

Risk assessment and scenario planning for a COVID-19 outbreak

Risk assessment – Waitaki Boys’ High School 10/02/22

The following information supports our readiness for a potential COVID-19 outbreak in our community under the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

It’s important that we consult with staff or their representatives about our approach to operating safely at all Alert Levels.

WorkSafe also recommend we document our approach so it can be shared with others, including our school community. This was developed on 10/02/2022 and will be shared with all staff.

The Rector will connect with MoE to talk through any staffing or other challenges that might arise, as part of this process.

Risk profile for our school community

The COVID-19 Protection Framework supports a range of mitigations we need to adhere to, to keep our school community as safe as possible and our unique community and context has been taken into account in this planning.

This process has included a full review of our COVID-19 response plan in light of the Omicron variant, including this risk assessment.

While North Otago has a high level of vaccination rates and all staff onsite are double vaccinated, there is a greater level of risk for some in our community and these include the immune-compromised and staff with existing medical problems.

Potential risks and considerations

Potential risk	Considerations
Learners with higher levels of disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritising their attendance in situations where we may need to split learning onsite and offsite.
Learners at higher risk of severe illness especially if not fully vaccinated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan in advance for their learning from home, and/or with cases appearing in the area.• Commit to providing any student unable to attend school due to medical conditions with distance learning in their core subjects.• Encourage whānau to seek medical advice regarding attendance onsite.

Teaching and supporting staff at higher risk of severe illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage staff to get their booster vaccination as soon as they become eligible. • Commit to providing staff the option of teaching from home online due to any medical conditions that make it unsafe to be onsite. • Encourage staff members to seek medical advice regarding attendance onsite.
Students with additional learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising their attendance in situations where we may need to split learning on and offsite. • Checking they have access to appropriate resources and support at home e.g., Laptop and Wi-Fi access.
Anti-Vax, anti-government community refuse to send children to school or follow mandates and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage vaccinations in our community. • Encourage parents to seek medical advice from their GP's. • Refer complaints and aggressive communications to the Ministry of Education. • Continue to put out communications to the community that are sound and researched, supported by the MoE, and remain focused on safety, compassion, and community.
Community cautious about sending students to school when there is community transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain communications and reassurances about the health measures we have in place to reduce risk. • Prepare to support some form of learning from home, wherever possible. • Pastoral, whanau and staff meetings to discuss and plan for how we can keep connected with these children/students. • Increased health measures should encourage greater attendance onsite – e.g., face coverings, improved hygiene if we all follow the guidelines. • Encourage vaccination where appropriate.
High proportion of staff and student absence (self-isolating / confirmed cases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement our plan to support learning both onsite and offsite- currently being formulated. • Limit staff onsite to only those necessary to safely support children/students who are attending onsite. • Prioritise attendance onsite for most vulnerable learners and those who do not have an appropriate care option at home. • Ensure there are sufficient staff / contractors to provide key functions (eg, cleaning, first-aid, emergency response).

Scenario planning

The following scenarios and related considerations may help to support planning for COVID-19 in 2022. In addition to those mitigations already in place at Red, Orange and Green, we may consider the need to introduce additional measures.

The table further below can be used to record the health measures and mitigations we might implement at different settings under the framework.

- **Scenario 1**
Omicron community transmission is identified in our region.

Considerations:

- May be unsettling for some in our community
 - consider sending comms to community to remind about our mitigations in place to reduce risk and your processes if there are cases in our school
 - remind community of key prevention strategies, and to stay at home if unwell and get tested
 - stress the importance for students to have face-to-face engagement with teachers and connect with their peers onsite.
- Continue to issue devices / resources, where possible, for students to keep at home, in case situation moves quickly

- **Scenario 2**

Community transmission of Omicron in our region, but not yet in our local community or school.

Considerations:

- Same as above

- **Scenario 3**

Community transmission of Omicron in our school.

Considerations:

- Likely to spread quickly if not identified early following exposure
- Asymptomatic individuals may have COVID-19 and not be aware of it
- We will need to identify close contacts of the confirmed case(s) and they will be asked to isolate
 - how many people can undertake this function in our school (ie plan for absences / illness of key individuals)?
- Plan for proportion of students to be offsite (potentially >30%) and learning from home (as are contacts of a confirmed case), with all others learning onsite
- May result in higher levels of illness in some cases
- May quickly result in elevated levels of staffing absence (whether as subsequent cases or as close contacts)
 - can asymptomatic staff and staff who are contacts work from home to support learning?
 - identify staff who may have children/dependents also required to isolate, and therefore not easy to work from home
- Most vulnerable to severe illness, even if fully vaccinated, may/will want to work from, or learn from, home

Health measures - summary

The measures which already apply at each traffic light setting are highlighted and ticked.

Tick () the blank boxes if there are any further measures you might introduce, to reflect the risk facing our community at the time, and/or to reflect any increased vulnerability in your community.

Health measures	Red	Orange	Green	Notes / Actions needed
Good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette				
Monitor closely for symptoms and stay away if sick				
Contact tracing				
Vaccination required for all workers, paid and unpaid				
Vaccination including boosters encouraged				
Case management / contact tracing				
Good ventilation – ensure all windows and doors, designed to open, do, and raise any concerns with property manager				
Face coverings required when indoors (students and staff) – years 9 - 13				
Children with complex medical needs (particularly if not vaccinated) – seek medical advice to support onsite learning				
Physical distancing between classroom groups – 1 metre when indoors, wherever practicable				
Large groups of students meeting indoors is avoided				
Exercising and singing outdoors only				
Students from other schools are permitted onsite for curriculum-related activities, but 1 metre physical distancing will apply where practicable				
No external students onsite for non-curriculum related inter-school activities*				
Exams can go ahead but physical distancing of 1.5 metres will apply				

