



St Thomas Aquinas School NAG 5.9

Health & Safety Pandemic Plan

Stage 1 Trigger Internationally, no new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in people. Health officials are concerned, however that circulating animal virus subtypes (such as H5N1) could pose a substantial risk of human disease.

Ministry of Health (MoH) Alert Code: White

Goals:

To ensure that St Thomas Aquinas School is prepared as well as it can be for a pandemic emergency; To have a pandemic emergency plan that fits within the school's emergency management plan' To ensure that staff, students and parents are well informed and understand their roles in a pandemic emergency

Getting Started

1. Appoint a Pandemic Manager and Deputy
2. Develop a Pandemic Emergency Action Plan by modifying the MOE provided 'Planning Guide'
3. Set up a single point of contact for school in our area to liaise with the Southland DHB 'emergency planner'
4. Review the schools cleaning policies, practices and supplies and the schools emergency supply kits. They may need extra medication and personal protection such as face masks and gloves.
5. Develop a protocol for dealing with sick staff and students
6. Add a Pandemic Emergency Action Plan section to the school's 'emergency management plan'
7. Consult with and inform relevant community groups about the schools Pandemic Emergency Action Plan to see if there is anything that they can help with. Relevant groups include: local MOE office, local schools/ECE clusters, DHB, Public Health Nurse, local government reps; Civil Defence Team
8. Ask the Public Health Nurse to come to the school and speak to staff and parents/caregivers
9. Make sure that the school's contact list is kept up-to-date (contact details for students, staff and BOT members)

10. Take steps to clarify the school's role in the local response plans (local agencies, school cluster representatives). Issues to discuss: Alternative duties for school staff Alternative uses of the schools facilities (CBAC's) Schools role in local planning and decision making; and How to maintain services as near as normal as possible during a pandemic emergency - White

POLICY 5.9 Pandemic Emergency Action Planning

APPENDIX A The following assumptions underpin all Pandemic Emergency Actions Plans for Schools

1. Schools will maintain as full a service as possible for as long as possible during a pandemic emergency
2. During a pandemic emergency, schools will be asked to consider alternative means of delivering education to their students such as 'distance learning options'
3. Closing schools to students is part of the NZ National Health Emergency Plan to help prevent the influenza spreading. School closures aim to reduce contact between children. Children have been known to remain infectious for up to 21 days whereas the risk period for adults is only 8 days.
4. School closure does not mean that the facilities would be closed for quarantine. Staff may in fact still be able to go to work, work remotely (at home), or carry out additional or alternative duties for the school or another agency.
5. Education facilities, schools and kindergartens may be used for alternative purposes such as being Community Based Assessment Centres (CBAC's).
6. In a pandemic emergency, people with influenza symptoms will be encouraged to stay away from hospitals and doctors surgeries, and to seek assistance at Community Based Assessment Centres (CBAC)
7. A pandemic may come in several waves over a 6-8 month period. At the peak of the worst pandemic wave, up to 50% of the teaching workforce may be sick, looking after sick dependents, or carrying out 'alternative duties' in a priority area for another agency (such as a health or welfare role)
8. Teachers will be paid their normal salary during a pandemic, provided, with their Board's preapproval, they; Come to school or work where there will be rigorous personal hygiene, social distancing and cleaning regimes in place; Work remotely such as working from home; or Carry out additional or alternative duties for the Board or another agency

9. Teachers will be expected, along with other state sector employees, to use their leave entitlements (sick, domestic, annual or other, with the ability to anticipate some sick leave) if they are looking after sick dependents during a pandemic emergency

10. An employee, who contracts pandemic influenza, may be sick for up to 2 weeks. When sick leave entitlements and advances are exhausted, teacher may be provided with additional paid special leave during Stages 2 and 3 of a pandemic, but only where this will contribute to preventing the arrival or spread of a pandemic

POLICY 5.9

Getting Ready For a Flu Pandemic APPENDIX B

1. Have a Plan During an influenza pandemic emergency, you and your family may be so sick that you will all need to stay at home for several weeks. Matters to be planned for if this situation arises include: Getting food supplies if you or your household are sick; Getting prescription medicines; Get together the telephone numbers of people who live near you, as well as your family doctor Emergency kit supplies – see ‘Survival Items’ on the back cover of the Yellow Pages section of the telephone book

2. Set up Your Emergency Kit Have a supply of food and drinks that will last at least a week (include long lasting foods in cans and packets; Get paracetamol and/or ibuprofen as they are good for bringing down a fever and reducing aches and pains. Check with your doctor as to what is suitable for children; The wearing of masks can help stop the spread of germs. A mask can work only for a short time, and needs changing when wet from sneezing or coughing; Have tissues (or toilet paper) and plastic bags for used tissues; Think about what things you can do if you and your family have to spend more than a week at home (books, games, videos)

3. Hygiene – Keeping Clean Washing and drying your hands properly is one of the best ways of protecting yourself against the spread of germs; Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap or an alcohol based rub; Drying your hands is important as well Wash and dry hands: before preparing food and eating; after coughing and sneezing, blowing noses, visiting the toilet, or looking after sick people Keep coughs and sneezes covered. Put tissues straight into a covered, lined rubbish bin or plastic bag; Try to stay a metre away from sick people to reduce the spread of germs

For more information on influenza and planning for an influenza pandemic, visit:
www.moh.govt.nz/pandemicinfluenza

Pandemic

It is important that your ECE/School takes steps **now** to protect staff, students or children from future **pandemics** (global disease events such as influenza) or **epidemics** (local disease events such as, measles, hepatitis, tuberculosis, norovirus, whooping cough etc).

The **Ministry of Health** leads the Government’s response to a pandemic. It is the responsibility of other agencies to plan for and respond to a pandemic in their respective sectors and settings, based on the direction set out by the Ministry of Health. At all times updates and latest information should be accessed from the Ministry of Health.

Pandemics by their nature are unpredictable in terms of timing, severity and the population groups that are most affected. Planning for an infectious disease outbreak is as important as planning for other emergencies.

	Pre-response and Response actions (as appropriate)
	Planning
	o Recommend annual vaccinations for staff
	o Consider having a supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) gloves, face masks, antiseptic hand wash,
	o Develop a communications plan for staff, students, families and other interested members of the community.
	o Identify an appropriate space to be used as an isolation area
	o Know who your local Medical Officer of Health is and maintain regular contact. _____
	Response – when a pandemic has been advised or declared
	o Regularly check for updates on the Ministry of Health website (Ministry of Health NZ)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Use posters available from Ministry of Health re cough / sneeze etiquette, handwashing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Consider social distancing strategies. Information on this is available from the Ministry of Health.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Consider implementing an enhanced cleaning routine of touch points and common spaces as a precaution.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Establish the isolation area (as required)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Liaise with your local Medical Officer of Health (MOoH):

St Thomas Aquinas School will follow Ministry of Health advice at every stage of a pandemic. Ministry of Health announcements will be made through media reports and on their website. There will also be direct communication with education organisations from the Medical Officer of Health (DHB).

Any directions to close schools will come from health authorities. The Ministry of Education will assist health authorities to communicate these directions.