

EXTREME WEATHER PROCEDURES

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Wainui School monitors weather warnings (severe and extreme) issued by **MetService** and notifies our school community of any **school closure**.

If extreme weather threatens during the school day, we follow our **disaster** and **crisis management** procedures as appropriate, including monitoring **information sources** for instructions from local authorities. We may need to **shelter in place or evacuate**.

Storms

Storms may bring large hail, high winds, heavy rain or snow, thunder, lightning, and tornadoes. A thunderstorm warning from MetService may include one or more of these events.

If there is time before the storm arrives:

- bring inside or tie down anything that could break or cause injury
- turn off and unplug **small** electrical items (e.g. chargers, routers, landline phones, and devices) as appropriate to protect them from power surges/damage and to prevent electric shocks.

Once the storm arrives:

- if students are outside, bring them inside when a storm is imminent and/or you hear thunder (don't continue outdoor activities until at least 30 minutes after the storm has passed)
- stay inside and away from windows
- stay away from objects that conduct electricity (e.g wires, cables, and appliances) and any falling items to avoid injury
- if there is a power outage, unplug **large** appliances to prevent possible damage when power is restored
- unplugged devices (e.g. laptops, tablets, cellphones, and cordless phones) are safe to use indoors.

High winds

If MetService issues a severe weather warning (e.g. strong wind gusts, gales):

- move/stay inside and away from windows
- shut and cover all windows (e.g. pull the curtains/close blinds) in order to protect people from any broken glass or debris
- secure any unanchored outdoor structures or playground items that could get blown about and cause damage.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes sometimes occur during thunderstorms in some parts of New Zealand. Warning signs include a long, continuous roar or rumble, or a fast approaching cloud of debris. If a tornado funnel is seen, take shelter immediately, and:

- alert the school using an appropriate signal (e.g. reverse evacuation)
- move students to interior rooms with no windows on the ground floor
- move to the centre of the room and drop to the ground (making "a turtle") – cover your head and neck (or whole body if possible). Get under sturdy furniture, if possible.

If caught outside, get away from trees if possible. Lie down flat in a ditch or low spot and protect your head.

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Heavy snow and rainfall

In the event of heavy snow or rain, our school monitors the situation and considers closing the school. If flooding is a potential risk during the school day, we consider following our evacuation procedures.

Floods

Flooding may be caused by heavy rainfall, creeks or rivers overflowing, high tides, or a tsunami.

During a flood, we:

- follow the instructions provided by local civil defence and emergency management authorities
- evacuate to higher ground if required
- stay out of flood water as it may be contaminated
- turn off water, electricity, and gas if advised to
- move records, electrical equipment, and furniture onto higher floors to prevent damage if possible and safe to do so.

Extreme temperatures

When the temperature is very hot (e.g. heatwave), we:

- stay out of the sun and remain indoors as much as possible
- limit physical activity and encourage everyone to drink plenty of water
- recommend wearing loose, lightweight clothing
- keep buildings cool by closing curtains or blinds and opening windows for ventilation (air conditioned areas are used if possible)
- monitor the inside temperature.

When the temperature is very cold, we:

- use appropriate heating throughout the day
- encourage everyone to wear suitable clothing to stay warm, which may involve wearing layers under the school uniform.

We monitor for signs of temperature-related conditions and seek medical help if required.

Ongoing operations and return to school

The decision to continue school operations rests with the board, in consultation with the principal.

Before the school is reoccupied, we follow the Ministry of Education's guidance for [checking school property after a major incident](#). See [After an Emergency, Disaster, or Crisis](#).