



**AVONSIDE GIRLS'**  
— HIGH SCHOOL —  
*Te Kura Kohine o Ōtākaro*

## **PANDEMIC PLAN**

### **Rationale:**

Avonside Girls' High School has an agreed procedure to follow if ever a pandemic alert occurred.

### **Note:**

This pandemic procedure is specific to Coronavirus (COVID-19). Should a pandemic alert occur which is not of this type the school will adopt and amend the document detailed herein to deal with the incidence appropriately.

This plan applies to the schools operating on the Ōrua Paeroa campus.

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## Why a need for a Pandemic Procedure?

- To ensure that as a community we have a pandemic plan in place as a component of our emergency planning.
- To ensure that we maintain as full a service as possible for as long as possible during a pandemic emergency (consistent with State Services Commission Guidelines).
- To consider alternative means of delivering education to our students (for example, digital learning options) during such an event.
- To ensure that Avonside Girls' High School is part of New Zealand's National Health Emergency Plan to help prevent COVID-19 spreading. School closure aims to reduce close contact between people (people have been known to remain infectious for up to 14 days). Closures may not mean facilities would be closed for quarantine. Staff may still go to work, work remotely or carry out additional or alternative duties for their employer or another agency.
- A pandemic may come in several waves. It isn't possible to predict how long a pandemic may last.

## Pandemic Management Team

Avonside Girls' High School Pandemic Management Team consists of:

- The Principal  
Sue Hume  
[principal@avonside.school.nz](mailto:principal@avonside.school.nz)
- The Senior Leadership Team  
Anita Yarwood Deputy Principal  
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Tanya Clegg Deputy Principal  
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Karen Powell Assistant Principal  
[kpowell@avonside.school.nz](mailto:kpowell@avonside.school.nz)
- Spotless Operations Manager
- Representatives from Shirley Boys' High School and Ferndale Satellite School

### **The Pandemic Management Team (PMT) will:**

1. Establish a system to monitor staff who are ill or suspected of being ill, including contacting staff who are unexpectedly absent from work:

- Has their doctor been notified of their illness?
- Have they been in contact with anyone? Have contact issues been addressed?
- Is someone able to care for them?

The process begins with staff ringing in sick to school.

- Staff need to report any symptoms that have been linked to COVID-19.
- There is a shared spreadsheet that is confidential to SLT.
- Staff will be required to contact Healthline and have medical clearance before they return to school.

2. Ensure Avonside Girls' High School has adequate supplies of tissues, medical and hand hygiene products and cleaning supplies.

### **Pandemic is expected to arrive**

The Ministry of Health will signal the need to activate pandemic plans. The Ministry of Education will keep regional and local Ministry offices, education agencies and education sector groups informed of these changes.

Leadership and direction will come centrally from the Ministry of Health, local health authorities or via the Ministry of Education. There may be widespread and immediate closures of educational facilities.

### **Communication with the school community**

It is likely there will be anxiety during a pandemic and this is likely to contribute to increased absence and/or increased stress to the Board of Trustees, staff, parents/whānau and students.

Accordingly we will:

A. Communicate early the possibility of a pandemic and Avonside Girls' High School's preparedness to manage it – to the Board, staff, students, parents and whānau.

Key communications will be through:

- Website
- School App
- Email Text
- Facebook

If we get a case in our school the principal, or SLT member will notify the principals of Shirley Boys' High School and Ferndale immediately.

If we get a case in our school we need to notify the Head of Learning Support immediately so she can notify vulnerable students and whānau, under her care. Other vulnerable students will be contacted by the first aid officer, or SLT member responsible for pastoral care.

B. SLT will discuss with staff possible health and safety issues and leave arrangements for them if they are ill or need to look after dependents.

C. The PMT has developed a comprehensive plan, which will be clearly communicated to the board, staff, students, parents and whānau.

D. The PMT will ensure that communications management during the pandemic is part of the plan. It will be important to have systems in place to allow our school to communicate effectively in a pandemic.

E. In activating the plan, the PMT will provide clear, timely and pro-active communications to the Board.

F. We have established a "communications tree" for our school to circulate important messages. We have considered how we will maintain communication with:

- Board, staff, student, parents and whanau
- other schools in our area/cluster
- relevant agencies and community support networks
- key suppliers and contractors

### **How will essential activities be maintained?**

The school will make every effort to maintain teaching and learning programmes. In the event of school closure teachers will be expected to provide programmes of online learning and provide feedback to students for their online learning.

In the event of a closure, students without personal devices will be issued school loan devices. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning continues for students.

In the event of high staff absence the PMT will make a decision around the school's ability to have all levels at school. They may have to implement a year level rostering home system, or combine class groups.

Staff may be allocated other essential roles to maintain operations.

**Subject Teacher responsibilities:** Support student learning

- Communicate with students in subjects
- Provide learning programmes
- Provide feedback

A work from home approach / school closure approach means staff and students will still follow their normal timetable. Staff will respond to student emails, teach students online, provide feedback and mark during this time. This will allow staff to be available to students, and students will be available to teachers at exact times.

**Pouako responsibilities:** Support student wellbeing

- Communicate with students in Ako class twice weekly
- Communicate with whānau weekly

**Knowledge management**

We have the following:

- printed copies of emergency contacts for staff and students
- contact numbers for key people at Shirley Boys' High School and Ferndale School
- a phone list of key contacts from the Ministry of Education.
- all student and staff details on Kamar
- phone list of contacts of other schools in the area.

**Protection and management of students, staff and visitors**

- Restricting entry of people with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Practicing good personal hygiene and workplace cleaning habits.

- Increasing social distancing (by minimizing close physical contact and avoiding situations where you or the students may come into contact with infected people, such as outings to enclosed places). As long as closure has not been directed, take a common sense approach on how to handle appropriate social distancing between students and students, and students and staff.
- Managing staff and students who become ill. If a student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 they should go to the First Aid Officer. She will assess the student in a space allocated for COVID-19 triage. If the First Aid Officer is concerned about the student being symptomatic of COVID-19 then she will be taken to the Green Room. The Green Room will be used as a safe space for unwell staff and students. Parents will be asked to collect the students, ring Healthline and advise school of the outcome. Once the Green Room has been used the First Aid Officer will notify a PMT member, who will organise Spotless to clean the room.
- - If a staff member is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, they will be required to go home, contact Healthline and advise the Principal of the outcome. Spotless will be advised so they can clean affected workspaces and teaching spaces.
- Managing any staff and students who are travelling overseas or who have recently returned from affected countries. Staff and students will have to fulfill any quarantine requirements and not return to school unless they are healthy.
- Being aware of staff with underlying health conditions that could exacerbate the virus. These staff will be placed on a staff register.

### **Restrict workplace entry of people with COVID-19 symptoms**

On instruction from the Ministry of Education we will put up signs, advising people not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Students who are unwell should remain at home. Staff, parents and whānau should be advised not to come in when they are feeling unwell, or if they are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms.

We will use the full range of our normal communication methods to ensure all staff, parents and whānau receive notices. We will also provide them with information about how to stay well during a pandemic, such as the [Ministry of Health advice](#).

Staff and students will be required to inform the PMT if they travel outside New Zealand, and they will be required to fulfill any applicable quarantine period and are healthy before returning to school.

Staff and students who are unwell with COVID-19, or symptoms of COVID-19, must have medical clearance before returning to school.

### **Personal hygiene**

Personal hygiene measures will be reinforced as a key way to minimize transmission:

- 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.
- We will ensure there is plentiful supplies of tissues and paper towels.

### **Communicate hand and personal hygiene information to staff and visitors:**

- Hygiene notices will be posted in all workplace entrances, washrooms, hand washing stations and public areas. See attached resources.
- We will use student notices, newsletters, global emails to share information around good hygiene.

### **Cleaning**

During a pandemic Avonside Girls' High School may be closed, and Spotless will need to clean thoroughly to destroy any virus. This applies particularly to hard surfaces (for example, sinks, handles, railings, objects and counters).

Surfaces that are frequently touched with hands should be cleaned often, preferably daily.

- Hygiene practices will be elevated.
- Staff and students will be reminded not to share cups, dishes and cutlery; and will ensure these items are thoroughly washed with soap and hot water after use.
- Staff will be given cleaning supplies, so they can clean their work stations and work rooms.

- When a person with suspected COVID-19 is identified and has left, it is important that their work area or office and any other known places they have been are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- Spotless will identify basic hygiene practices (including hand hygiene) to be followed by cleaners, protocols for the use of personal protection equipment (if recommended by the Ministry of Health), and methods for waste disposal.

### **Ventilation**

Spotless will maintain the air conditioning systems to ensure effective ventilation.

### **Social distancing**

Social distancing is a strategy to protect staff and students during a pandemic by minimizing their contact with others. Events involving large gatherings should be avoided, whether inside or outside.

- Where possible we will encourage staff to avoid meeting people face-to-face – use the telephone, video conferencing and the internet to conduct business as much as possible.
- We will ask staff to avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops or training sessions.
- We will ask staff and students to avoid shaking hands or hugging.

### **What is likely to happen when there is a pending/confirmed case of Coronavirus in our school?**

1. Following confirmation of a case, the Public Health Unit (PHU) will contact and work with the Director of Education to notify Avonside Girls' High School. The PHU will communicate with the school Principal.
2. We will work with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education to provide communication material for our parent communities.
3. The local Medical Officer of Health is the decision making authority when it comes to specific action around isolation and measures to prevent spread which may include a decision to close a school. These decisions will be made in discussion with the Director of Education.

4. The PHU will oversee tracing and management of contacts of the confirmed case with the assistance from the school or early learning service management as needed particularly to identify close contacts. We will provide support for this process.

## **Contact management**

### **Contact definition**

COVID-19, like the flu, can be spread from person to person. When a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks, they may spread droplets containing the virus a short distance, which quickly settle on surrounding surfaces.

You may get infected by the virus if you touch those surfaces or objects and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes.

### **Contact management mandated by law**

COVID-19 is a notifiable disease, meaning that some additional provisions of the Health Act apply to it. To reduce the risk of further infection contacts will be expected to stay at home and avoid contact with others for a recommended period. This period will be set by health officials and is not at the discretion of employers.

The Board of Trustees and Principal may need to:

- identify contacts (once anyone from the school is suspected to be infected)
- advise contacts in person that they have been in contact with a person suspected of having COVID-19
- ask contacts to go home and stay at home until advised otherwise.

## **Staff and student travel**

The [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Ministry of Health have advised all New Zealanders to avoid all non-essential travel overseas.](#)

Once a pandemic is recognised, our border may immediately be closed to all incoming passengers and aircrew, from other affected countries. All arrivals from overseas must self-isolate for 14 days, with the exception of the Pacific Islands. This advice changes regularly and we will follow the most up to date advice from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry of Education.

The school will follow the directions of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education around required self isolation, or quarantine measures, if these are indicated.

Planned school overseas trips will need to be reviewed and will only proceed on approval by the Board of Trustees.

Staff and students will be required to inform the Principal if they make the decision to travel internationally, and they will be required to fulfill any applicable self-isolation, or quarantine period and are healthy before returning to school.

The school will continue to monitor developments of the virus and put measures in place accordingly.

### **Best Practice guidelines for hand hygiene**

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

Many disease-causing virus 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 will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own hand washing and drying and we will provide a supportive environment for this to happen.

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)
  - **45** seconds by air dryer
  - **10** seconds by paper 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.
- To make these more economical, half-sized paper towels are available that can be used with standard dispensers.

#### *Air dryers*

- Hands must be dried thoroughly to stop the spread of infection (takes approx 45 seconds).

#### *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.***

#### **Where can we find more information?**

[Visit the Ministry of Health website](#) – for background information about pandemic COVID-19, National Health Emergency Plan, pandemic preparedness, planning, and latest updates.



# HANDWASHING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF.

Follow the steps below to wash your hands

- 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) OR
  - **45** seconds by air dryer

