

Adjusting risk management plans for 5 April changes

Guidance from SPC



Adjusting risk management plans

April 5 marks the changes to mandates and traffic light settings. It is not itself a deadline for actions.

Key changes

- The possibility of unvaccinated staff working on site. (Having unvaccinated students on site is not a change.)
- Up to 200 at indoor gatherings at Red
- Unlimited outside gatherings at Red

Reviewing your risk management plans and health and safety policies

1. Take your time – aim for start of term 2 readiness.
If necessary you can have unvaccinated staff asked to work from home until the process is completed.
2. Follow a robust and objective process.
3. Use what you currently have in place to review risks and identify controls and use [WORKSAFE guidance](#)
4. The school's duty of care is to eliminate as far as reasonably practicable, and where elimination is not reasonably practicable to minimize risks as far as reasonably practicable.
5. Consult with your health and safety committee/representatives and people who may be directly affected (unvaccinated staff, staff with underlying health issues or vulnerable family members, and offer the opportunity for consultation with other staff, including those who are on leave as far as practicable.
6. Consider how possible scenarios might be handled to minimise risk of transmission and where current practices may need to be supplemented or adjusted. e.g.
 - a. Unvaccinated staff appointed or returning
 - b. Staff working with high needs students who are immunocompromised
 - c. Staff who are immunocompromised.

Assessing the risks in the new Red phase, requires the Health and Safety committee, or its equivalent, in each school to:

1. Principal checks and updates any new student and staff personal health data and medical advice for specific risks to be managed.
2. Check/Review current measures in the school for hygiene and air quality in all settings:
 - information communicated.
 - cleaning of surfaces
 - Hand hygiene sanitisers
 - Mask wearing
 - air monitoring and ventilation
 - physical distancing, reduced mass gatherings
3. Assess external risk levels of local community Covid vaccination rates. (Your community vaccination rates can be found here: [Map of COVID-19 vaccination rates in New](#)

[Zealand](#) or here: [COVID-19: Vaccine data | Ministry of Health NZ](#). (Open the first spreadsheet "COVID-19 vaccination data through xx xxx 2022". Go to the tabs 'TLA' and 'SA2 All Ethnicities' or 'SA2 Māori and Pacific Peoples'.)

4. Assess internal school vaccination rates.
5. Assess percentage of staff who are fully vaccinated - where known.

If all the physical risk levels are covered, but there is high anxiety, that would lead to a response involving:

- tailored communications to different audiences, using expert teams in the staff (and possibly the student body) to be the knowledgeable go to resource people on a given topic, e.g mask wearing, vaccinations or ventilation
- EAP support.

General mitigations - General hygiene, mask wearing, and social distancing will address most scenarios.

- *Staying away if unwell and getting tested*
- *Monitoring for symptoms and asking those unwell to go home - Use RATs where available.*
- *Using well-ventilated spaces and air testing.*
- *Good hygiene and cleaning - communications as well as equipment - hand sanitisers etc.*
- *Encouraging and supporting staff and eligible students to get vaccinated including booster doses*
- *Masks required for children, students and staff in years 4 and up, when indoors (unless exempted)*
- *Limiting onsite visitors to only those who are essential*
- *Limiting large gatherings*
- *Holding higher-risk activities outdoors, where possible*

Young people with multiple chronic conditions and staff who have an [underlying medical condition](#) which puts them at higher risk from COVID-19, regardless of their own vaccination status should

- *be encouraged to seek advice from a health professional about how to best manage risk*
- *develop an individual plan to support safety onsite, with the principal.*
- *be encouraged to wear a medical-grade mask when indoors regardless of year level and as required when at Red for staff.*

For those roles requiring regular close contact with young people at higher risk when indoors, there may be a recommendation for the position to be filled by vaccinated staff, after other risk reduction options have been investigated and found to be insufficient. Such a recommendation would require all other mitigations for high-risk situations to have been considered and objectively found to be inadequate. They are likely to be justifiable only for those in roles which require engagement with students at high risk.

Other resources

[*Risk assessment for COVID-19*](#)

[*Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 practical guide.*](#)

Check also the current MoE advice and risk management templates