
MANAGING THE 2020 SUMMER HOLIDAYS

New Resources

The following resources and templates are available on the Hub:

1. Managing the 2020 Summer Holidays (for returning students)
 - a. Message to parents about 2021 border re-entry and options for students
 - b. Confirmation of arrangements for the care of a student under 18 template
 - c. Accommodation agreement between the school, the parents, and the student for the 2020-2021 holiday period

2. Managing the 2020 Summer Holidays (for students changing provider in 2021)
 - a. Message to parents about 2021 border re-entry and options for students
 - b. Confirmation of arrangements for the care of a student under 18 template
 - c. Accommodation agreement between the school, the parents, and the student for the 2020-2021 holiday period

These resources provide templates for schools to inform parents of the option for students to remain in New Zealand over the summer holidays in order to continue their education in NZ in 2021, confirm with parents the arrangements for the care of the students at the end of their 2020 enrolment and get an accommodation agreement in place to cover the period between the 2020 end of enrolment date and the 2021 start of enrolment dates.

These templates can be adapted to suit.

Agreements and contracts

An agreement needs to be in place to determine who is responsible for a student and for what dates during the holiday period.

An accommodation agreement is linked to the contract of enrolment and will therefore only cover the period in which the student is enrolled. This means that, as the summer holiday period is after a student's 2020 end date and before their 2021 start date, there will no longer be an agreement in place between the school, the student and their parents around accommodation provision, expectations of behaviour and responsibility for that time.

While it would be possible for schools to capture the summer holiday period in a contract of enrolment by amending the start dates of a new offer, schools need to be aware that if students are under an enrolment contract the school is subject to the Code and responsible for them under the Code, and would need to terminate the enrolment if there were any issues that arose over the holidays that led to the student needing to be sent home.

Responsibility

SIEBA will develop a resource to assist schools determine their responsibility for students in a range of scenarios. This guidance will aim to point out factors for schools to consider when defining their duty of care and responsibility.

Breakout room discussion: Challenges and considerations in managing the summer holiday period

It is expected that 70 – 80% of the students currently in NZ schools will remain over the summer. For some schools this is normal, but many others will not have had the responsibility of having students during the summer holidays.

Holiday programmes

- Many schools are considering offering some form of programme for their students for part of the holiday period. This will take some pressure off caregivers, keep students engaged and connected and help make having to stay in NZ a more positive experience for the students and their families.
- Some regions and school clusters are working together to organise programmes and activities.
- Tertiary providers and language schools are developing summer courses
- SIEBA will post any information it receives from providers of student tours, holiday programmes or summer courses.
- Programmes will need to meet the needs of all students. Many students won't be interested in doing anything and will be happy to stay at home or hang out with friends. However given the length of the summer holidays this may not be desirable nor in the best interests of some students.
- Managing EOTC requirements; time consuming process completing forms, RAMS.
- Need to balance the amount of work involved in organising activities against the benefits and goodwill they create and students' level of interest.
- Getting commitment from students to actually participate in any organised activity may be difficult.
- School exchanges – swap homestays use SIEBA Message Board must ensure homestays are willing and parents are informed of arrangements and disclosure of all the risks and give permission.
- Any planning should anticipate the possibility for changes in COVID19 alert levels.

Managing the 24/7 phone

- Share the load amongst staff to avoid burnout
- Small international departments may need to engage other staff in the school to join a roster
- Put in place a backup for those who are not familiar with the Code especially in case of a critical incident
- Schools should be prepared for any changes in COVID19 alert levels

Host families

- Some schools are considering extra payments to top up families over the Christmas period for extra expenses and to encourage families to include students in family activities and holidays.
- Schools won't have extra funds to make extra payments.
- Won't be unreasonable to ask students' parents to contribute towards family holidays which involve extra costs.
- Students may need to change families during this period if families are unable to accommodate them during Christmas or on family holidays.
- Students may also not want to be included in family holidays – for example camping or other plans that would be completely outside of a student's comfort zone and experience.

Students living with a DCG or a parent

While a student lives with a DCG or a parent the school will not be responsible for the student. However if the school is organising activities these students could be included to ensure they do not become too isolated and lonely. Consideration should also be given to ways parents of students living in NZ can also be supported. Some schools are planning to offer holiday activities for the mothers.

Mental health challenges

This period may present higher than usual risks to students' mental health and wellbeing. As part of their planning schools should consider developing a clear contingency plan, set up a directory of resources and contacts of those available over the holiday period. Student wellbeing resources and links to support agencies are available on the Hub.

Over 18 year olds

When a student's enrolment ends so does the school's responsibility. However if students are planning to remain in the school's homestay it would still be reasonable to get them to sign an accommodation agreement and be subject to homestay rules and an expectation of reasonable behaviour.

Other

Water safety course

AgentBee has contacted regional groups and schools about an online drowning prevention course they have developed in conjunction with WaterSafetyNZ. Initially intended for agents, education providers will also be offered the opportunity to deliver the course.

Increase in student issues this term

Many schools are experiencing a noticeable increase in student pastoral care issues including declining attendance, online bullying, lack of motivation. Students are struggling and do need extra support during these difficult times.