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|  | **Policy Category: Health and Safety**  **Date Created: March 16, 2020**  **Policy Name: Pandemic Policy** |

ReasThe purpose of this operational policy I

**Reason for our Policy**

To meet the recommendations of the Ministry of Education to develop a pandemic plan in accordance with the *Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 2008 (Regulation 46)* and Licencing Criteria HS26*.*

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| **Position Statement**  Pukeko ELC aims to provide a safe environment for children and staff. We have a pandemic plan in place to ensure that children and staff members affected by a pandemic event are managed effectively throughout its duration. Alongside our own action plan, we will follow all requests by the Ministry or Health and/or the Ministry of Education. |

**Issue Outline**

In the event of a pandemic outbreak we will be able to effectively manage and implement our planned health and safety responses. By being prepared we will be able to better manage children and staff affected by the pandemic, reducing the risk of further spread of infection. Our Fee Schedule for families will remain unchanged unless more specific information has been directed to all families via Storypark. We employ and train quality relievers to ensure that any staff who require time away from work are able to do so with minimal disruption to our service delivery for children and their whanau.

**Policy Details:**

**General:**

* Our Centre will remain open for as long as safely practicable.
* Our Centre will open/close only after receiving instructions from the Ministry of Health, local health authorities or the Ministry of Education.
* In the case of the Centre being closed down under the request of the Ministry of Health we will follow our response plan.
* Management will work closely with the Ministry of Health and other relevant authorities, following their advice.
* We will maintain communication with other schools and Early Childhood Centre’s in the area.
* Our emergency contact details will be regularly updated and a process in place for contacting families.
* We will ensure the Centre has adequate emergency supplies of tissues, medical and hand hygiene products, and cleaning supplies.
* A process is in place for recording details of staff or child illness
* Management will coordinate communication to students and staff at different phases of a pandemic.
* Our Centre will ensure that all cases and status reports are notified to health authorities and assist health authorities to track ‘contacts’ of people showing symptoms.
* We will have a recovery plan in place.

**Implementation:**

In the case of an outbreak of a pandemic or the Centre being closed down under the request of the Ministry of Health we will follow this procedure;

1. We will communicate with families Immediately, following the guidelines from the Ministry of Health
2. We will put up notices at all entry points advising people not to enter if they have pandemic symptoms
3. We will display Information from the Ministry of Health on pandemic outbreaks for parents and staff
4. We will record details of all staff or child illnesses (we do this irrespective of a pandemic)
5. A system will be implemented to manage children and staff who become ill, involving immediate isolation and sending home immediately (both staff and children).
6. We will continue to ensure regular hygienic cleaning and sanitation of the Centre, toys and equipment.
7. All internal spaces will be well-ventilated
8. Teachers will emphasize hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette with the children and display posters.
9. During the pandemic period, we will not use playdough or shared food.
10. We will hot-wash dress-ups, puppets, etc and dry in a dryer where possible or hang in the sun to dry
11. If our Centre closes, parents will be notified, notices will be posted on doors and parants/whanau updated via Storypark and / or email.
12. We will follow the guidelines from the Ministry of Health on when children and staff can return to the Centre.

**Recovery plan:**

* There will be a debrief of the pandemic event for staff and families.
* We will ensure the Centre has been cleaned and disinfected.
* We will only re-open when we have the capacity of staff to resume normal Centre operations.
* We will continue to support and monitor the wellbeing of staff and children.
* We will re-stock our emergency supplies kit.
* We will review our pandemic plan and procedures.

**Alignment with Other Policies**

This policy is aligned with our Centre philosophy and other Centre policies including our Health and Safety Policy, Emergency Management Plan, and our Infectious Disease Exclusion Policy.

**Relevant Background (including Legislation/Regulation references)**

* Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 2008; Regulation 46:

1(a) The licenced service provider will take all reasonable steps to promote the good health and safety of children enrolled in the service; and

1(b) Take all reasonable precautions to prevent the spread of infection among children enrolled in the service

* Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 2008; Regulation 57: Health and Safety of Children

57(1) if the service provider or educator has reasonable grounds to believe that a person employed or engaged in the service, or any other person (b) has an infectious or contagious disease or condition may ensure that the person is excluded from the service and does not enter

* Licencing Criteria 2008, Health and Safety, Child Health and Wellbeing:

All practical steps are taken to ensure that children do not come into contact with any person (adult or child) on the premises who is suffering from a disease or condition likely to be passed on to children and have a detrimental effect on them

* Education Act 1989
* Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

**Review:**

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

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| Authorised Date: | March 16, 2020 |
| Review Date: | March 2021 |
| Consultation Undertaken: | Kathryn Flay (Centre Director), Val Parker (Centre Manager) |