

# Pandemic Plan

**Pandemic Manager:** The Principal

**Other Key Personnel:** The Office Manager, Classroom Teachers, Support Staff, Cleaners, Board of Trustees Chairperson

**Isolation Room(s):**

- A. Sick Bay
- B. Interview Room beside Principals Office

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**Refer to full pandemic management guidance provided by the [Ministry of Education](#)**

## Stage 1: Risk Management

Notification: [Ministry of Health](#) announces human to human transmission

### Pandemic manager will ensure:

1. Preparedness follows guidelines provided by the [Ministry of Health](#).
2. Parents, caregivers and guardians are informed that the pandemic plan is activated. (Sample letter appendix 1).
3. All contact details are up to date (Assembly student management system is kept up to date as each new enrolment starts at Sacred Heart Cathedral School, and reminders sent out throughout the year).
4. The school office can easily generate an up to date contact list on Assembly, which will be provided to the local Ministry of Education office if requested. Parents, caregivers and guardians are kept updated on their tasks and responsibilities, which will include how to manage sick children and adults and what happens in the event of closure.
5. Parents, caregivers and guardians are aware of ways to limit spread of the pandemic including staying at home when sick, cough and sneeze control, hand washing etc.
6. Pandemic Manager will review resources to ensure that there are sufficient supplies of cleaning materials. Introduce extra cleaning as required. This will be determined by the nature of the pandemic and will be advised by the Ministry of Health.

Critical staff numbers and skills required to keep essential parts of the school running are identified, as suggested below:

Principal and / or Deputy Principal (DP)

At least one member of office staff

**A ratio of at least 1 teacher for every 30 children and**

At least one additional member of the support staff team (for supporting children with special needs)

### Parents will ensure:

1. Contact information held at school is accurate and up to date (records sent out annually, and reminders communicated regularly).
2. The school is provided with (preferably two) accurate and up to date alternative contact details, in the case of the first contact being unavailable.
3. Children who are unwell remain at home if they are exhibiting the pandemic symptoms.

**Contact Healthline on 0800 611 116, or the GP for medical advice** and stay at home until symptoms resolve.

### Staff will

1. Maintain up to date emergency contact information for all students and staff
2. Maintain familiarity with [Ministry of Health](#) guidelines for pandemic management.
3. Request that a student is collected and taken home immediately should they become seriously ill or if instructed to do so by the pandemic manager.

4. Ensure that if a student becomes ill and cannot be taken home immediately they will be placed under the care of an adult and will be taken to the isolation area to await collection from Sacred Heart Cathedral School.

## **Stage 2: Cluster Control**

*Trigger: [Ministry of Health](#) announces human pandemic strain case(s) found in Wellington.*

### **Pandemic Manager will:**

1. Communicate early the possibility of a pandemic and Sacred Heart Cathedral School's preparedness to manage it – to board, staff, students, parents and whānau (Appendix 1-4)
2. Discuss with staff possible health and safety issues, and leave arrangements for them if they are ill or need to look after dependents.
3. Ensure the Cleaning Company is aware of the alert, and follow additional cleaning instructions. Select and communicate the most appropriate isolation area (either the Sick Bay or Interview Room, or both).
4. Restrict entry of any persons displaying the pandemic symptoms. Any children displaying pandemic symptoms will be put into isolation.

***Contact healthline on 0800 611 116, or the GP for medical advice if concerned about any student or staff member displaying symptoms.***

5. Communicate any decisions about exclusion, isolation, closure to parents and caregivers through established protocols.
6. Notify any cases to health authorities as required (appendix 9).
7. Establish a system to monitor families who are ill or suspected of being ill including contacting families who are unexpectedly absent.
8. Use a variety of means to remind students, staff and families to practice good personal hygiene and cleaning habits.
9. Take a common sense approach on how to handle appropriate social distancing between students and students, and students and staff - see examples later in this document
10. Notify the local DHB if more than 30% of the roll is absent.

### **Parents / Caregivers will ensure:**

1. Children who are unwell remain at home if they are exhibiting the pandemic symptoms.

***Contact Healthline on 0800 611 116, or the GP for medical advice and stay at home until symptoms resolve.***

2. Children, parents and caregivers who have been overseas recently to an affected country, and/or been in contact with someone diagnosed with the pandemic stay away from school.

### **Staff will:**

1. Report to the pandemic manager, and take care of, any student (in isolation room, and taking care to protect their own health and safety), showing the pandemic symptoms, such as:  
High fever (or feel feverish or hot)  
Headache, fatigue and weakness  
Sore throat, cough, chest discomfort, difficulty in breathing  
Muscle aches and pains  
Any additional symptoms communicated by [Ministry of Health](#)
2. Notify the Pandemic Manager if they themselves have pandemic symptoms, and contact Healthline on 0800 611 116, or the GP for medical advice and stay at home until symptoms resolve.
3. Notify the Pandemic Manager if they have recently returned from affected countries.
4. Fill in the suspected pandemic notification form (appendix 8) and give to the Pandemic Manager to submit. Take names of contacts (those who have been within one metre of them or in an enclosed place for more than 60 minutes). These will be provided to the Pandemic Manager.

#### For students

1. In consultation with the Pandemic Manager, arrange to send the student home immediately. Suggest they call their doctor by telephone to advise that they have been in contact with a suspected pandemic case. Set up an isolation room.
2. Advise parents, caregivers and guardians, caregiver and guardians to collect their children.
3. Ensure the school has adequate supplies of tissues, medical and hand hygiene products, cleaning supplies and masks.
4. Cancel all extracurricular activities and planned school trips.
5. Remove books, magazines and papers from common areas. Consider ways of cleaning and/or restricting communal use of some play, physical education equipment or office equipment.

#### **Cleaning Contractor will:**

Implement Pandemic Cleaning Procedure, as per guidance from the Ministry of Education following additional cleaning processes. The procedures in such an event will be to use detergent and/or bleach on all surfaces as advised by the Ministry of Health. Report completion and any issues to the Pandemic Manager.

## **Stage 3: Pandemic Management**

*Trigger: The Ministry of Health will widely publicise any changes to the “alert codes”, and may signal the need to activate pandemic and continuity plans. The Ministry of Education will contact schools to provide further guidelines / directions.*

### **Pandemic Manager will:**

1. Through consultation with the Board of Trustees Chairperson, and the DHB Emergency Planner and the Ministry of Education Office make the decision to close Sacred Heart Cathedral School as required.
2. Advise all parents, caregivers, guardians and whanau (Sample email and text - appendices 3 & 4).
3. Post notices of closure on entry points.

### **Cleaning / Hygiene Practices**

During a pandemic Sacred Heart Cathedral School will be closed, but may need to be cleaned thoroughly to destroy any virus. This applies particularly to hard surfaces (for example, sinks, handles, railings, objects and counters). Influenza viruses may live up to two days on hard surfaces.

Hygiene practices should be elevated in a pandemic to an even higher level than usual. Thorough and additional cleaning to be carried out, for example:

Reminding staff and students not to share cups, dishes and cutlery; and ensure these items are thoroughly washed with soap and hot water after use.

Remove books, magazines and papers from common areas.  
Consider ways of cleaning and/or restricting communal use of some play, physical education equipment and office equipment.

When a person with suspected influenza is identified and has left, it is important that their work area or office and any other known places they have been are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Planning should identify the basic hygiene practices (including hand hygiene) to be followed by cleaners, protocols for the use of personal protection equipment (if recommended by the Ministry of Health), and methods for waste disposal.

All internal spaces should be well ventilated, preferably by fresh air via opening windows

People with influenza symptoms should use a disposable surgical mask to help prevent exposing others to their sneezes and coughs. Used masks must be disposed of as soon as they become moist or after any cough or sneeze, and hands must be thoroughly washed and dried after the used mask has been discarded.

## **Social Distancing and Barriers**

In primary schools social distancing may be difficult to achieve, but any raising of awareness or any level of compliance will be useful (source: [Ministry Of Education](#))

Social distancing is a strategy to protect staff and students during a pandemic by minimising their contact with others. Events involving large gatherings should be avoided, whether inside or outside. A distance of at least one metre should be maintained between people wherever practical. The Ministry of Health has the following suggestions for minimising contact, including the following measures where practicable:

- Use closed sliding doors to maintain a barrier between office staff and members of the public.
- Avoid bringing large groups of children together (eg multiple classes in confined mat areas).
- Cancel overnight stays.
- Arrange learning activities outside or make use of large indoor spaces.
- Avoid activities where children are holding hands, hugging, kissing, sharing equipment, etc.
- Set up the classroom to maximise opportunities for distance - table distances, single seating spaces, etc.
- Where possible avoid meeting people face-to-face – use the telephone, video conferencing and the internet to conduct business as much as possible – even when participants are in the same building.
- If a face-to-face meeting with people is unavoidable, minimise the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one metre away from each other if possible. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
- Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops or training sessions.
- Avoid public transport.
- Bring lunch and eat away from others (allowing distance in the staffroom).
- A staggered lunch and morning tea times may be introduced to reduce numbers in the staffroom.
- Set up systems where families and staff can request information via phone, email or fax and have information ready for fast pick-up or delivery.

## **Stage 4: Recovery**

*Trigger: Population affected by vaccination/or pandemic abated in New Zealand.*

### **Pandemic Manager will:**

1. Advise that Sacred Heart Cathedral School is reopened through telephone/email.
2. Undertake debrief of procedures used with staff.
3. Review the importance of keeping well and healthy guidelines with children.
4. Arrange for trauma/grief counselling as necessary.
5. Lead a community evaluation of all procedures followed and make updates, based on recommendations.
6. Share a report of evaluation with the community and Board of Trustees.
7. Update all relevant documentation.

**Pandemic Plan Reviewed: March 2020**