



Rathkeale College

Pandemic Plan

**TO SUPPORT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS AND STAFF IN THE EVENT
OF A PANDEMIC (GLOBAL DISEASE EVENTS SUCH AS INFLUENZA)**

Updated March 2020

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1. Introduction

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is constantly updating its pandemic plan and leading whole of government work to prepare for a possible pandemic in New Zealand.

Leading up to, during and post pandemic, leadership and direction will come from firstly the Ministry of Health and/or local health authorities and secondly from civil defence or local authorities.

The Ministry of Health can declare a pandemic event and take the lead. The Ministry's Medical Officers of Health are our key external contacts in a pandemic event and we will follow their advice and guidance, including whether to keep the school open, closed and when to reopen.

Health advice will change over time as new information becomes available. The [Ministry of Health](#) website has the latest information relating to pandemics.

The Ministry of Education leads pandemic planning for the education sector and provides information and resources to assist.

Our Pandemic Plan has been updated to respond to the coronavirus COVID-19

The key information sources in relation to COVID-19 for our staff, students and whānau, and to assist our planning and response, are:

- Ministry of Health – [Latest COVID-19 updates, information and advice](#)
- Ministry of Education - [Information and advice for students, whānau, and the education sector](#)
 - Symptoms, prevention and what to do if you're concerned
 - Important information for people coming to New Zealand
 - Travel restrictions and visa information
 - More advice for schools, planning, student and staff absences
 - More advice for students, parents and whānau including host families
 - Information in other languages
 - Wellbeing and support for our community
- NZ Government – [Information related to COVID-19](#), including health, travel, education, business and community issues
- NZ Government – [Prepare yourself for an influenza pandemic](#) and [Get Prepared](#)
- State Services Commission – [Workforce Pandemic Planning Guidelines](#)

2. Context

How is Rathkeale College preparing for a pandemic?

Pandemic Planning is part of Rathkeale College's Emergency Management Planning – we put in place plans for when an infectious disease outbreak occurs.

Our Principal and Board of Trustees is responsible for managing health and safety at Rathkeale College – which includes managing any potential or actual outbreaks of communicable diseases.

By their nature, pandemics are unpredictable in terms of timing, severity and the population groups that are most affected. It is not possible to predict how long a pandemic may last. There could be more than one wave of infection during a pandemic period – each wave could last for eight weeks. It is likely that schools in affected areas will be closed to students however schools outside the affected area may remain open and maintain “education as usual”.

Our Pandemic Plan covers all phases and has the following objectives:

- Objective 1:** We will take all practicable steps to protect students and staff from infectious diseases whilst at school or at school events. Minimising the spread of any infectious disease is a key objective.
- Objective 2:** We will keep students, staff and parents/whānau/caregiver community regularly informed and will share access to relevant information.
- Objective 3:** We will maintain as full an education service as possible for as long as possible during a pandemic event and will take advice and guidance from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education.
- Objective 4:** We will plan for alternative means of delivering education to our students and for our staff to work remotely.
- Objective 5:** We will meet our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to provide a safe working environment for staff remaining at the college and to support those who are affected, during their recovery and on their return.

3. Key Information

Pandemic Manager and Pandemic Response Team

The Principal will be the Pandemic Manager.

The Pandemic Manager will be the sole spokesperson for the school in relation to any pandemic related media enquiries or communications and will be the key point of contact with Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education officials.

The key Ministry officials are:

1. Ministry of Education: Hami Doyle (Regional Advisor 04 439 5081)
2. Ministry of Health: Local Medical Officer of Health – [Regional Public Health](#)

The Pandemic Manager and Senior Management Team will form the Pandemic Response Team and will meet regularly, as requested by the Pandemic Manager to ensure that pandemic plans are in place and tested, and to direct the implementation of the Pandemic Plan.

If the Principal is unable to perform the Pandemic Manager role he will delegate this role to a member of the Senior Management Team.

We will follow the Pandemic – Decision Making and Communication Process (**Appendix A**)

4. Communicating with our community

We acknowledge there will likely be anxiety leading up to and during a pandemic and this may contribute to increased absence and/or increased stress to the board, managers, staff, parents/whānau and students.

To manage this we will:

	Lead
1. Communicate early, clearly, and regularly with our board, staff, students, parents and whānau – particularly key information such as school closure, expectations during school closure, returning to school, school reopening	Pandemic Manager
2. Use the most appropriate and effective means (eg newsletter, website, Facebook, emails, staff meetings) to convey important information and keep our community informed	Pandemic Manager
3. Provide useful website links in all communications to ensure that the most up to date information is able to be accessed and to avoid duplication and information overload – Pandemic Plan available on request	Pandemic Manager
4. Provide the opportunity for questions to be asked and concerns to be raised and addressed	Pandemic Manager
5. Ensure that communications are, to the extent possible, planned weekly in advance, and are reviewed before release	Pandemic Response Team
6. Ensure communication trees for the board, teaching and non-teaching staff are accessible (soft and hardcopy) and up-to-date, with emergency contact details to circulate important messages	Pandemic Manager
7. Ensure contact details for parents and whānau are accessible (soft and hardcopy), up-to-date, and backed up off-site	Office Manager
8. Keep our school contact details up to date on our website and on the KAMAR system so that the Ministry is able to contact us via that system	Principal's Secretary
9. Ensure our key operating and emergency management contact information is accessible (soft and hardcopy) and up to date	Principal's Secretary

5. Supporting our staff

As a good employer, we will take all practicable steps to mitigate risk, protect and support our staff at the school before, during and after a pandemic event. We will continue to work with our staff, and unions, in good faith.

We will follow the advice and guidance provided by the [Ministry of Education](#), [State Services Commission](#), MBIE ([Employment New Zealand](#)) and [WorkSafe NZ](#) and will:

	Lead
1. Maintain open lines of communication with our staff at all times and prioritise their safety	Pandemic Manager
2. Support our staff to protect and, where necessary, isolate themselves from others and also care for dependents when required	Pandemic Response Team
3. Inform our staff about the relevant employment provisions in their Collective Agreements and other government advice regarding leave and paying staff (eg Employment New Zealand advice and Ministry of Education advice)	Pandemic Manager
4. Work with our teaching staff to develop ways that they can continue to provide education services to students, if they are well enough to do so, either in the event that the school closes or students are unable to be at school during enforced attendance restrictions	Pandemic Response Team
5. Work proactively with staff to provide support as they continue to provide education services to students – this may include assistance with additional costs incurred in working from home or other remote location	Pandemic Response Team
6. Ensure that our staff are aware of the processes and requirements set out in this plan and are able to apply these in relation to keeping themselves and our students safe	Pandemic Response Team
7. Work with our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider to ensure that these services will be available for any staff member needing additional support. Remind staff that EAP is available	Pandemic Manager

6. Protecting students and staff

To minimise illness among staff, students and visitors we will encourage and promote good hand washing (see **Appendix E**), coughing and sneezing etiquette.

We will follow [Ministry of Health advice](#) in relation to workplace infectious disease prevention, including restricting access to the college and managing staff or students who become ill.

Our pro-active plan includes:

- Practising good personal hygiene and workplace cleaning habits.
- Restricting entry of people with symptoms of the pandemic illness.
- Increasing social distancing (by minimising close physical contact and avoiding situations where staff or students may come into contact with infected people, such as outings to enclosed places).
- Managing staff and students who become ill, including managing their return to school.
- Managing any staff and students who are travelling overseas or who have recently returned.

Personal hygiene

Personal hygiene measures are encouraged and actively supported as a key way to minimise transmission of illness.

Hygiene notices will be posted in all entrances, bathrooms, staff areas and public areas. The key points are:

- Cover nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing (preferably with a disposable single use tissue).
- Immediately dispose of used tissues.
- Adopt good hand washing and drying practices, particularly after coughing, sneezing or using tissues.
- Keep hands away from the mucous membranes of the eyes, mouth, and nose.

The following key protection measures form part of our pandemic plan:

Protection measure	Where applicable
Annual vaccinations for staff	These are offered free of charge as part of our staff wellness initiatives
Hand hygiene, cough etiquette, ventilation	Everyone, all the time
Health and safety policies	Everyone, all the time
Social distancing - avoid close contact	Close contact is generally described as someone who was in near proximity (1.5 metres) of a person confirmed with the virus for 15 or more minutes
Disposable surgical mask	Sick people coughing and sneezing

	Staff having close contact with suspected infected people, for example, in sick bay caring for the sick (this includes first aiders). Active management of stock levels will be required
Tissues, hand sanitiser, antiseptic	As required. Active management of stock levels will be required
Disposable gloves, sheet and pillow protectors	For close contact patient care when there is a high risk of contact. Active management of stock levels will be required
Pain relief	As required. Active management of stock levels will be required

Using masks: We will follow [Ministry of Health advice](#) on the use of face masks.

People with 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.

Maintaining a clean environment

A clean environment is important to prevent the spread of illness. We will:

	Lead
1. Work closely with our cleaning services provider to ensure that cleaning is completed to a high standard, consistent with the advice from the Ministry of Health	Pandemic Manager
2. Implement heightened cleaning services in times of increased risk of illness, particularly the cleaning of frequently used surfaces and ensuring that there are adequate supplies of hand soap, paper towels, rubbish bags etc	Property Manager
3. Ensure that our cleaning services provider has an active Pandemic Preparedness Plan in place and operating	Property Manager
4. Make cleaning products readily available for use throughout the school, particularly for shared resources	Property Manager
5. Ensure air-conditioning systems continue to be maintained by our external provider	Property Manager
6. Ensure any areas of possible contamination are cleaned thoroughly using safe and recommended practices	Property Manager

Restricting entry to the school

Students who are unwell should remain at home. The Principal can require any student exhibiting symptoms to stay away from school.

Staff, parents and whānau will be advised not to come in when they are feeling unwell, or if they are exhibiting any symptoms associated with the pandemic illness. We will put up notices around the school (**Appendix G**) advising students about the pandemic illness symptoms and what to do if they are experiencing any of the symptoms.

In the case of COVID-19 the symptoms are:

a cough

a high temperature (at least 38°C)

shortness of breath

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have COVID-19. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu. Shortness of breath is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention.

To help stop the spread of illness, we will put up notices at all entry points (**Appendix F**), advising people not to enter if they have any of the symptoms.

We will use our normal communication channels to advise parents and whānau of our restrictions.

We will advise students, staff, parents and whānau that - if they have the symptoms of COVID-19 and have recently been to any [countries or areas of concern](#), or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19, to call Healthline (for free) on 0800 358 5453 or their doctor immediately.

Social distancing

Social distancing is a strategy to protect staff and students during a pandemic by minimising their contact with others. Close contact is generally described as someone who was in near proximity (1.5 metres) of a person confirmed with the virus for 15 or more minutes.

The Pandemic Response Team will meet regularly to review school events planned and may cancel any events where the risks of proceeding are considered too high.

Student and Staff Travel

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (via their [Safe Travel website](#)) and Ministry of Health (via their [Health Advice – Countries and Areas of Concern](#)) will publish appropriate travel advisories for people travelling to other countries infected by the pandemic. They will also provide advice for government staff and other New Zealanders in infected areas.

Once a pandemic is recognised, our border may immediately be closed to all incoming passengers and aircrew, possibly for several days.

We will:

	Lead
1. Keep updated on all government travel advisories and follow advice provided by government officials in relation to travel and	All staff

	any quarantine measures put in place for those returning from overseas.	
2.	Maintain a register of staff and students who are travelling overseas	Pandemic Manager
3.	Provide information about current travel restrictions and quarantine requirements to any staff member, or the parents of any student, who is travelling overseas and explain the requirements regarding returning to school	Pandemic Manager
4.	Keep in contact with parents/whānau and staff on their return from overseas travel and reconfirm the required conditions for return to school, including confirming that any enforced period of quarantine has been successfully completed	Pandemic Manager

Managing students and staff who become ill

We will actively manage students and staff who become unwell at school.

		Lead
1.	If a staff member feels ill and the symptoms mirror the Pandemic illness they are to contact the Pandemic Manager by telephone, go home and remain home, and seek medical advice	All staff
2.	If a staff member observes a student exhibiting symptoms of the pandemic illness, they are to contact the Pandemic Manager by telephone and take the student to the sick bay	All staff
3.	The sick bay has the amenities needed to provide temporary care for anyone feeling unwell. We will maintain this room to a very high standard, particularly after the room has been used	School Secretary
4.	A screening process may be undertaken (Appendix B)	Pandemic Manager
5.	Parents/whānau will be contacted and asked to come and collect a student who is feeling unwell and take them home. They will be provided with the contact details for health services	School Secretary
6.	If it is suspected that a student or staff member has contracted the pandemic illness, complete the Notification Form (Appendix C) if requested	Pandemic Manager

Contact management - should this be required for a confirmed case of the pandemic illness

Contact definition: The [Ministry of Health defines pandemic illness contacts](#) as:

- A close contact is anyone who has been close to someone with COVID-19. This can mean living in the same house or spending more than 15 minutes close to someone with COVID-19 such as on a flight, bus or train or in your workplace.
- A casual contact is someone who has had contact with a case but doesn't meet the criteria for a close contact. This could mean someone travelling on the same aeroplane who was seated away from the case. For example, they were only close to the person with COVID-19 for less than 15 minutes or were at the same place but not near them.

The Pandemic Manager may be asked by health officials to:

- identify contacts (once anyone from Rathkeale College is suspected to be infected – **Appendix D**)
- advise contacts in person that they have been in contact with a person suspected of having the pandemic illness (this would be done in conjunction with contacting parents/whānau)
- ask contacts to go home and stay at home until advised otherwise.

Managing staff or student return to school

Students and staff who have recovered from the pandemic illness are unlikely to be re-infected (they will have natural immunity) and we will support their return as soon as they are well and, in the case of school closure, when the school has re-opened.

We will:

	Lead
1. Check on any staff member or student regularly during his or her absence from school due to a pandemic illness	Pandemic Response Team
2. Ensure that ill students and staff, and those quarantining from travel as required, have completed any required quarantine period and are healthy before allowing them to return to school	Pandemic Manager
3. Welcome back and support returning students and staff	All staff

7. School closure and supporting students during attendance restrictions

During a pandemic, the Chief Medical Officer of Health or local Medical Officers of Health will provide leadership, direction and guidance as to what to do – remain open, close or reopen the school.

Our Pandemic Manager will establish contact, and remain in close contact, with our local Medical Officer of Health. We will follow their guidance and advice.

The Principal, in consultation with the Board of Trustees Chair, may make a decision, having taken advice or direction from health authorities, to close Rathkeale College based on staffing and supervision concerns due to staff absences.

Closing the school to students would not necessarily mean that the facilities will be closed in a quarantine sense. Staff may be able to come into school, work remotely, or carry out alternative duties, if it is safe to do so. The Pandemic Manager will make a decision about this and notify staff.

During a period of school closure, and where students are away from school as a result of any enforced attendance restrictions, we will:

	Lead
1. Proactively work with teaching staff to plan how we can best continue to provide education services in various scenarios	SMT
2. Support students to continue learning during any time away from the school, if they are well enough	All staff
3. Plan for the distribution of any resources to allow students to continue learning from home	Teachers
4. Ensure that any resources required to continue to deliver education services (eg IT services, photocopying services, access to websites, student contact information etc) will be available and maintained	SMT Teachers
5. Immediately advise our parent/whānau community of any decision to close or reopen the school via our normal communication channels	Pandemic Manager
6. Advise our parent/whānau community of the arrangements that will operate in providing remote education services	Pandemic Manager
7. Remain in close contact with our staff regarding their health and their ability to continue to provide education services	SMT & HOF's
8. Place a notice on entry doors advising that the school is closed (Appendix H)	Office Manager

8. Maintaining Essential Services

In the event of a pandemic it is important that people with core skills are available to keep essential parts of our school functioning even if it has been closed to students.

It is also essential that decision making and operational delegations are in place, including to make decisions regarding full shut-down of some or all of the essential services when absence rates threaten safe continuation of core operations.

To manage this we will:

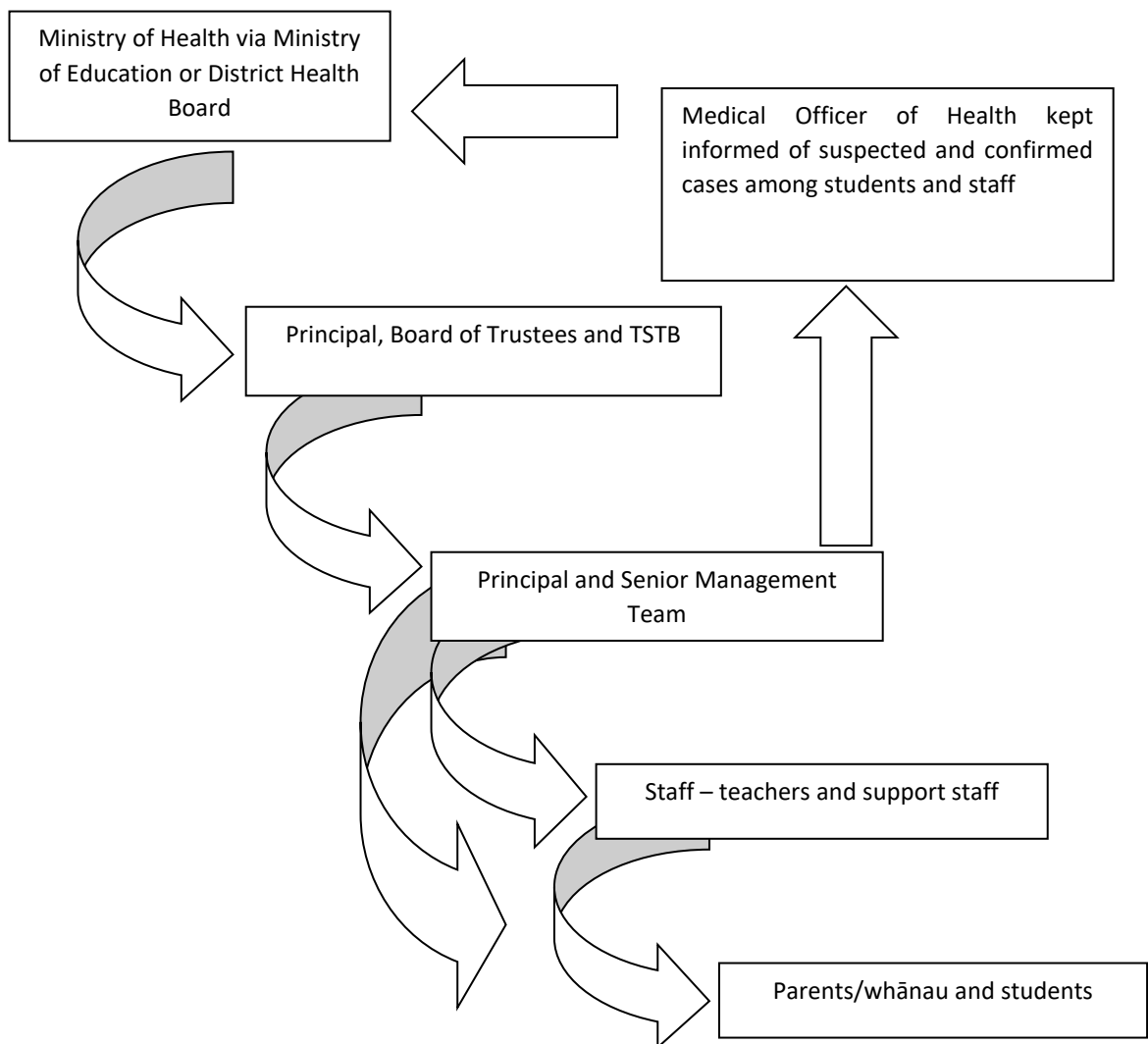
	Lead
1. Identify the “essential” parts of school operations that must keep running, and the key people with the skills required. This is likely to include: payroll, technology, finance, property (security, facilities management etc).	Principal
2. Ensure the key people identified for maintaining essential school operations are aware of, and are able to perform, the tasks required	Principal
3. Consider early “remote working” for key people to minimise the risk that they become ill	Principal
4. Identify other staff who would be available and willing to assist with maintaining essential school operations and ensure that they would be able to perform any duties required. This is likely to include: SMT support staff and School and Principals Secretary.	Principal
5. Identify the resources that will be required to keep the essential operations running and ensure that these will be available and accessible in the scenario of remote working.	Principal
6. Ensure that all relevant decision-making and operational delegations are in place, including Plan B's.	Principal
7. Ensure that key operating and emergency management information is stored in known, accessible and shared locations – preferably not relying on electronic storage only – and backed-up off-site	Principal

APPENDIX A: Decision making and communication tree

We will follow Ministry of Health advice at every stage of a pandemic. Ministry of Health announcements will be made through media reports and on their website. There will also be direct communication with education organisations from the Medical Officer of Health (DHB).

Any directions to close schools will come from health authorities. The Ministry of Education will assist health authorities to communicate these directions.

Pandemic planning - decision making and communication process for Rathkeale College

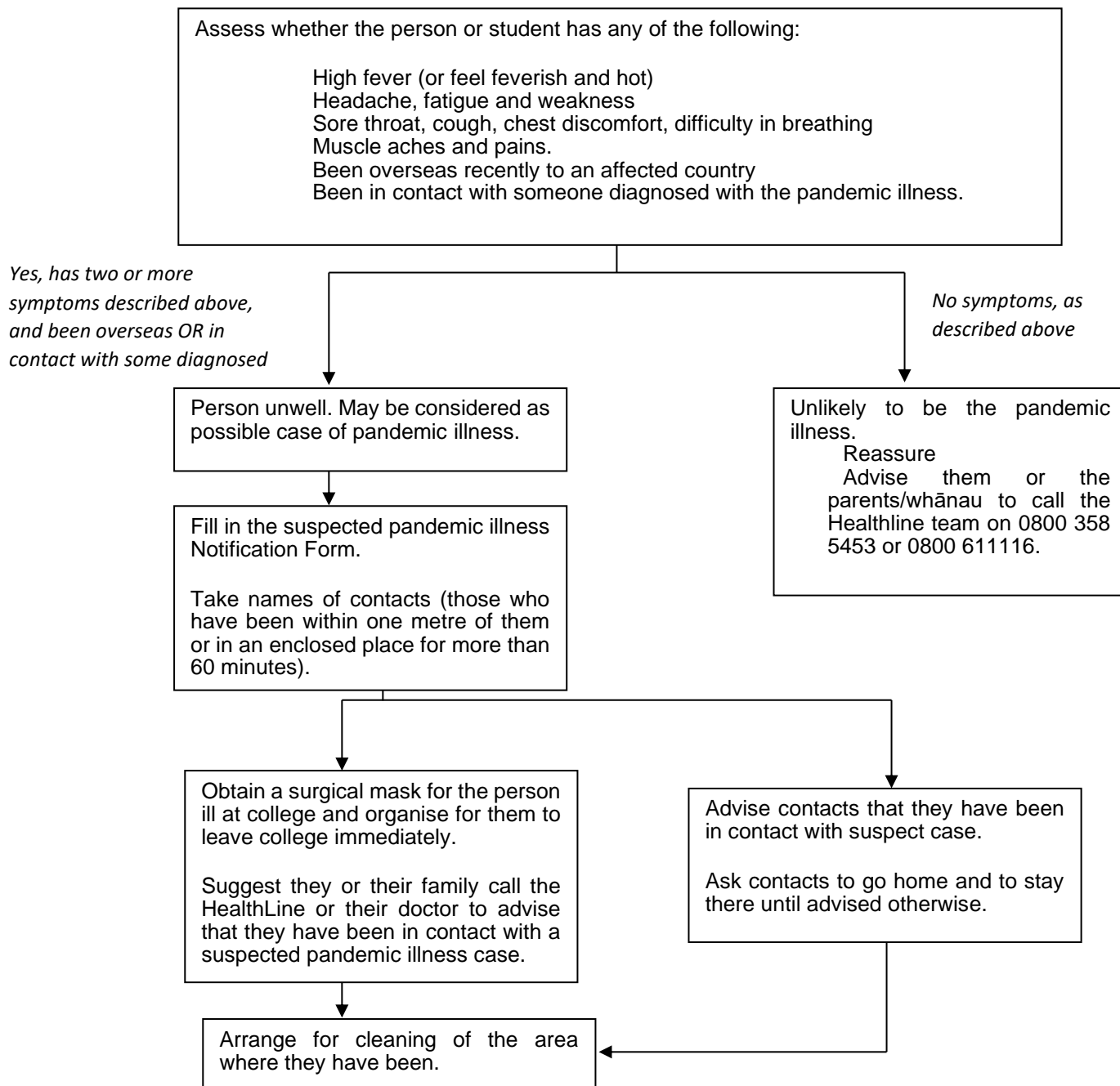


APPENDIX B: Screening Flowchart

For detection and management of suspected pandemic illness cases

Process

1. The Pandemic Manager receives a call from a person suspecting they may have the pandemic illness, or from a staff member who has noticed a student who may be ill.
2. Avoid contact with the sick person if possible and manage the process over the telephone.
3. For someone at the school who is ill, follow the flowchart below:



APPENDIX C: Suspected Pandemic Illness Notification Form

Details of Affected Staff/Students

Name:	Site:	Location of isolation:
Job title:	Nationality if visitor to site:	Date of birth: (optional)
Address:		
Telephone no: _____ (W) _____ (H) _____ (M)		
Symptoms noticed:		
Fever <input type="checkbox"/>	Body aches <input type="checkbox"/>	
Headache <input type="checkbox"/>	Fatigue <input type="checkbox"/>	
Dry cough <input type="checkbox"/>	Others <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: _____
Cold <input type="checkbox"/>		
Time of fever on-set: _____		
Time of isolation: _____		
Travel history over the past eight days:		
Countries visited _____		
Flights taken: _____		
Where referred:		
Contact List (See separate page)		

Where referred:
Contact List (See separate page)

Details of Reporter

Name:
Job title:
Telephone no: (W) _____ (H) _____ (M)

APPENDIX D: Contact List

The Ministry of Health currently defines pandemic illness contacts as:

- A close contact is anyone who has been close to someone with COVID-19. This can mean living in the same house or spending more than 15 minutes close to someone with COVID-19 such as on a flight, bus or train or in your workplace.
- A casual contact is someone who has had contact with a case but doesn't meet the criteria for a close contact. This could mean someone travelling on the same aeroplane who was seated away from the case. For example, they were only close to the person with COVID-19 for less than 15 minutes or were at the same place but not near them.

Use the form below to collect contact information. Retain the form and provide to the Medical Officer of Health or his/her designated officer on request.

People the affected person has interacted with since displaying symptoms			
Name	Email	Telephone number	Address
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

APPENDIX E: Best practice guidelines for hand hygiene

Effective hand washing and drying routines are a primary means of reducing infections in students and staff.

Many diseases causing viruses and bacteria are carried on hands and can be passed from person to person through direct contact with the person's hands or through objects or food that the person has touched.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own hand washing and drying and we create a supportive environment within which this can occur.

Recommended technique for good hand hygiene practice

- Wet hands, preferably with warm water and apply liquid soap
- Rub hands vigorously together and rub all areas
- Wash for 20 seconds (about the same time as it takes to sing Happy Birthday)
- Rinse well and dry hands thoroughly, the following examples are considered thorough:
 - **20** seconds by paper towel (2 towels 10 seconds on each towel)
 - **20** seconds by clean roller towel
 - **45** seconds by air dryer
 - **10** seconds by towel followed by **20** seconds by air dryer

Times when hands should be washed

- After coughing or sneezing (when the hands have been used to cover the mouth or nose)
- After using the toilet or after handling animals
- Before, during and after the preparation of food
- When hands are dirty
- More often if someone is sick

Rationale and tips for use of:

Liquid soap

- Lowers the likelihood of the transfer of infection from person to person.
- Wall mounted dispensers are preferable to hand held dispensers.
- Pump action dispensers help reduce soap wastage.

Paper towels

- Lower the likelihood of the transfer of infection from person to person.

Air dryers

- Hands must be dried thoroughly to stop the spread of infection (takes approx 45 seconds).
- Younger students may find air dryers frightening to use.

Warm water

- Warm water is preferable to cold water.

The Ministry of Education has worked with the Ministry of Health to produce these best practice guidelines.

XXXXXXXXXX NOTIFICATION

xxxxxxxxxxx is a contagious disease.

There is currently an increase in the numbers of people in New Zealand with xxxxxxxxx. To prevent the spread of xxxxxxxx here:

DO NOT ENTER if you have:

- chills, shivering and a fever (temperature above 38°C)
- onset muscle aches and pains
- sore throat
- dry cough
- trouble breathing
- sneezing
- stuffy or runny nose
- tiredness

If you start to feel ill at school or are showing any of the symptoms listed above, **DO NOT** leave your area.

Call the Pandemic Manager
Martin O'Grady, Principal

XXXXXXX NOTIFICATION

xxxxxxx is a contagious disease.

There is currently an increase in the numbers of people in New Zealand with xxxxxxxx.

To prevent the spread of xxxxxxxx in this school, you must **tell your teacher** if you have any of the following symptoms:

- chills, shivering and a fever
- onset of muscle aches and pains
- sore throat
- dry cough
- trouble breathing
- sneezing
- stuffy or runny nose
- tiredness

Rathkeale College IS CLOSED

DUE TO THE XXXXXXXX PANDEMIC,
THIS SCHOOL IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE

DO NOT ENTER

If you have to collect a student - please go to

For urgent enquiries, contact
