



Preparing your School / ECE for winter wellbeing

Information for ECE Centre Managers, Kohanga, School Principals, and staff

Here's some tips to protect your community, whānau, and those at higher risk of illness this winter. In addition to the recent measles communication, we will continue to see surges of COVID-19, influenza (flu) and other respiratory viruses through winter. Use the following messaging and actions now to ready your facility/school, to lessen the risks and impacts of any disease outbreak. We recommended you review, follow, and share the following information.

What's new and can be shared with whānau

There are four main illnesses that tamariki and whānau need vaccination against now – and all are **FREE**



Whooping cough (pertussis)

Pēpē and tamariki should get their vaccine doses at 6 weeks, 3 months, and 5 months. Booster doses are offered at 4 and 11 years old.



Influenza (flu)

Tamariki from 6 months to 12 years are eligible for flu vaccination. It is recommended that everyone over 6 months gets an annual flu jab.



Measles

All tamariki need two doses of MMR given at 12 and 15 months. If in any doubt that your tamariki have had both, talk with your GP.



COVID-19

Tamariki 5 years and older are able to have a vaccination.

You can also create a free, personalised routine immunisation schedule for your child at: www.immunise.health.nz/get-a-personalised-immunisation-schedule/

Messages for staff

- Vaccination remains one of the most effective protective factors for these illnesses.
- Flu infection rates are generally highest in tamariki, and they are a major source of flu spread – individuals who work with tamariki should get a flu jab to protect themselves and tamariki against infection.
- Make it easy for your staff to be immunised – bookings can be made via bookmyvaccine.health.nz/
- Please note the Boostrix vaccine for whooping cough (pertussis) is recommended but not funded for ECE/school teachers. Boostrix vaccination is offered free to adults at 45 and 65 years and from the second trimester of each pregnancy.
- It's important to keep your immunisation register up-to-date, including of all staff. Please keep it up-to-date by reminding parents to share when their tamariki receives immunisations. This will help us to quickly identify those that are most vulnerable.
- In addition, ensure you have an up-to-date contact number and information for parents/caregivers/whānau of tamariki in your facility in case you need to arrange for them to be picked up due to illness.

Prevent the spread of illness in your facility



Remind everyone that sick tamariki or staff should stay at home



Ask parents to let you know the reason for their child being absent



Encourage people to wash hands, cover coughs and sneezes, wear a mask if indoors in crowded areas



Regular cleaning of high touch surfaces e.g. door handles, bathroom areas



Good ventilation is an important way to reduce the transmission of respiratory viruses in indoor spaces where people gather and spend time



Learn the symptoms for whooping cough – it starts like a cold with a runny nose, cough, and fever, so it can be hard to recognise as a serious illness at first. After seven to ten days the cough becomes more severe and causes coughing fits that may end with a 'whoop', dry retching or vomiting



Share key health snippets regularly with your community – there are tiles pre-prepared for newsletter or website/Facebook. See www.rph.org.nz/snippets

Outbreak notifications:

- Please notify us of illness outbreaks above 15% of your total roll
- You can now notify us of any disease outbreaks online – see www.rph.org.nz/health-professionals/notifications/

Resources

- **ECE's** www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/early-childhood-centres/
- **Schools** www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/schools/
- **Snippets** www.rph.org.nz/snippets
- **CO2 Monitor** <https://temahau.govt.nz/covid-19/advice-schools-and-kura/ventilation-schools/assessing-ventilation>

Thank you for reviewing and sharing the above information and your help with reducing winter illness in our communities.

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