



Guidance for schools in Alert Level 3 when bringing Year 11-13 students on-site

Schools in this setting remain at Alert Level 3, with everyone to stay at home except for essential movement (which includes travelling to an education entity).

However, the public health assessment is that given the higher levels of vaccination and lower risk in school environments, all students in Years 11-13 for are able to attend onsite, with a range of precautions in place.

Students in Years 1-10 will remain learning from home, with the exception of those students who do not have an appropriate carer at home.

Public health measures at all alert levels

If a child or staff member is sick, they should stay home (phone Healthline or their GP and get tested if a doctor or health professional recommends them to do so):

- staff are to observe students/children on arrival checking for symptoms and ask those presenting as unwell to go home or arrange for parents and caregivers to come and pick up. Please note, this does not mean that temperatures are to be taken.
- principals at state and state-integrated schools have authority to preclude a student from attending if they believe on reasonable grounds they may have a communicable disease under section 77 of the Education and Training Act 2020. See [Guide to Legal Powers](#)
- private schools are able to ask someone presenting as ill to not attend
- contact the local medical officer of health if there are any concerns about someone believed on reasonable grounds to be ill, refusing to stay away.

In addition:

- regularly wash and dry hands, cough and sneeze into your elbow, don't touch your face
- schools connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 may need close on an individual or group basis to allow contact tracing and cleaning. You will work with public health units to manage this and any direction to close will come from the Medical Officer of Health
- stringent self-isolation of those who display relevant symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 – [Ministry of Health information for self-isolation](#)
- schools are required to display QR Code posters for the NZ COVID Tracer App (and to have other contact tracing systems in place including an attendance register and visitor register)
- it is recommended to keep classroom temperatures to 18 degrees. 18–20 degrees is a comfortable temperature, below that there is increased risk – from a cold household, workplace or school
- indoor spaces should be well-ventilated for example by opening windows, doors and any vents. Good practice would include fully opening all windows during breaks and after school for as long as possible.

[Find further advice on ventilation, including how to best ventilate using mechanical or passive ventilation, on our website.](#)

Vaccination

As Public Health experts have stated vaccination and testing remain the key actions we can all take to keep ourselves, whānau, friends and community as safe as possible.

All eligible students and staff should be encouraged to get vaccinated.

All staff and workers (paid and unpaid) who may have contact with children and students in schools and kura throughout the country (regardless of COVID-19 Alert Level) will be required to have a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by 15 November and be fully vaccinated by 1 January 2022.

There is good information online to support you with messaging including through the School Bulletin:

- [COVID19.govt.nz– Your vaccine questions answered](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/your-vaccine-questions-answered)
- [Karawhiu.nz – Protecting whānau is what we do](https://www.karawhiu.nz/protecting-whanau-is-what-we-do)
- [Health.govt.nz – COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.health.govt.nz/your-questions-answered/covid-19-vaccines)
- [Healthpoint.co.nz – COVID-19 Vaccination](https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19-vaccination)
- [YouTube – Dr Ashley Bloomfield on the safety standards of the Pfizer / BioNTech vaccine](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrAshleyBloomfield)
- [Bulletin for School Leaders - Supporting staff to get vaccinated \(28 September\)](#)
- [Bulletin for School Leaders - Becoming a vaccination site \(24 September\)](#)

Public health requirements and recommendations for schools with Year 11-13 students

For schools which do not have Year 11-13 students on-site, the existing public health measures for Alert Level 3 continue to apply. Please go to the table on our website: [Ministry of Education – Guidance for schools for Alert Levels 1–4.](#)

Measure/risk	Alert Level 3 requirements
Overarching description/implication for education	<p>There is a medium risk of community transmission – and active but managed clusters.</p> <p>Schools and early learning services can open but must follow all public health measures.</p>
Attendance on-site	<p>All students in years 11 – 13 are to attend on-site.</p> <p>All other students in years 1 – 10 will continue to learn from home, except for those students who do not have an appropriate carer at home.</p> <p>Anyone who is self-isolating, or who has been advised by health authorities to remain at home while they wait for their COVID-19 test results must stay home.</p>
Method of delivery for learning	<p>On-site for years 11 – 13 and those students who do not have appropriate care at home. Distance learning will be provided for students in years 1 – 10 and those requiring to self-isolate, waiting for a test result or choosing to remain at home because they are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.</p>
Children at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-	<p>Children at higher risk of severe illness are to remain home, where possible.</p>

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19 (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled who are not vaccinated)	<p>Children with complex medical needs, can also seek advice from their health professional about whether it is appropriate to come to school.</p> <p>Distance learning will continue to be available to those who are advised to remain at home.</p> <p>Go to COVID19.govt.nz for further information</p>
Staff at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled who are not vaccinated)	<p>Unless fully vaccinated, staff who have a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should stay at home.</p> <p>If they want to come to school you may agree to the request only if it can be assured that it is safe for them to do so.</p> <p>Staff to work with their GP or specialist if they need help understanding their own level of risk and how best to stay healthy.</p> <p>Go to COVID19.govt.nz for further information</p>
Washing and drying hands	<p>Hand sanitiser at entry to classrooms and in shared spaces where available. Soap, water and the ability to dry hands must be provided in bathrooms. Washing and drying hands with soap is still the most effective hygiene measure.</p>
Physical distancing	<p>There are no bubbles required for students on-site in a stepped down level 3 setting.</p> <p>There is no specific physical distancing requirement inside or outside but a 1 metre distance is recommended, particularly between adults. A 2-metre distance from people you don't know remains a strong recommendation.</p> <p>In secondary settings, where possible, students in years 11 – 13 should remain separated from those students on-site in lower year levels.</p> <p>Visitors, including parents and caregivers, should maintain a two-metre distance from those who are not part of their household bubble.</p>
Face coverings	<p>Face coverings are not required to be worn in schools for years 1 - 8, but are required to be worn for registered schools providing secondary education when at Alert Level 3. This will include middle and area schools.</p> <p>The requirement will only apply to students receiving secondary education (Year 9 and above) and any staff member working to provide, or support the provision of, that education.</p> <p>School transport will no longer be exempted from the face coverings requirements. Students aged 12 and above are therefore required to wear face coverings on school transport to align with the requirement to wear face coverings when on public transport.</p> <p>All visitors, including parents and caregivers, should wear face coverings when on school grounds.</p>
Cleaning	<p>Disinfect and clean all surfaces daily.</p>
Gatherings and congregating	<p>Schools, school hostels and workplaces are not classified as gatherings. However specific health measures as summarised in this table, must still be applied.</p>

	<p>Children and students should be encouraged to take breaks and eat outside, and use outdoor settings for learning, wherever practicable.</p> <p>Public health advice is that large groups of students meeting indoors should be avoided including assemblies, prize givings and performances.</p> <p>Events should not go ahead at Alert Level 3. If bringing others on-site, including parents and caregivers, any rules for gatherings applicable at the time, will apply.</p> <p>Adult to adult transmission remains the greatest risk. Staff should avoid congregating together inside, for example staff meetings should not go ahead indoors, and maintain a minimum of a 1 metre distance from other staff wherever practicable.</p>
Physical and cultural activities/ playgrounds	<p>Exercising and singing must be held outdoors.</p> <p>Physical education classes and break time activities can include access to sports equipment including playgrounds but hygiene practice should be observed before and after playing with equipment. There will also need to be regular cleaning of shared equipment such as balls, sticks etc.</p> <p>Playgrounds can open.</p> <p>Physical distance is not possible in some sporting activities. In these situations, extra emphasis on handwashing and drying (or cleansing with hand sanitiser) before and after activities and regular cleaning of equipment is important.</p> <p>See further below for singing and musical instruments.</p>
Vaccine register	<p>All schools (state and private) will need to capture in a register, the vaccination status for COVID-19 for children, students and staff (fully, partially, exempt or no information provided).</p> <p>If a case is connected with your school, this information will be used by local Public Health authorities to support their rapid risk assessment, and will inform decisions about whether the school will need to close, and the duration of any closure.</p> <p>This data will also support targeted vaccination campaigns in your school community.</p>
Contact tracing	<p>Contact tracing remains a priority through your visitor register, timetable and attendance register. You are required to display QR code posters for the NZ COVID Tracer App.</p> <p>To support contact tracing, record all visitors who are on-site for a period of time, including parents and caregivers, in your visitor register (as is usual practice but also to assist if contact tracing is necessary). Only essential visitors should be on-site at Alert Level 3.</p> <p>You should already have contact details for all your students, parents, caregivers and staff so shouldn't need to record this (perhaps remind families, whānau and staff to update you if their address or phone number has changed, or changes).</p> <p>For drop-offs and pickups, if the parent or caregiver uses the app you don't need to capture them in your visitor register.</p>

	<p>For parents and caregivers who cannot use the App, you may wish to continue to record their details in a simple register when they do pick-ups and drop-offs (rather than your main visitor register). If they don't come into your school grounds, there is no need to record their details.</p> <p>Please keep your visitor register for at least two months.</p>
Visitors	<p>No non-essential visitors on-site.</p> <p>All visitors, including parents and caregivers, should wear face coverings when on school grounds.</p> <p>You must adhere to the rules for gatherings when others come on-site, including parents and caregivers.</p> <p>There should be no volunteers for classroom activities at Alert Level 3.</p> <p>Consider how you might monitor entrances to minimise non-essential visitors from coming on site. If staffing on-site is limited, one entry point may be the most practical way to manage visitors, coupled with staggered starts.</p>
Teaching across groups	<p>Minimise as much as possible, staff working across groups/classes of students.</p> <p>Staff such as itinerant music teachers will not be able to work across different schools at Alert Level 3.</p>
Food preparation	<p>If you prepare food on-site you must check the MPI guidance on food safety and ensure your school and any suppliers meet all health and safety requirements before you recommence the supply of food to your students.</p> <p>Food should be eaten outside wherever practicable.</p> <p>MPI guidance on food safety</p>
Libraries	<p>Libraries can be operated as the virus does not survive for long on paper and cardboard (less than 24 hours), so books and other paper and cardboard can be put aside overnight and used the next day by other students. Books with plastic sleeves should be wiped down with a disinfectant wipe before re-issuing the next day.</p>
External students on-site (for example, for music programmes or technology schools)	<p>No external students or staff on-site.</p>
Shared supplies	<p>Shared supplies and equipment are able to be used if students and staff are undertaking regular hand washing and staying away if sick.</p>
Music, instruments, singing etc.	<p>For singing, participants must be outside and two metres distant from each other. No singing should take place inside.</p> <p>No sharing of musical instruments unless sanitised between use as per sports equipment.</p> <p>Wind instruments not to be shared and limited to home use.</p>
Drinking fountains	<p>Drinking fountains should not be used at Alert Level 3.</p>

	Water bottles should be used and appropriate health and safety considerations followed for re-filling.
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