

# Communicable Diseases Procedures

## PURPOSE

- Prevention of communicable diseases is a critical part of school and community health and safety where all staff and students need clear direction in dealing with all body fluids, secretions and excretions

## GENERAL PROCEDURES

- a. Hand washing is the single most important procedure and must be done – before handling food, after the toilet, before giving and after giving first aid, and any contact with any body fluids
- b. Rubber gloves must be used for first aid and whilst cleaning up
- c. All spills to be mopped up with paper towels and then the areas involved bleached (one part bleach to ten parts water)
- d. Carpets to be cleaned with soap and water
- e. All instruments and equipment to be sterilised

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## A. PANDEMIC GENERAL

### 1. Purpose

To ensure the school is organised to respond immediately to a pandemic crisis

### 2. Procedures

- In the event of a pandemic, the Principal or Principal's delegate supported by Senior Staff will manage the situation

- The school will manage the Ministry of Health advice and instructions at every stage
- Any decision to close the school will be made in close consultation with the District Health Authority and the Ministry of Education

**Reference:** <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/pandemic-planning-guidelines>

## **B. FLU PANDEMIC**

More information can be gained from the Planning Guide for Education Agencies and Providers – December 2005

**Hard copy available from Property Manager – checking with John**

### **DHB WHITE/YELLOW ACTIVATION**

#### **Phase 1: Plan for it**

(Health officials are concerned that the H5N1 virus could mutate and cause a global pandemic)

1. Students are taught importance of not sharing food and drink bottles, hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette, not spitting and staying home when sick

#### **Phase 2: Stand by**

1. Access signage stating that people with flu symptoms should not enter the school grounds.
2. Programmes designed for students to complete at home in case school is closed.
3. Review emergency first aid supplies (extra gloves and face masks) and prepare appropriate space to isolate sick staff and students

### **DHB RED ACTIVATION**

#### **Phase 1: Keep it out (border management)**

1. As above
2. Monitor planned and recent domestic and international travel of staff, students and parents
3. Discuss wages for staff in case of school closure

#### **Phase 2: Stamp it out (influenza is outside cluster area)**

1. Encourage children and staff to use tissues to contain respiratory secretions. Dispose of tissues in rubbish bin after use and clean hands either by washing or using sanitisers.
2. Regular hand washing – encourage children and staff in the use of soap or alcohol-based products (gels and foams). Hands should be dried thoroughly

using disposable paper towels. Hand sanitising will be supervised by teachers in the classroom after children visit toilets.

3. Disposable gloves should be worn when handling suspected contaminated areas.
4. Rigorous cleaning and disinfecting practices carried out using alcohol or chlorine bleach. All environmental surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected regularly. Particular attention should be paid to communal areas such as staffroom, toilets, reception area and shared equipment such as telephones, photocopiers and computer keyboards. Particular attention should also be given to areas that sick staff and students have used.
5. Use of telephones, photocopiers and the fax machine will be limited to one person per machine, eg Resource Manager in resource room and Office Manager in office. Telephones in communal areas will be removed, eg staffroom, ICT room. A communal telephone will be available at the office, use will be monitored and it will be disinfected after each user.
6. The digital classroom, library and PE shed will be closed. The use of classroom computers will be suspended and wet areas in classrooms should be closed.
7. Staff should be encouraged to monitor their own health and advise management if they are feeling unwell.
8. Isolate staff and students showing influenza symptoms and send home. Section 19 of the Education Act provides that a principal may exclude a student who may have a communicable disease (Avian influenza is included). Ensure staff and students returning to school have completed any required quarantine period and are healthy.
9. All internal spaces should be well ventilated by fresh air – open windows and keep air conditioning systems well maintained. Frequently used doors will be latched open to avoid hand contamination.
10. Reception, caretaking, cleaning and food handling staff will wear gloves and face masks.
11. Make preparations for possible school closure.
12. Notices advising not to enter school grounds if flu symptoms are evident are to be displayed on entry points and main buildings.
13. Notify health authorities of people showing symptoms.
14. Cancel all staff travel plans (domestic and international).

**Phase 3: Stamp it out (influenza is inside cluster area)**

1. School is closed after taking advice from Medical Officer of Health. Section 65E of the Education Act provides that a board may close a school in an emergency such as an epidemic.
2. Secure premises and place notices of closure on entry points and main buildings.

#### **Phase 4: Manage it (pandemic management)**

1. Programmes are organised and running for students at home via email, phone, internet, prepared lessons

#### **DHB GREEN ACTIVATION**

##### ***Phase 1: Recover from it (recovery)***

1. Arrange debrief of pandemic event for staff and students if appropriate and arrange trauma and grief counselling as necessary.
2. Assess capacity of staff to resume normal school operations, employ relievers or appoint new staff.
3. Clean and disinfect all affected areas.
4. Support and monitor wellbeing of staff and students.

For further information contact Auckland Regional Health Service Emergency Planner on Tel: (09) 623 4600.

*At all phases of the pandemic, the Board of Trustees, staff, students and parents should be kept informed of the current pandemic phase, what the school is doing to prepare, what parents and students can do to prepare at home and what the next steps will be.*

*Regular contact with schools in the area should also be made throughout the pandemic phases. Contact should also be made with early childhood centres in the area.*