of Education

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

He mea tārai e mātou te mātaurangakia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga.

We shape an education system that delivers equitable and excellent outcomes.

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