

Decision tool for early learning and school responses to COVID-19

Risk Level	Situation/Trigger	Response
Level 1	When a child, young person, or staff member has no symptoms, but has had close contact with a confirmed case (eg. Within their household) And there is no known community transmission.	Track and trace as a precaution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Education will be notified by the local Medical Officer of Health, and will talk to the Principal/ECE Service Provider and/or ECE Centre manager • Child/young person/staff member and family self-isolate • Testing of child/young person/staff member if recommended • If test is positive - Trace, track and test process to identify close contacts • Provide information and resources to the parent community and enable opportunities to ask questions.
Level 2	When a child, young person, or staff member has symptoms, and has had close contact with a confirmed case (eg. Within their household) And there is no known community transmission.	Close the school/ECE temporarily if there is a delay in test results to enable contact tracing and tracking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Education will be notified by the local Medical Officer of Health, and will talk to the Principal/ECE Service Provider and/or ECE Centre manager • Child/young person and family self-isolate • Child/young person tested • Track and trace, with close contacts going into self-isolation • Decision to close school/ECE is based on test results – close temporarily if there is a delay in getting test results • Maintain thorough cleaning practice in schools/ECE • Provide information and resources to the parent community and enable opportunities to ask questions.
	When a staff member has symptoms in school/ECE And when there is no known community transmission.	Close the school/ECE temporarily if there is a delay in test results to enable contact tracing and tracking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Education will be notified by the local Medical Officer of Health, and will talk to the Principal/ECE Service Provider and/or ECE Centre manager • Staff member self-isolates • Staff member is tested • Track and trace, with close contacts going into self-isolation • Decision to close school/ECE is based on test results – close temporarily if there is a delay in getting test results • Maintain thorough cleaning practice in schools/ECE • Provide information and resources to the parent community and enable opportunities to ask questions.
	When a child, young person or staff member tests positive and has been at school or ECE	Close the school/centre for at least 72 hours to enable contact tracing, tracking testing and cleaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Education will be notified by the local Medical Officer of Health, and will talk to the Principal/ECE Service Provider and/or ECE Centre manager • Close school / ECE immediately for at least 72 hours and up to a week. Based on number of contacts and timing of the weekend • Child, young person or staff member self-isolates • Child, young person or staff member is tested • Contact trace, track and test, with close contacts going into self-isolation • Cleaning and disinfecting according to Health specifications • Assess if other programmes can continue to operate (e.g. after school care) • Provide information and resources to the parent community and enable opportunities to ask questions.
	When a case suspected or identified in a boarding hostel (this situation could also occur at any of the risk levels 1-5)	Isolate boarding hostel or send students home if it can be done safely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All boarding hostels are required to have a pandemic plan • Keep all students in hostel until can confirm if case is positive, with physical distancing measures in place • Assess if students can be supported to self-isolate within the hostel or transported home to self-isolate. If neither option is viable for successful isolation of student, work with Ministry of Education and Public Health on alternative locations.

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Level 3	When there is a small number of unrelated local cases in the community (not in ECE/school) in one geographical area Possible (but not confirmed) community transmission.	<p>Increase physical distancing and encourage those who are vulnerable to stay at home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend anyone vulnerable to COVID 19 stays home (see Ministry of Health list). Online/remote learning options are provided • Limit assemblies, sports and events, and limit movement through buildings. Choose low contact curriculum options (possible more theory based for some subjects), consider moving to homeroom based teaching • Consider options to stagger learning opportunities (shifts, starting and finishing at different times) • Limit shared facilities (e.g. drinking fountains) and equipment (e.g. Chromebooks) or clean between use • Assess if other programmes can continue to operate (e.g. after school care) • Provide information and resources to the parent community and enable opportunities to ask questions.
	When there are cases from multiple families in the same school. Possible (but not confirmed) community transmission.	<p>14 day closure to manage spread</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeframe for closure most likely to be at least 14 days as staff will need to self-isolate, possible testing, possible contact tracing. All contact tracing needs to be completed in this time. If not, reassess – may need to close for longer. • Decision to reopen after 14 days would be made if there is confidence that multiple cases are contained based on public health advice • Cleaning and disinfecting according to Health specifications • Online/remote learning options provided. • Supervision/support for children of essential workers such as health and emergency services workers.
Level 4	When there is confirmed community transmission in contained geographical location.	<p>Close all schools and centres in a geographical location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following advice from Public Health, close schools and centres in the location • Close initially for 14 days, continue to review every 14 days, until Public Health advises to reopen • Decision to reopen schools in a geographical location would be made when there is confidence that outbreaks/multi-clusters are contained based on public health advice. • Remote learning options, project work, online learning for students. • Supervision/support for children of essential workers such as health and emergency services workers.
Level 5	When there is community transmission on a national level.	<p>Close all schools and centres nationally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following advice from Director-General, all schools and ECEs are closed • Close initially for 14 days, continue to review every 14 days, until Public Health advises to reopen • Decision to reopen schools nationally would be made when there is confidence that community transmission is under control based on public health advice • Remote learning options, project work, online learning for students. • Supervision/support for children of essential workers such as health and emergency services workers.