

Te Awamutu Primary School

Earthquake Response Plan

This plan defines action in an earthquake affecting
Te Awamutu Primary School

The Classroom Earthquake Response

During an earthquake response, or at the first sign of ground shaking, students should react immediately, quietly and appropriately. Use the two word earthquake response command: "**EARTHQUAKE - DROP**", to initiate the response.

1. On the words "EARTHQUAKE - DROP" students should immediately take cover under desks or tables and turn away from the windows.

NOTE: This should happen quickly, quietly and without panic.

2. Students are to get down on their knees, face down, making themselves as small as possible, covering all body parts with the desk.

NOTE: Stress the importance of students looking down, not sideways and thereby risking facial injury caused by flying objects.

3. They should secure their 'shelters' by holding on to the desk legs using both hands. Hands should be positioned just below the desktop.

NOTE: Advise students that desks may topple or move during strong shaking if they do not hold on to them.

4. Students remain in this position until the shaking stops and you tell them that it is "ALL CLEAR" (safe to stand up).

NOTE: Stress that no one should stand up until you have checked the room for safety ie heaters/lights dangling above desks, broken glass on the floor between desks, which you need to clear before students get up.

Notes for teachers: Stress the importance of them remaining quiet, it is vital that they are still able to listen to your instructions and/or cries from injured or frightened students. Advise students that the noise that accompanies an earthquake may make it difficult to communicate.

Aim to have all students under their shelter within 4 or 5 seconds (count out loud). You may have to repeat this drill two or even three times until you are satisfied all students understand what to do. Ensure that you (and student teachers), also practice the earthquake response with your students. Your example reinforces the importance of earthquake response and ensures your safety as well as that of your students.

Remind your students to stay calm and take deep breaths to remain calm. You could ask them to count slowly in a whispered voice. Keep talking to your students to minimise panic.

Outside The Classroom Earthquake Response

Indoors but NOT in the classroom

1. In halls, stairways or other areas where no cover is available, move to an interior wall. Turn away from windows, kneel alongside the wall, bend close to the knees, cover both sides of the head with your elbows and clasp your hands behind your neck.
2. In libraries and storerooms immediately move away from windows and shelves and take appropriate cover.
4. During assembly students seated on floor cover their heads with their hands, get on their knees, making themselves small, crouched together. If students are on chairs, cover their heads with their hands and lean forward, face down to their knees and remain quiet.

In the school ground

Students should;

1. Turn their back towards the school building.
2. Move towards an open space, away from buildings and overhead power lines.
3. Crouch low to the ground, legs will not be steady.
4. Keep looking around, remain aware of dangers that may demand you to move.
 - a. Parked cars may roll around, large trees may fall and playground equipment or overhead power lines may collapse.
5. When the ground stops shaking all students should immediately move to the designated earthquake assembly area for a roll call.

Post Earthquake Response Discussion Topic Ideas

- Students discuss their fears and concerns about earthquakes.
- Students discuss how they can help and comfort each other during and after an earthquake in class.
- Students discuss how they can help and comfort each other during and after an earthquake when outside e.g. during lunchtime when they are 'on their own'.
- Check the yellow box file containing the Civil Defence education resources in the school's teacher resource room for activity ideas and videos to view.

Non-Teaching Staff

Instructions for non-teaching staff in School Emergency Guidelines document. Please familiarise yourself with these and take part in any and all Earthquake Drills.

These guidelines are from "School Emergency Guidelines – Civil defense" pp15, 27-34

Earthquake Response Responsibilities for action

This plan defines the responsibilities for action in an emergency affecting Te Awamutu Primary School

Practices and simulations will assist students and teachers at TAPS to become familiar with the immediate action to take to keep safe in earthquakes which could affect our school. The guidelines for practicing our Earthquake Drill is once a term.

Initial Action if Outdoors

Teachers 'on duty' and students will carry out the earthquake response as outlined and practiced in accordance with the earthquake guidelines above.



Await instructions from Principal.

Initial Action for Non-Teaching Staff

Non-teaching staff will take cover under a desk or doorframe and move away from glass areas if possible.



Non-teaching staff will check for hazards in administration and service areas.



Non-teaching staff will conduct an external building safety check and report to the Principal who will inform all staff of the situation and/or action.

Initial Action if in Class

Teachers, student teachers and students will carry out the earthquake response as outlined and practiced in the Earthquake Response Plan.

Post Impact Action if in Class - Calm and reassure each other.



Unless there is an obvious hazard (e.g. major cracks in ceiling or walls or possibility of building collapse teachers will keep students in the classroom (this is usually the safest place). Stay alert and await instructions from the Principal.



Each teacher will eliminate any hazard (e.g. remove debris near exits) in and immediately adjacent to their classroom. Extinguish small fires before they get out of hand.



If classroom evacuation is essential (obvious damage to school structure / teacher decides it would be unsafe to remain in class / instructions from Principal), the school's evacuation procedures will be used.