



PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEW ZEALAND

TE AO KORI AOTEAROA

# COVID-19 Alert Level 3 Guidelines

Prepared for

Physical educators in Primary, Intermediate and  
Secondary  
physical distancing school environments

Physical Education New Zealand

For more information and support visit

[www.penz.org.nz](http://www.penz.org.nz)

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# How to use this document:

1. This document has been prepared for a New Zealand context, based on public health guidelines and our NZ Government Alert Levels. If using this for a different country, please adapt accordingly, and follow your own guidelines.
2. Senior leaders, HOD's, HPE leaders and teachers can engage with these guidelines and ideas.
3. Please note, there are different Ministry of Health Guidelines for Early Childhood Centres (ECC). The nature of an Early Childhood Centre is very different, and therefore all 'toys', 'equipment', and spacing rules need to be considered and adhered to. As children in ECC's are moving most of the time, we believe there is no need to treat the 'physical activity context' any differently to the guidelines on general play or handling of toys] etc. Therefore, the suggestions in this document are not designed for ECC specifically. Some suggestions could be used/modified if they meet the public health measures and Centre guidelines. These can be found here: <https://education.govt.nz/covid-19/alert-level-3-fags-for-schools-and-early-learning-centres#public-health-measures>
4. This document provides ideas for physical education or physical activity contexts to support physical distancing when equipment or sports gear cannot be shared between children, and they must be 2m apart.
5. These suggestions have been based upon the most up to date information released by NZ Government.

More on public health guidelines and Sport New Zealand's advice for play, physical activity and sport can be found here:

<https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Play-Active-Recreation-and-Sport-at-Alert-Levels-4-4.pdf>

More on the role of the school, and guidelines from the Ministry of Education for schools can be found here:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/covid-19/>

More on the general guidelines of Levels and what this means can be found here:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/>

6. We have based our comments on the types of movement we may typically see on school grounds. Physical Education classes, breaks and lunchtimes, play, fitness, sport and incidental movement (between classes, on and off school grounds).
7. These guidelines should not supersede your school policy. For example, many schools have been informed that the role of the school in Alert Level 3 is to act as a 'home'. This means teaching staff are supervising students to complete their independent online work in a safe space, whilst their caregivers or parents attend work. Therefore, teachers on site will not be planning, or facilitating lessons for students on school grounds.

Please follow the instructions of your school leaders on this matter. If this is indeed the case, you may wish to use the ideas within this document to support break times from online learning, and for quality physical activity experiences throughout the day.

<h2>What the guideline says.</h2>	<h2>What we can do about it as a school.</h2>
<p>Equipment cannot be shared.</p> <p>This means no sports gear or equipment that travels, or is passed from one student to another can be used (ropes, balls, rakau   sticks, rackets etc).</p>	<p>If you have a small number of students, and you have enough gear – clean the gear, and label it for each student. Have a place where this can stay isolated, and only be touched/returned by that student. This gear becomes ‘theirs’ and theirs alone whilst they are at school.</p> <p>This may not work for smaller children if they cannot keep the gear to themselves.</p> <p>Examples of physical contexts you could use if you have gear for each student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shooting hoops (own ball required and spaced out hoops or rotating time at hoop).</li> <li>• Throwing up to themselves, or to a wall/rebounder (own ball only).</li> <li>• Dribbling around a course (own ball only).</li> </ul>
<p>There is to be no organised contact or non-contact sport (including team practices or trainings).</p> <p>High risk activities or new skills beyond the children’s capabilities should be avoided. I.e. gymnastics where you cannot spot or support children that are inverted.</p>	<p>Individualise play, and encourage personally designed breaks – talk to your students about the situation. What do they want to do? Can they bring something from home that they enjoy to leave at school in a safe space that they could use at break times? Are they working on a skill or technique for a particular sport? Could you help them with this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about safety here – if the child can do a skill safely and it is well within their ability, then this is fine. For example, plenty of children can do a cartwheel safely, and therefore this does not need to be discouraged in an open space, 2m apart with hand washing before re-entering the classroom.</li> <li>• Discourage activities that are physically challenging for that child, which might require you to step in, or could result in injury. Now is not the time for them to learn a standing back tuck.</li> </ul>
<p>No contact sports, or games where children are close (within 2m).</p> <p>Playground equipment cannot be used.</p> <p>Outdoor fields, parks, courts, or artificial surfaces/turfs are ok but 2m physical distancing is required outside.</p> <p>No shared gym equipment is to be used.</p>	<p>Think about contexts where children can be 2m apart and do not need to touch or use equipment. Our suggestions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Physical distanced follow the leader.</li> <li>○ Creative/rhythm walking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Running/jogging/skipping activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Free running.</li> <li>○ Personal challenges (distances and times).</li> <li>○ Changing Speeds.</li> <li>○ Beach sprints (without the shared flag, just getting to a line).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Individual or 2m paired orienteering around the school field to find clues or pictures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This could be connected to nutrition or body care, ie. count the water fountains the school has, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cloud watching and being with nature. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lie back and watch the clouds, link this to meditation or yoga, get the students to listen to their breath and heartbeat.</li> <li>○ Get them to talk about why these calm moments are needed, and what sometimes gets in the way of these calm moments.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about their school crossings and traffic management/safety.</li> <li>• Scavenger hunt with items that are not shared. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blade of grass, a leaf, a sharp stone etc.</li> <li>○ Or pin some photos/images on other classrooms windows, and they can write down what they saw. This can easily connected to other learning areas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Biking, skating or scooting in marked out areas (on their own bikes or scooters they could bring from home, and park in the sheds 2m apart. Make sure they bring their helmets and protective gear.</li> <li>• Get students to make up their own games that require being physically distanced.</li> <li>• Have personal physical challenges, strength-based challenges or flexibility-based challenges that they can work on daily and see progress in.</li> <li>• Gardening – they could be provided disposable gloves, and could tend to a community school garden (spaced out).</li> <li>• Chalked activities that could involve leaping, jumping or hopping. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Follow the chalk patterns.</li> <li>○ Draw the numbers 1-20, leap from 1-20.</li> <li>○ Hopscotch.</li> <li>○ Leaping the ‘stream’ – a marked out distance that they try to ‘jump over’.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>There is a 1m physical distancing requirement inside, but this is more to do when they are seated and working on individual sedentary tasks.</p> <p>When we think about indoor movement and physical activity, keep that 2m rule in mind.</p>	<p>Some indoor movement contexts with physical spacing include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tai chi or other individual martial arts.</li> <li>• Mirrored movements, standing 2 m apart in pairs, one leads the other mirrors the movement.</li> <li>• Individual fitness and calisthenics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Could be followed or learned from the TV, or the teacher could lead. Choose age appropriate activities.</li> <li>○ They could then create their own and share with the class.</li> <li>○ They could make these unique New Zealand, or talk about likes or dislikes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Yoga or stretching.</li> <li>• Te ao kori.</li> <li>• Balancing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Task cards (pinned to walls, so no touching) with different individual body balances to try.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Individual dance (spaced out and mark ‘X’s’ on the floor of the classroom or hall). These could take weeks to learn and perform. They could be recorded. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sasa Samoan dance (awesome physicality and beat).</li> <li>○ Kapa haka or waiata.</li> <li>○ Recreate a famous dance move or learn a dance to a song.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Research indigenous games, school yard games and international games and see if there was anything, which was done historically that did not involve equipment. Try to replicate these with social distancing.</li> </ul>
<p>Use hand sanitiser and ensure proper hand washing should occur before and after physical education classes or movement/physical activity breaks.</p>	<p>Use this to connect to the HPE curriculum body care and physical safety. Children can learn about movement and hygiene, keeping themselves safe and how their individual actions can affect people around them. Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help with making signage, and putting this up around the school.</li> <li>• Creating notices for toilets and bathrooms with age appropriate songs to sing to wash their hands to, or things to read whilst washing their hands that correspond to the length of time they need to do this.</li> </ul>

Do not share drink bottles/whistles/bibs/bands etc.

Have signs up in physical spaces reminding students to stay apart and wash their hands.

- Stocktake the school to see if there is enough hand sanitiser and soap/washing places.
- Have a personal water bottle for school that is well labelled.
- Whistles are not needed. Don't use them. Make up some new clapping routines for gaining attention.
- Tuck away equipment that is 'tempting' to grab that we reach for automatically and out of habit. Bibs and bands should not be used or shared.

## Some final tips from us:

### 1 You know your kids, we don't.

- These things can all be factored into HPE programmes, or can be used as breaks to online learning based in the classroom at school, but you have to choose and adapt what works for your students.
- If you are using these ideas for HPE, remember you can learn many things using these contexts. Have a look at your HPE curriculum across all four strands to see what fits your learners. You could be working on personal health and physical development, movement concepts, relationships or healthy communities and environments.

### 2 Go easy on yourself.

- Older classes could plan and run these activities for younger ages. They could mark out courses, plan and prepare orienteering or scavenger hunts etc. This will take the pressure off teachers. This is a great example of the socio-ecological perspective and health promotion underlying concepts. Remember social distancing must be present at all times.
- Making other learning areas physical, and combine learning areas. Can they go for a walk to find something to write creatively about? Can they get their heart rate up moving and then learn about how the heart and other pumps work? Can they pace out an area in 'pin-steps', make equations or solve problems by inquiry that involves the whole moving body?
- Think about connecting the learning experience to things that matter, not just 'fill in' activities. For example, spaces and environments that exist in your school. You could get students to walk round the school, and note the things that need maintenance, things that are well used by kids for physical activity, places that are exclusive, or old equipment that is dangerous or unsafe. They do not need to touch these things, and they can walk 2m apart when doing this activity.
- Is there something children could do to be physical that could contribute to upkeep of the physical environment? Painting a mural, court lines, or old equipment (where paint brushes could be cleaned thoroughly, not shared, and 2m distancing could be maintained)?

### 3 Join in.

- If you are able to, join in. Any time your children are moving, try to move too. This will help build those relationships that children will be craving right now, and it will allow you to have a bit of fun together. We know this isn't easy, but we can achieve it together.