

Mass Illness Response Plan

TE AWAMUTU PRIMARY SCHOOL

Updated August 2022

Sources/References

[Derek Wenmoth \(2020\) Resilience Planning for Schools](#)

[TAPS: Framework summary - guidance for schools and kura](#)

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Over the past months the school has managed as COVID positive cases have occurred through our school community or as people have had to isolate. More recently, it appears that other illnesses are affecting our staff and students, requiring absence from school. Some of these illnesses have been serious in nature, and have resulted in hospital visits for some. For example, RSV, scarlet fever, influenza, gastric tummy bugs, slap cheek, hand foot and mouth.

The school's response to mass illnesses is similar to our COVID response plan. It has been reviewed taking into consideration the various scenarios that could play out within the school community, especially if multiple staff members are ill at the same time. Currently, our biggest concern is being able to staff the school in a safe manner and in a way that meets the needs of our students. While TAPS has a group of core relievers that work primarily for us, there is a real shortage of available relief across the wider Te Awamutu area, especially at short notice (as is often the case when people wake up unwell).

Therefore, this plan details the steps of learning we are prepared for if we have sustained, high levels of absence due to illness. Sometimes the decision to move between the steps will need to be immediate while others will come into effect with some warning. The movement between the steps needs to be responsive to school and community circumstances and will need to reflect government requirements (via the Ministry of Education/Health). We do not anticipate moving any further than Step 2, but we have learned from the last three years to be prepared for any eventuality.

Preparing at home for various changes that may be ahead will be helpful for all. Consider things like:

- Transportation of your children to school, if you are ill but not officially isolating.
- Who will care for your child or children if they are sick and unable to attend school?
- Can you work from home in the event school moves to hybrid or home-based learning?
- Access to digital devices in case of hybrid or home learning. (The school is unable to provide any due to contract restrictions with our lease). Is Chrome downloaded on your home device? For students in Year 3-6; can your child access their school account on your home device?
- Resources that you have at home - paper, pens, pencils, books etc?
- Are your contact details and address correctly listed with the school? It is important that you are receiving emails as this is the most efficient form of communication for over 560 students. Do you have emergency contacts listed in case we can not get hold of parents, if your child is sick at school?

The purpose of sharing the TAPS Mass Sickness Plan with you is to prompt you to consider your next steps in preparation for any scenario that may arise. We reiterate that we expect to stay at Step 1 and do not anticipate moving any further than Step 2. However, if you have any questions or concerns we are happy to discuss them with you and offer support where needed.

Kind regards
Sharon Griffiths

Stages of how learning will operate through mass illness/absence at TAPS

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4
<p><u>Onsite Learning - "Normal"</u> School is open to all students.</p>	<p><u>Hybrid Learning</u> Both onsite and home-based learning occur simultaneously.</p>	<p><u>Home-based Learning</u> Learning occurs only at home.</p>	<p><u>School Closure</u> No learning programmes available.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School programmes continue as normal. ● Majority of staff and students attend school as normal. ● Occasional staff or student absence due to illness. ● Relievers allocated to classrooms, reallocation of itinerant staff, or classroom splits organised to provide cover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School programmes are moderately impacted by illness/absence. ● 5-6 teachers are absent and/or class groups are having to stay home. ● Mixture of home-based online learning and school-based learning programmes are offered. ● Senior Leadership and regular relievers are called upon to teach. ● Online learning is organised by designated teachers to provide an online programme across the school. ● The rest of TAPS continues as normal. ● If necessary, hybrid learning may be instigated for classrooms or teams of students, due to a lack of relievers or teachers. ● School itinerant teachers may get withdrawn from their groups to cover sick classroom teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School programmes are largely impacted by illness/absence. ● Management, in consultation with the Board, will decide to implement home-based online learning. Hard packs organised <i>if necessary</i>. ● Majority of staff are unable to attend school and the pool of relief teachers has diminished. ● Priority for school based learning will be given to the children of working parents, without alternative care options. ● Learning at school for children who need to attend in person will be modified to suit the situation. For example, students may do online learning tasks or thematic projects. ● If teachers are sick they will be uncontactable. Another school contact will be provided in this case. You will be notified by email. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School programmes are heavily impacted by illness/absence. ● The majority of staff and students are absent. ● School Leadership must consider Health and Safety Risks due to lack of staff available onsite. ● It is no longer suitable to operate onsite or home-based learning programmes (previous three steps). ● The MoE, in consultation with the Board, will decide to shut the school as learning programmes are unable to be sustained. ● Priority of consideration will be given to children of essential workers.