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Early Learning Bulletin 17 August 2021

Message from the Secretary for Education

Tēnā koutou i tēnei ata,

You will have heard the Prime Minister and Minister for COVID say last week that in the event that the Delta Variant of COVID-19 is found in our communities we will be expected to shift alert levels quickly. I know that, like the Ministry, you will be taking time to check our systems and processes for responding to possible changes in alert levels.

Today's Bulletin provides an emergency checklist to help you work through a range of actions to ensure your quick response if it's needed.

As always, I'd encourage you to keep up good hygiene practices and continue to use the NZ COVID tracer app.

Noho ora mai,

Iona

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Feedback

Send us your feedback, comments or questions »

Do you have a question about early learning or COVID-19?

Send an email to ece.info@education.govt.nz»

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Heads up

A new resource!

Poipoia ngā ākonga kanorau ā-roro, by Dr Melanie Riwai-Couch. A literature review on neurodiversity from a te ao Māori perspective.

This report provides a Māori-centric view of ākonga kanorau ā-roro, learner neurodiversity. It will help practitioners and educators work with ākonga kanorau ā-roro and their whānau to provide culturally responsive and effective education and care. It also points to a need to build on the perspectives in the report by sharing oral knowledge and practices that work in today's education context.

[Poipoia ngā ākonga kanorau ā-roro – A literature review prepared for the Ministry of Education \[PDF, 959KB\]](#)

Emergency checklist for closures due to COVID-19

New Zealand has been successfully stopping the COVID-19 virus from coming onto our shores. However, there is every possibility that it might make its way into our communities with the new variants that are spreading in other countries. We all need to prepare for any chance of a change in alert levels and be prepared for this to happen at any time.

We have seen how quickly the Delta variant can spread from looking at what is happening in Australia. We must remain vigilant and be prepared for any potential change in alert levels.

We have developed a checklist for services to

use to help prepare for a change in alert levels, including what to do if there is a confirmed case within a service. Responses to alert level changes need to happen quickly so it is best to be well prepared if they happen.

[Checklist for early learning services \[PDF, 154KB\]](#)

We continue to have up-to-date information on our website about COVID-19. We have a dedicated page to early learning services with all the information you need to know about each alert level. This includes information on health and safety for each alert level, planning for a pandemic event and COVID-19 and wellbeing.

[Advice for early learning services
Planning for pandemic
COVID-19 and wellbeing](#)

Immigration and residency concerns update

Earlier this month we provided some information from Immigration New Zealand about Immigration and residency concerns. We have heard that this announcement may have inadvertently created some confusion and we are keen to clarify the situation.

Under the current immigration settings, most overseas teachers who are in NZ on a non-residency class visa are eligible for a temporary visa for three years. They are able to reapply for another visa upon the expiry of a previous three year visa, providing that they continue to meet immigration policy criteria.

We are aware the current situation isn't ideal for anyone and in particular for those directly affected. Border settings have changed over the past 18 months in response to the threat COVID-19 brings to New Zealand. The most reliable source of information regarding visas and border settings is Immigration New Zealand.

Find information on the Immigration New Zealand website or contact them on 0508 558 855 (free from a NZ landline).

[Immigration New Zealand website](#)

Teachers' Pay Equity Claim

Last year, NZEI Te Riu Roa and the Post Primary Teachers' Association/Te Wehengarua raised pay equity claims for teachers, under the Equal Pay Act 1972.

Their claims have now been consolidated into the Teachers' Pay Equity Claim. The claim spans across early childhood teachers who are working for employers which are involved in the claim, as well as early intervention, primary, intermediate, area, composite and secondary school teachers. This includes primary, intermediate, area, composite, and secondary school principals and tumuaki, and those doing the same or substantially similar work.

If you have any questions, including if you are involved in the claim, please contact teachers.payequity@education.govt.nz.

Notifying employees

If you are an ECE employer which is involved in the claim, you must notify your employees of the claim, including what the claim means for them and what their options are including whether they would like to stay in or opt out of the claim on or before Wednesday 18 August. No action is required for ECE employers who are not involved in the claim.

We have provided resources and information to support employers which are involved in the claim with their notification obligations.

The Ministry of Education is notifying school sector employees.

Multi-employer pay equity process agreement (MEPA)

Where a union raises a claim with multiple employers, the employers must enter into a single multi-employer pay equity process agreement. The agreement outlines how the employers will work together and make major decisions as a group.

We're working with ECE employer associations (Te Rito Maioha, Early Childhood Council New Zealand, Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand and Barnardos) to jointly develop a MEPA in conjunction with feedback we've received from the sector.

More information about pay equity claims in the

education sector or about how the claims are progressing is available on our website.

[Pay equity](#)

Border Exception – Family Reunification

On 3 July the government announced two new border exceptions for the education sector:

- one to allow up to 300 new teachers and their partners/dependents to travel to New Zealand, and
- one to allow the reunification of partners and dependent children of teachers who are already in New Zealand on temporary visas.

[Border exceptions for teachers](#)

Immigration New Zealand is responsible for the administration of the family reunification exception and applications are currently open. Further information about this exception can be found by visiting Immigration New Zealand's website or giving them a call on 0508 55 88 55.

[Reason you can travel to New Zealand – Immigration New Zealand website](#)

More information on the border exception for up to 300 new teachers, and how services/schools/kura can apply, will be released shortly, in advance of the Ministry receiving applications in September.

Free extra mentoring for beginning teachers/Kaiako

This is a reminder that the free enhanced induction and mentoring programme is available to beginning teachers/kaiako who had their initial teacher education disrupted last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The programme provides a local university-based mentor who will:

- visit the beginning teacher/kaiako at their service and do two-half day observations; and
- have two meetings with the beginning teacher and their work-based mentor teacher, focusing on supporting the

beginning teacher's professional growth, goals, and reflections.

If you have employed a beginning teacher/kaiako (or a newly qualified relief teacher) this year, they may be eligible for the programme. More information and eligibility requirements are on the Auckland University website.

[Enhanced Induction and Mentoring Programme – Auckland University website](#)

You can also call the Teaching Council on +64 (04)4710852 for more information.

Curriculum and assessment changes

We have set-up a webpage providing information about what is happening (and when) in the curriculum and assessment work programme. This is on our website.

[Curriculum and assessment](#)

This includes a series of infographic timelines that illustrate key milestones for curriculum and assessment work happening across early learning and schooling.

We look forward to working together with you.

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