



Learning in a Covid-19 World:

The Impact of Covid-19 on Schools

REPORT



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Introduction

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on all aspects of life around the world. In Aotearoa New Zealand, significant disruption to schooling has occurred through national lockdown (when schools and other educational facilities were closed), local lockdown (in Auckland), closure of individual schools (in response to Covid-19 cases), and from the ongoing uncertainty and new requirements (for example, cleaning and social distancing).

Under national lockdown from 25 March to 13 May 2020, schools and other educational facilities were closed. From 27 April to 13 May, schools reopened for the children of essential workers, but the majority of students continued to learn from home until schools fully reopened as the country moved into Alert Level 2 at 11:59pm on 13 May.

On 11 August 2020, four new cases of Covid-19 were recorded in the community and most students in Auckland learnt from home from 12 August to 30 August.

Through this difficult time schools have innovated, working with students to deliver education differently and engaging with families and whānau in new ways.

The virus continues to spread in other countries; we continue to record new cases in managed isolation at the border; and the possibility remains that schools may have to return to teaching and learning from home as part of new regional or national lockdowns.

To inform how we support students going forward, we need to understand the impact Covid-19 has had so far on students and capture and share successful responses by schools. ERO has undertaken a programme of work to understand:

- What the impact of Covid-19 has been on students, teachers, and schools
- How schools responded to the Covid-19 crisis, and what lessons can be learned
- What the challenges are going forward.

Together these questions provide a picture of where students were at towards the end of 2020 and can help inform schools, families and whānau on how they can support students in 2021 and going forward.

About this report

ERO collected a wide range of data to understand the impact of Covid-19 at English medium schools. ERO spoke to students, teachers, principals, parents and whānau using a mix of surveys, interviews and focus groups. The data was collected while students were learning from home and after students had returned to learning at school.

The data collected by ERO included:

- surveys, during lockdown, of 10,106 students and 694 teachers
- surveys, after lockdown, of 1,777 principals, 4,666 students and 686 teachers
- 740 interviews with principals, board chairs and teachers
- 36 focus groups with teachers, trustees, students and whānau.

This report looks at the impact of Covid-19 on students at English-medium schools (ages 5-18). The impact on children in English-medium early learning services is covered in our companion report *Learning in a Covid-19 World: The Impact of Covid-19 on Early Childhood Education Services* and the impact of students in Māori-medium early learning services and schools is set out in our report *Te kahu Whakahaumarū – Ngā mahi a te rangai mātauranga Māori*.

ERO is very grateful for the time of all those who we spoke to while researching for this report. We would like to thank all the students, parents and whānau, teachers, principals and trustees for generously sharing their experiences and challenges during and after lockdown.

Further details on data collection and analysis are given in Appendix 1.

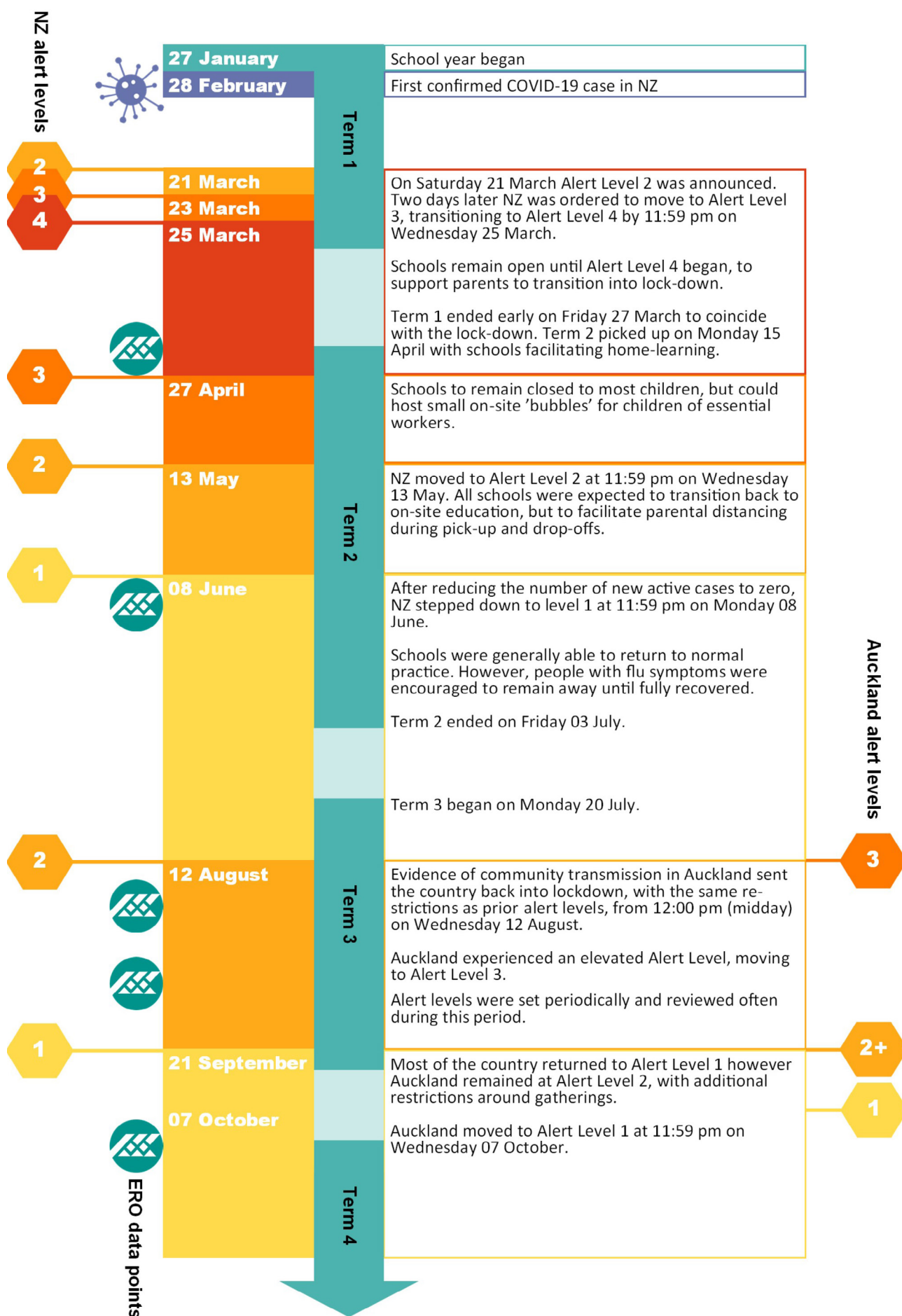
This report sets out what we have found about the impact of Covid-19 to date:

- **Part 1** sets out the impact on student wellbeing, engagement and learning.
- **Part 2** sets out what was different for Māori and Pacific students, low decile schools (schools in low socio-economic communities) and schools in Auckland.
- **Part 3** sets out the impact on teacher and principal wellbeing.

In each section we set out what we saw, what challenges schools and students face, and what responses schools found effective.

In **Part 4** we draw this together into the key lessons going forward and practical steps schools and the sector can take to respond to ongoing challenges. In **Part 5** we look at next steps.

There are short vignettes (in green boxes) throughout the report which highlight specific experiences of respondents, or actions undertaken by schools. For privacy reasons, all names have been changed.



Part 1: The impact on student wellbeing, engagement and learning

The disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic meant that students had to quickly adapt to a range of new experiences. Over a relatively short period of time, students had to quickly learn how to live in their bubble, manage their own learning from home and then transition themselves back into a classroom environment. In this section, we look at how well students coped with all these changes, what the challenges were and what worked to support them.

1. What we found: Student wellbeing

There are two key aspects to education outcomes – wellbeing and achievement. They are linked and reinforce each other. Student wellbeing is both important in its own right, and because it is a key factor in enabling learning. This section sets out what we found on the impact of Covid-19 on student wellbeing while they were learning from home and after they returned to school.

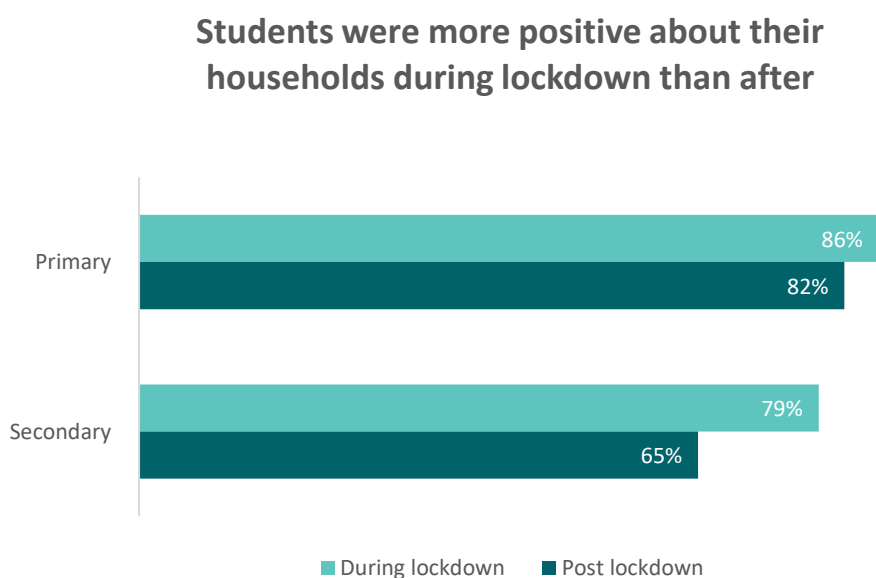
What did we see?

Students were struggling more after lockdown than they were in lockdown

Students reported high levels of household wellbeing during lockdown. Eighty four percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe from Covid-19 while learning at home.

However, students, especially in secondary schools, were less positive about their households' wellbeing after lockdown.

FIGURE 1: Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that their bubble/household was doing well, during and after lockdown

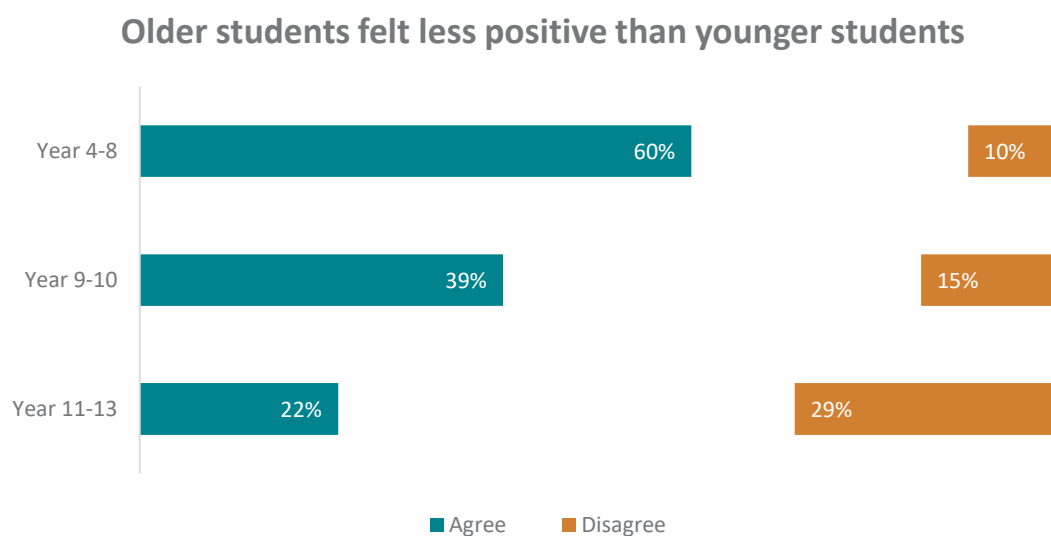


And while only 4 percent of students disagreed that their household was doing well, for these students and their whānau it had been a difficult time.

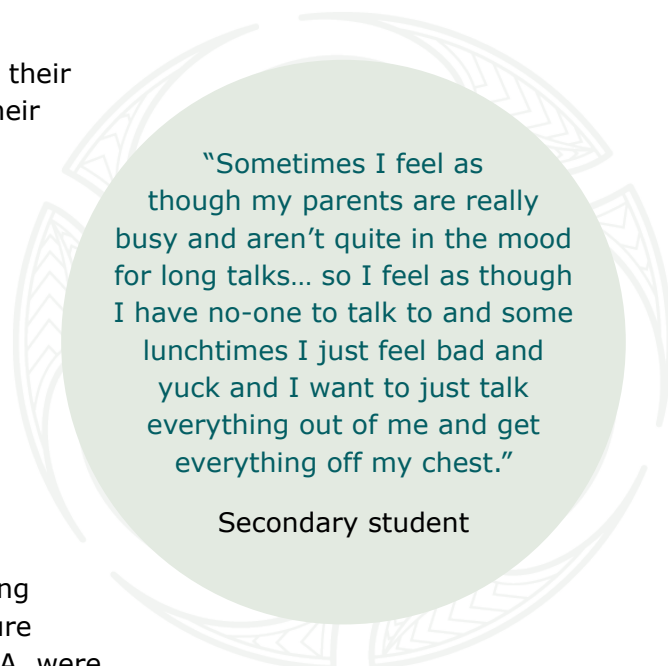
While 62 percent of students reported that they felt happy most or all of the time, on a few key measures of student wellbeing there were reasons for concern. A group of students clearly faced significant wellbeing challenges. **Students were four times as likely as principals and teachers to report that they never feel happy.** Older students reported being less happy than younger students.

Worryingly, after Auckland's second lockdown, a significant number of senior students were not feeling positive about the rest of the year. As shown in Figure 2, older students, especially those undertaking NCEA, were much less positive than younger students **with nearly a third saying they did not feel positive about the rest of the year.**

FIGURE 2: Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed that they were feeling positive about the rest of the year (2020)



These ongoing concerns about student wellbeing were also reported by teachers. In interviews, teachers and leaders told ERO that most students were initially excited and keen to return and re-connect but that student wellbeing and behavioural issues had subsequently started to increase.



What were the challenges in student wellbeing?

We have found two main ongoing challenges in student wellbeing. These are:

- Heightened anxiety about Covid-19
- Workload for senior secondary students

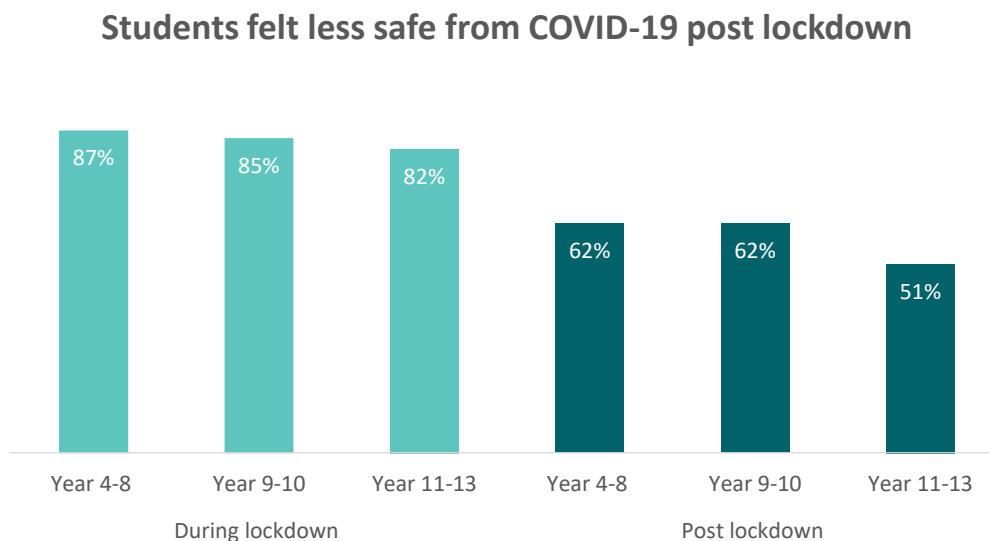
Anxiety in the community

Principals and teachers have identified that student and whānau anxiety about health and safety was higher after the lockdowns than previously. Only 58 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that they were feeling safe from Covid-19, down from the 85 percent who had agreed or strongly agreed that they had felt safe from Covid-19 while learning from home during the lockdown. Ten percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were feeling safe from Covid-19.

These data were collected just after the end of Auckland's second lockdown, so this finding is very likely influenced by awareness of the ongoing threat of Covid-19.

Figure 3 shows that the increase in anxiety was apparent across all students. NCEA students (Year 11-13) were the most impacted, with only half saying they felt safe from Covid-19.

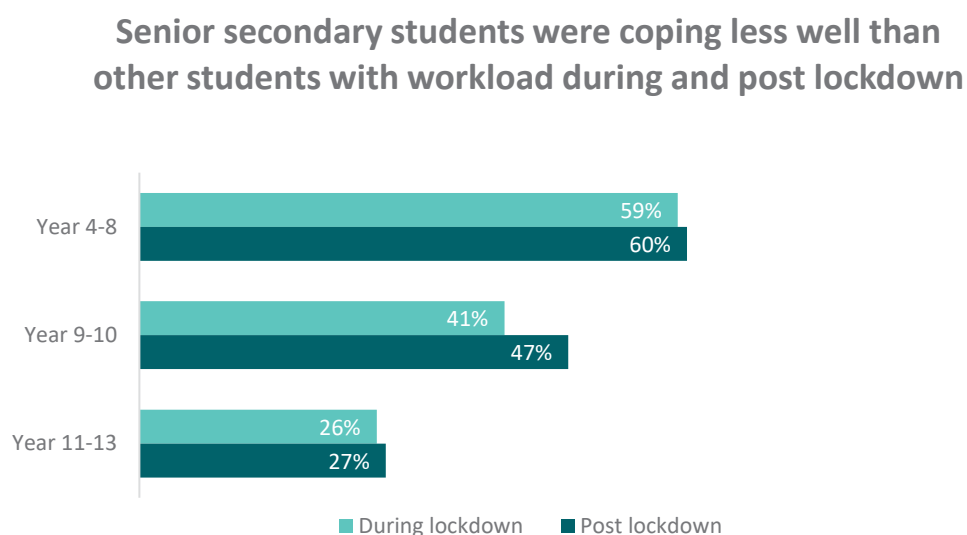
FIGURE 3: Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that they were feeling safe from Covid-19, during lockdown and post lockdown



Workload for senior secondary students

NCEA (Year 11-13) students have consistently reported that they are struggling with their workload. These students' concerns have not improved after lockdown, whereas Year 9 and 10 secondary students reported a slight improvement in coping with their schoolwork after lockdown.

FIGURE 4: Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed that they were coping with their schoolwork, during lockdown and post lockdown



These issues may have started in lockdown. It is clear that senior secondary students found it more difficult learning from home. A quarter (26 percent) of senior secondary students (Year 11 – 13) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were coping well with their schoolwork while learning at home. These students were less likely to report having someone at home who could help with their schoolwork. It is possible that parents and whānau found it harder to help senior secondary students because their schoolwork is more advanced than primary school students. Students cited workload pressures and timely access to support from teachers as particular challenges during the lockdown.

These senior secondary students have also encountered changes to their NCEA assessment schedules, changes to credit requirements and ongoing uncertainty due to Covid-19 of what exams they will be able to sit when. Together this may have contributed to their feeling of not being able to cope with their workload.

“It’s really stressful because my work is so hard and it’s not like I can constantly ask my teacher 100 questions and I don’t have the same support that I would at school.”

Senior secondary student

What has worked in supporting wellbeing?

Schools have been innovative in the new practices they have put in place to support student wellbeing. There are three main themes in how schools supported student wellbeing during lockdown and now that students have returned to school:

- prioritising wellbeing and managing pressure
- building relationships with whānau
- providing material support to whānau.

Prioritising wellbeing and managing pressure

Schools supported student wellbeing both during lockdown and afterwards. During lockdown:

- **Ninety-one percent of schools specifically cited increased or improved communication as being a crucial support** they had provided. Teachers used a combination of phone calls, emails, video calling and other digital platforms to regularly check in with students and whānau. This was key to maintaining student engagement and was a way of monitoring student and whānau wellbeing.
- **Seventy percent of leaders reported that they had explicitly prioritised student wellbeing** over academic learning. School leaders recognised that they could not expect the normal level of engagement and workload during lockdown and made it clear to students and whānau that learning was second to wellbeing. Some schools reported modifying their curriculum to include more fun activities, and to encourage students to engage in physical activity as appropriate. A teacher in one of the focus groups said that they had switched from providing a weekly email of tasks, to a daily email, to avoid overwhelming students. Both students and whānau reported to ERO during focus groups that they appreciated the flexibility of timetabling during lockdown and learning that connected to their home contexts.

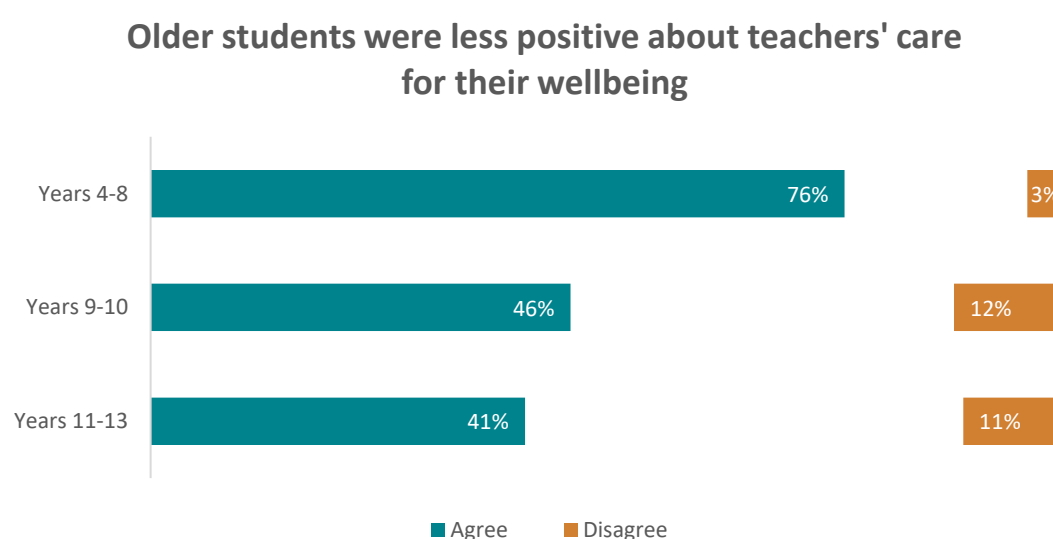
After lockdown:

- Schools largely sought to manage pressures on student wellbeing after the lockdown, and pursued a range of strategies to achieve this, including:
 - increasing funding for counselling and guidance services
 - delivering coaching programmes
 - providing explicit reassurance for anxious students
 - deliberate teaching of social-emotional skills
 - allowing flexibility for break and mealtimes
 - mindfulness skills
 - physical activities
 - kindness circles.

In focus groups students told ERO that a range of school initiatives supported their wellbeing, but our survey indicates that these strategies may have been more effective with younger students. Figure 5 shows that, when surveyed after the lockdown, primary students were more likely to agree that they had teachers who cared about their wellbeing than secondary students:

- Seventy-six percent of Year 4-8 students reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers cared about their wellbeing, and only 3 percent disagree or strongly disagree.
- Forty-six percent of Year 9-10 students agreed or strongly agreed and 12 percent disagree.
- Forty-one percent of Year 11-13 students agreed or strongly agreed and 11 percent disagree.

FIGURE 5: *Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed that their teachers cared about their wellbeing, post lockdown, by year group*



Building relationships with whānau

Around a quarter of leaders specifically reported greater whānau involvement and integration of home and school learning as a success over the lockdown period. Many leaders reported that regular communication helped to strengthen teacher relationships with whānau and gave whānau greater insight into their children's learning.

In 27 percent of schools, leaders reported that they were proud of the way their communities had come together in a crisis and that the experience had had some benefits in terms of building connections. One principal told ERO that it was "like having five years (of relationship-building) in seven weeks".

These findings were echoed by parents and whānau in the focus groups. Parents and whānau told ERO that they appreciated how schools had supported their children’s wellbeing. They noted that schools had done a good job of managing pressure by:

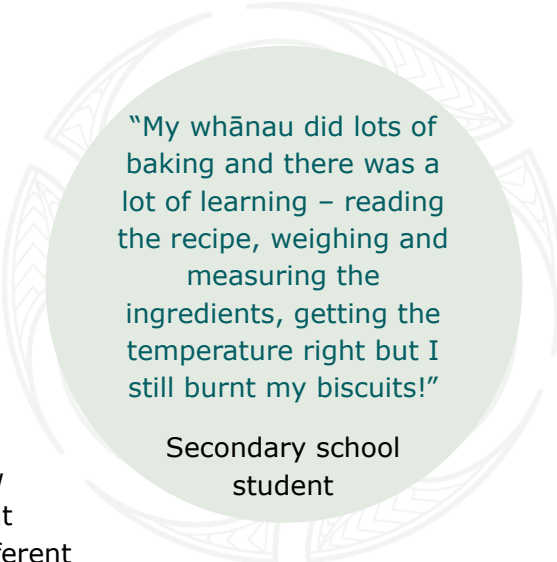
- making learning from home fun
- giving students resources and opportunities to do work, but giving them choices rather than making things compulsory
- encouraging children to do new activities like gardening and cooking to learn in different ways
- having a focus on caring for one another.

They also appreciated routines and regular check-ins from teachers, which helped them to know what to expect and gave them a feeling of relative normality and structure. During the lockdown 80 percent of students surveyed said they had been contacted by their teacher to see if they were okay. Families felt supported by schools and received enough information that they felt informed, but not so much that they were overwhelmed.

Some parents told ERO that they found it helpful to know that they didn’t have to take on the teacher role, and that teachers understood that parents were themselves in different situations and had different levels of capacity and capability to help with their children’s learning.


Schools reported continuing these stronger relationships after lockdown. In particular they have seen:

- whānau more engaged and interested in their children’s learning
- a greater sense of openness and trust between whānau and the school
- collaboration has been cemented into teaching practice.



“My whānau did lots of baking and there was a lot of learning – reading the recipe, weighing and measuring the ingredients, getting the temperature right but I still burnt my biscuits!”

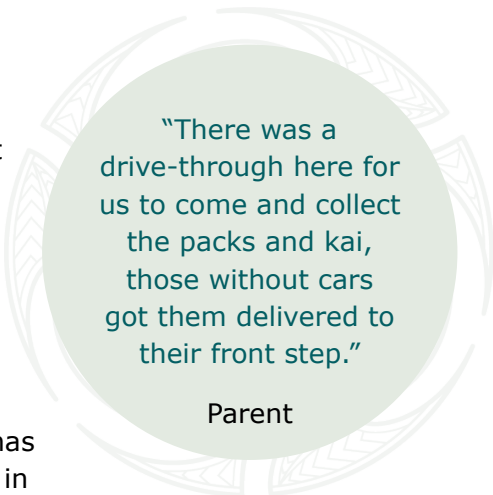
Secondary school student



Due to the lockdown and our concern with the lack of books in family homes we started, in Term 2 and continued this term, to have members of the community, usually retired people, come in and read to children and listen to them read. This has been very positive for the children who get to read their readers more than once a day and they are also developing relationships with older people in a positive way. One of the 'Reading Angels' told me that her doctor suggested she come into school to support her feelings of being lonely. So, everyone is winning in this scenario.

Teacher

In addition to stronger school and whānau relationships, for some students, there has been a strengthening of their own relationships with their whānau. Some students indicated that lockdown provided an opportunity to spend time with their whānau that would not normally be available. Parents and whānau echoed this, saying they had seen lockdown as an opportunity for reconnecting and talking with their children.



“There was a drive-through here for us to come and collect the packs and kai, those without cars got them delivered to their front step.”

Parent

Providing material support to whānau

Another way that relationships between schools and whānau has been strengthened was through schools taking a broader role in supporting whānau. In 23 percent of schools interviewed at Alert Level 3, leaders reported that they had distributed care packages during lockdown, including food parcels and clothing, to whānau in their community, often in conjunction with KidsCan or local marae. These were largely low decile schools (students from low socio-economic communities) and leaders cited Covid-related job losses and financial pressures on whānau as a trigger for this support.

Where schools had sent care packages of hygiene materials and food, these were greatly appreciated.

Sadly, 28 percent of school leaders in the interviews reported having concerns for the safety and wellbeing of some of their students in their home situations.

2. What we found: Student engagement

In order to learn, students need to be present and actively participating. When students are enjoying their learning, they are engaged and more likely to attend. Attendance and positive engagement in learning are concerns for the schooling sector in normal times, but Covid-19 has presented additional challenges.

What did we see?

We have found two main ways Covid-19 has impacted on student engagement. These are:

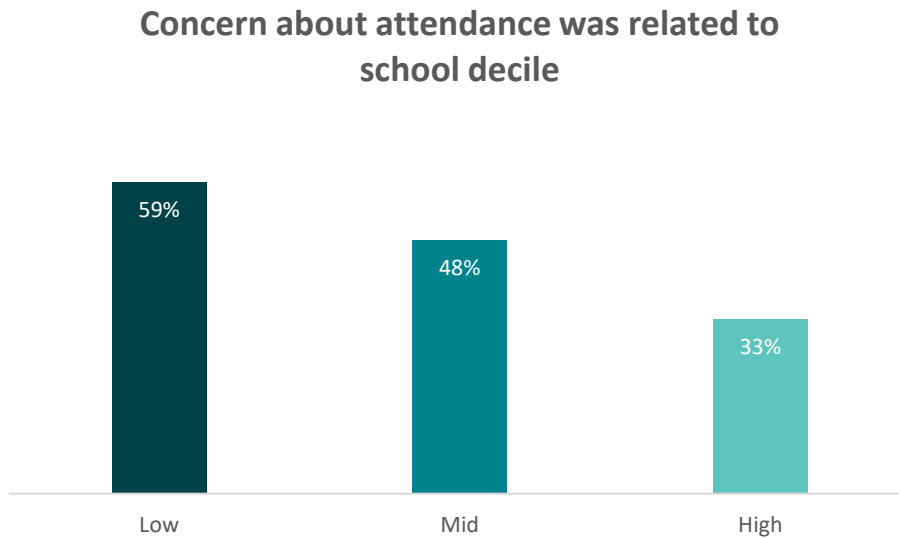
- Anxiety impacting on attendance
- Older students not enjoying their learning

Anxiety is impacting on attendance

After the end of lockdown nearly a fifth of schools have reported lower than expected attendance. Some schools reported an additional drop in attendance in the few weeks after onsite schooling resumed.

By Term 3, nearly half of schools were reporting that they had ongoing concerns about attendance with low decile schools (59 percent) and mid (4-7) decile schools (48 percent) being more likely to report ongoing concerns, compared to high decile schools (33 percent).

FIGURE 6: Percentage of schools where teachers and/or leaders had ongoing concerns about attendance, by decile

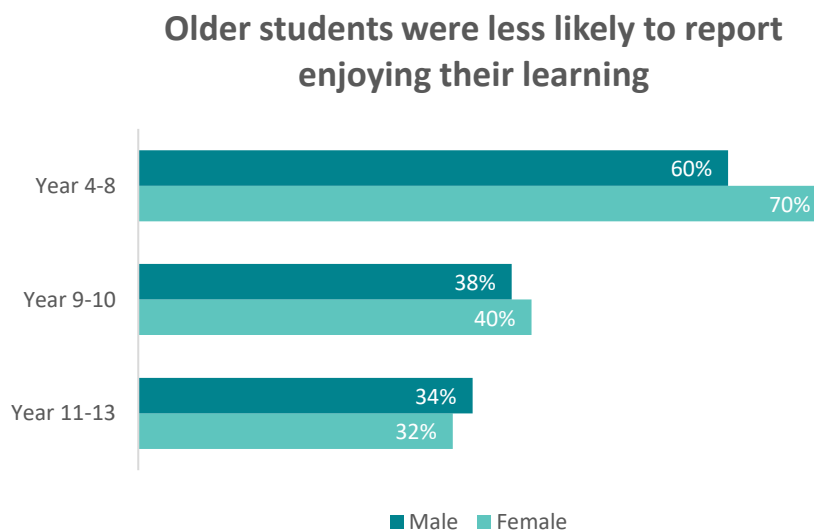


Most schools identify student and whānau anxiety about their health and safety, with respect to Covid-19, as the main cause of non-attendance. Some teachers and leaders report that this has been exacerbated by the second outbreak of community transmission in Auckland, which appears to have impacted on attendance not only in Auckland itself but around the country.

Older students were less likely to be enjoying their learning

Only a third of senior secondary students reported enjoying their learning, whereas primary school students were nearly twice as likely to be enjoying their learning. Primary school girls were most likely to be enjoying their learning with seventy percent of primary school girls reporting that they were enjoying their learning.

FIGURE 7: Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed they were enjoying their learning post lockdown, by year group and gender



This lack of enjoyment in learning for senior secondary students is concerning as it could indicate disengagement and be linked to their feeling of not coping with their work. Disengagement normally increases as students get older but there is a real risk that the disruption caused by Covid-19 has increased the pool of disengaged students which, if not addressed, could lead to more students leaving school early or not continuing with their education after they finish school.

What were the challenges in student engagement?

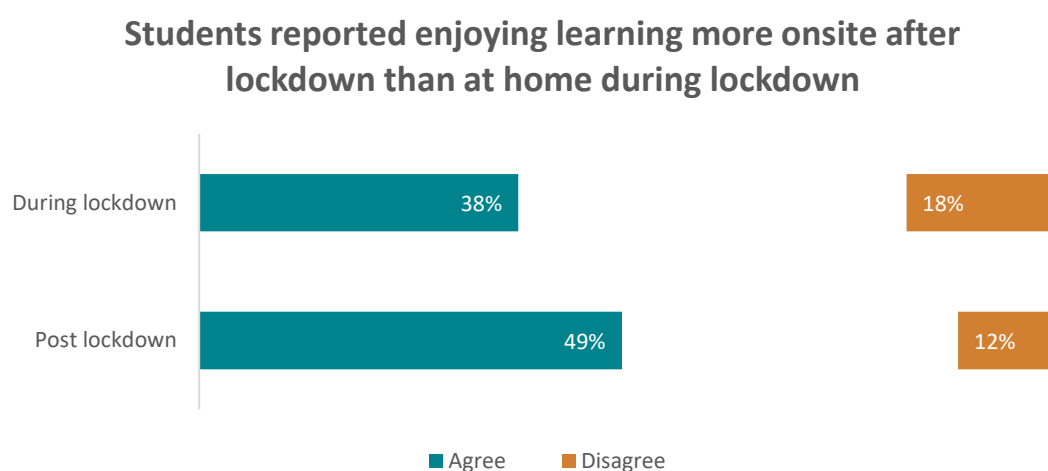
We have found two main ongoing challenges in student engagement. These are:

- students preferring to learn at school – a challenge for any future lockdowns
- disengagement can lead to further disengagement – a challenge for next year.

Students generally preferred to learn at school

Students reported higher levels of enjoying their learning onsite after lockdown, compared to during the lockdown. Figure 8 shows that nearly half of students said they were enjoying learning at school after the lockdown, compared to 38 percent of students when they were learning at home during the lockdown. The proportion of students not enjoying their learning (disagree or strongly disagree) fell by 30 percent between during the lockdown and after the lockdown, when students were back learning in the classroom.

FIGURE 8: Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed that they were enjoying learning from home/enjoying their learning during and after lockdown



This preference for learning onsite could be due to opportunities to engage one-to-one. Some students in the focus groups told us they felt that it was preferable to discuss their questions with friends outside of the 'class zoom' as they often did not want to ask questions of the teacher in front of the whole class, and this format did not necessarily allow them to be discreet. They also appeared to appreciate class zooms that were structured with a period at the end, where the class would be over, but the teacher would remain online to answer individual questions. Some students indicated that if they saw that a 'zoom room' was empty or small, they would be reluctant to engage and likely to avoid it.

Schools will need to understand how students best learn remotely as they plan for future remote learning.

Ongoing disengagement

In the Term 3 interviews, in around a fifth of schools, principals or teachers reported ongoing concerns around student engagement. This concern was consistent across school deciles. The most common reason cited by schools for disengagement was anxiety, followed by the student's home situation. In a handful of schools, principals or teachers suggested that some students had become disengaged during lockdown and remained disengaged after returning to school. We know from the evidence that disengagement can lead to further future disengagement, so it will be important to break that cycle as we go into the new year.

What has worked in supporting engagement?

We have found three main themes in how schools were supporting student engagement after lockdown. These are:

- taking a reassuring approach to non-attendance
- employing deliberate and differentiated strategies to re-engage students post lockdown
- providing targeted support for students with additional needs.

Taking a reassuring approach to non-attendance


Attendance is an issue many schools have had to grapple with. The most common school response to dealing with attendance issues has been to maintain or improve contact and communication with whānau, seeking to reduce anxiety about health and safety concerns in relation to Covid-19.

Some principals have told ERO they were purposefully taking a reassuring approach, recognising that many families are in a stressful situation because they may have lost their job or had money concerns. A few principals and teachers cited the improved communication they developed during lockdown as enabling the relationships with whānau to support their approach to attendance. Schools felt that this had been effective with most students. In instances where it was not, schools have escalated to engaging truancy officers, or social workers in external agencies (especially Oranga Tamariki).

Employing deliberate strategies to re-engage students

Approximately two thirds of leaders considered their transition back into onsite schooling to have been a success. The factors that supported a successful transition back to onsite schooling included:

- taking a phased approach to re-opening the school through the Covid-19 Alert Levels
- identifying students who had not returned and making specific contact with their whānau to check in and provide reassurance
- managing whānau anxiety around returning to school by clearly setting and communicating hygiene and safety protocols to protect students from Covid-19
- developing individual transition plans for students with additional learning needs
- focusing on re-connection and re-engagement with students and celebrating the learning that had taken place during the lockdown
- planning new school events or fun activities to replace the ones that had to be cancelled.



Mindfulness was already in place but has become more evident in programmes since lockdown. Children are reminded to "pause, breathe and smile" as a means to control emotions and bring them back to their learning and a place of calmness. Leaders feel the Mindfulness strategies help children communicate better and show what they can do – not just with reading writing and mathematics.

School leader


In focus groups, students told ERO that, despite some initial trepidation, they were mostly keen to return to school, and had been looking forward to reconnecting with friends and teachers. Students appreciated schools' efforts to manage any pressure on them. A few students described lenient deadlines, which helped to prevent them from becoming discouraged and disengaged. One group of students described their anxiety about a lack of academic progress which was demoralising, and that this was leading some of them to become less engaged at school. Students also said they liked having continuity across their learning during and after lockdown, for example carrying on with things that were started in lockdown, such as te reo Māori and waiata practice, or doing tasks based around describing their experiences in lockdown.

ERO has prepared a companion report to this one, which will discuss successful re-engagement strategies for secondary students.

Supporting students with additional learning needs

Fifty-one percent of schools reported that they had a specific focus on students with additional learning needs, many of whom had struggled during lockdown and in transitioning back to onsite schooling. Specifically, this included:

- More frequent contact and support provided, by teachers and teacher aides, to whānau during lockdown
- Individualised learning packs
- Deliberate transition plans to manage anxiety, challenging behaviours and disruption to routines as learners came back to school at lower alert levels.



Maria is a Year 3 student with dyslexia. Her family live and work in a semi-rural farming community. During lockdown, Maria's parents continued to work and their children would often accompany them to the farm. Maria's teachers encouraged her to draw or write about her experiences during lockdown. "After work, my dad bought pizza for dinner. It was delicious! After I ate the pizza, I did some drawing. I have never drawn on my own before. Then it was 8pm and I went to bed. I woke up at 2.00am and did more drawings. And then I slept until 7.00am, that's late!"

Teacher

3. What we found: Student learning

Student learning includes both the qualifications students achieve and more broadly the skills, knowledge and tools for ongoing learning they develop. Education outcomes are critical to students' future life outcomes, being linked to better health, wellbeing and future incomes. We need to understand the impact of Covid-19 on student learning so we can support students' education outcomes going forward.

What did we see?

ERO has found three main themes relating to student learning progress and achievement. These were:

- we do not yet know the size of the impact on student learning
- there are reasons to be concerned about impact on learning
- teachers are most concerned about student learning in practical subjects and writing.

There is a lack of clear information on the nature and extent of learning loss

Leaders in 17 percent of schools expressed strong concern about the effect of lockdown on student progress and achievement, particularly for students whose engagement in learning at home had been more limited. At that time, just after lockdown ended, few leaders had data available to ascertain the size of the effect, but this was something many were planning to investigate.

ERO has found that there had been a relative lack of assessment completed after lockdown. Thirty-seven percent of schools interviewed in Term 3 told ERO they had deliberately deferred some planned formal assessment. Teachers in the focus groups also told ERO they had deliberately deprioritised assessment. Schools reported that this was due to prioritising wellbeing and managing pressure on students.

Without assessment we do not yet have enough information at a system level to estimate the nature and extent of any impact on learning.

There are reasons to be concerned about impact on learning

While we do not have up to date assessment data, this research found strong reasons to be concerned about the impact of lockdowns on learning, particularly in low decile schools (schools in low socio-economic communities):

- Fifty-nine percent of schools reported having concerns about student progress and achievement because of lockdown.
- Where schools have done learning assessments, teachers have identified some students who have fallen behind. For those students who had plateaued or regressed in their learning, teachers tended to estimate the loss of about a term's worth of learning.
- Teachers and principals in 80 percent of low decile schools reported that progress and achievement was of concern for at least some of their students.
- Two thirds of principals in low decile schools indicated that at least a quarter of their students had fallen behind in their learning.

- Only 28 percent of surveyed teachers in low decile schools were confident that their students would be able to catch up with their learning, with 18 percent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. In mid and high decile schools (students from higher socio-economic communities) closer to half of teachers were confident that their students would be able to catch up with their learning.

Practical subjects and writing are areas of concern

Teachers and leaders saw the level of learning during lockdown was also reliant on individual students' ability to self-manage. Of the most assessed learning areas, teachers saw reading and mathematics as easier to engage with at home than writing. In one of the focus group schools, teachers talked about ESOL students having made 'massive' progress in reading. On the other hand, in interviews, many teachers and leaders expressed concern about students' lost progress in writing. A few teachers also reported that practical subjects like art, performing arts, and technology had been challenging to teach this year. In one school, teachers had adapted art programmes during lockdown so that students could use materials available at home, setting more research tasks and changing a painting course to a photography course.

What were the challenges in student learning?

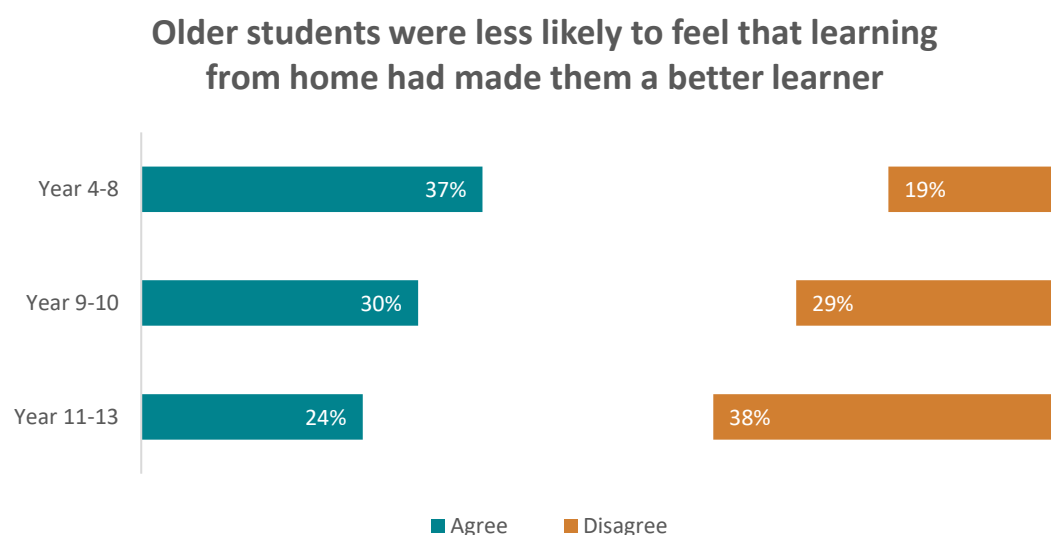
We have identified from this research three main ongoing challenges in student learning. These are:

- learning from home was not as effective as learning at school
- secondary students were concerned about their learning
- Lockdown may have exacerbated existing inequities.

Learning from home was not as effective as learning at school

Until assessment data comes in, we will not know for sure how significant the impact was of learning from home. There are signs that it hasn't been as effective as learning at school. Many students reported that learning from home did not make them a better learner. Figure 9 shows that only a quarter (24 percent) of NCEA students (Year 11-13) and a third (37 percent) of primary students thought that learning from home had made them a better learner.

FIGURE 9: Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed with the statement 'learning from home has made me a better learner' by year group



In many schools, teachers and principals expressed that they wanted to maintain elements of distance learning and deliberately develop student agency through providing greater flexibility and choice. While our data suggest that some students did enjoy learning from home, and felt they were able to succeed, this was by no means the case for all.

Secondary students were concerned about their learning

NCEA students reported the most concern about their progress and where they were at:

- Nearly a quarter of NCEA students disagreed that they were keeping up with their learning post lockdown.
- Nearly a third of NCEA students thought they were not up to date with their learning since returning to school.

Primary students were more optimistic that they had been able to keep up with their learning when surveyed towards the end of Term 3. Two thirds (66 percent) of primary students agreed or strongly agreed they had been able to keep up with their learning in the past week (Figure 10), compared to 28 percent of NCEA students.

FIGURE 10: Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed with the statement 'in the past week I have been able to keep up with my learning' by year group (as at September 2020)

Just under a third of NCEA students agreed they had been able to keep up with their learning post-lockdown

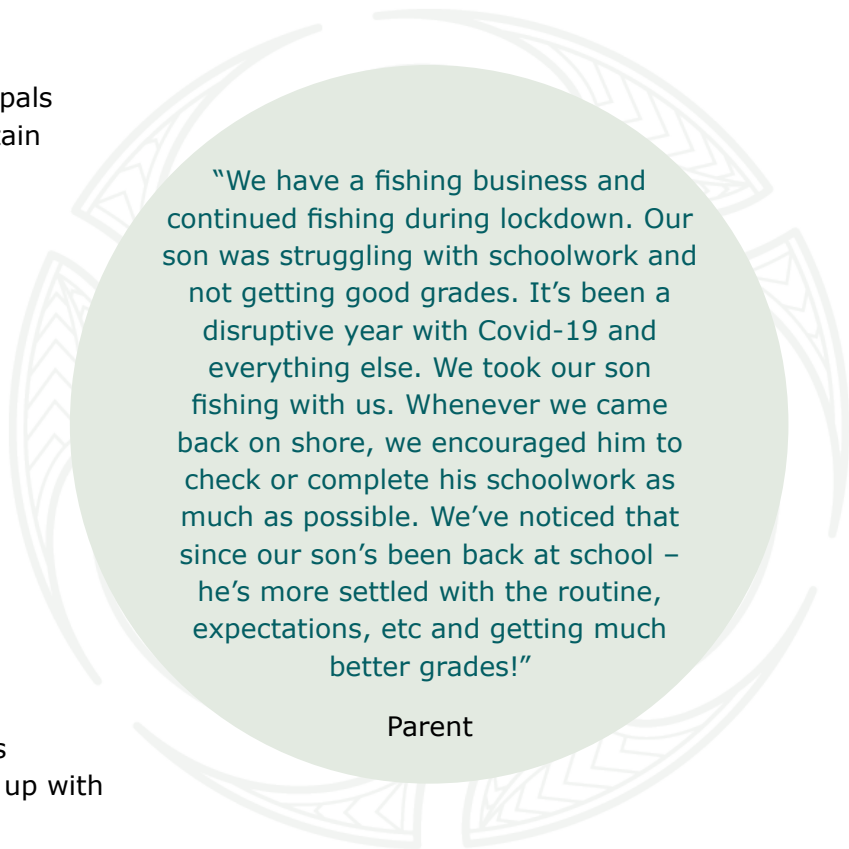
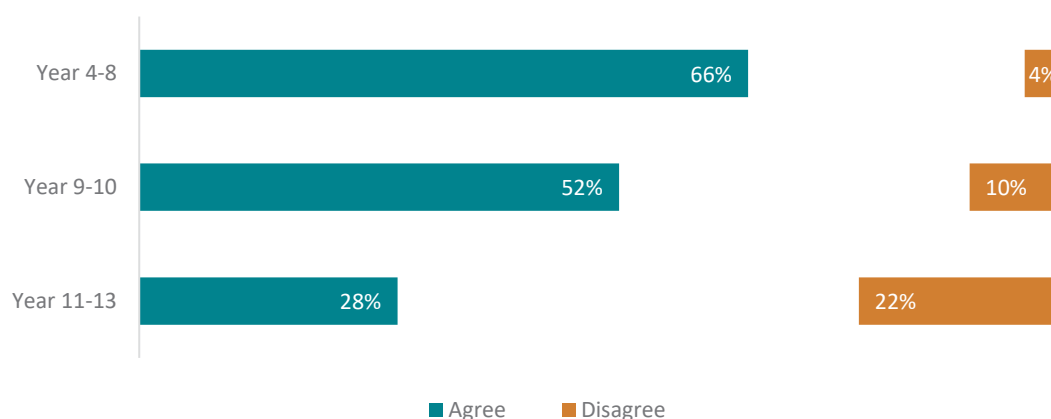
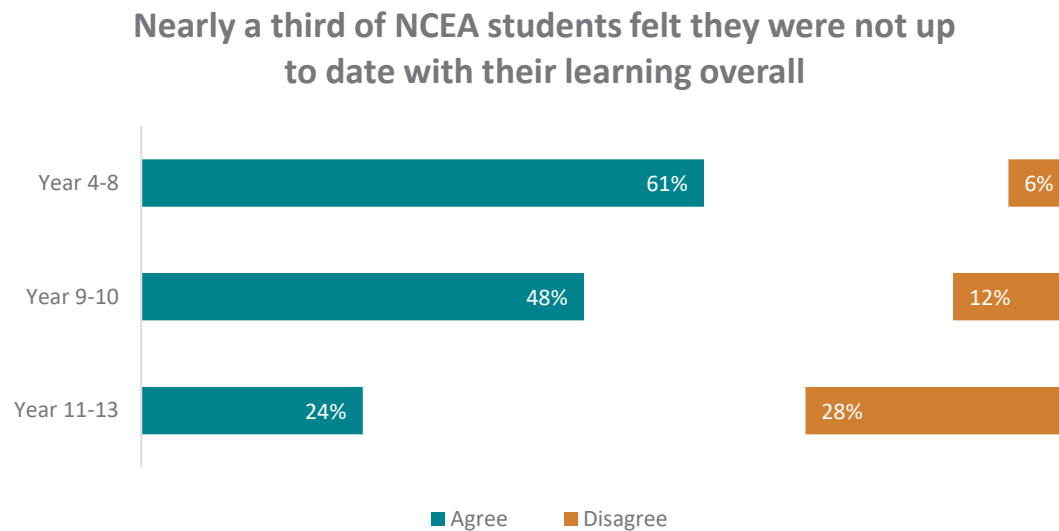


FIGURE 11: Percentage of students who agreed and disagreed with the statement 'I feel I am up to date with my learning' by year group



Overall, primary school students were most likely to agree that they were up-to-date with their learning. Sixty-one percent of primary students agreed with this statement, compared to only 24 percent of NCEA students.

In focus groups some NCEA students reported that they were keen to know their progress and what they might need to do to stay on track.

"I felt I was falling behind in my work. Regular catch ups with my Learning Advisor helped me to keep track of my progress and know what to do."

Secondary school student

We have been running workshops for the learners to opt into and running personalised programmes to support students' qualifications. We have undertaken intensive tracking and monitoring and deepening relationships with students. Learning programmes have been dramatically personalised due to the variation in work completed over both programmes. Credit bundles relative to the needs of the students have been designed to support success. Incremental progress is celebrated to support students' confidence and resilience in learning.

School leader

Lockdown may have exacerbated existing inequities

Principals and teachers told ERO, when interviewed, that they were most concerned about students who had not engaged with their learning during lockdown. Schools identified the following factors they thought had contributed to some students not doing much learning during lockdown:

- inequitable access to devices or connectivity during lockdown
- not having quiet spaces to study at home
- parents doing their children's schoolwork for them
- parents unable to provide their children with support with their schoolwork
- students missing opportunities to work together
- not having the equipment or facilities they need to complete their schoolwork (particularly for portfolio subjects like art)
- at the most extreme end of the spectrum, unsafe home situations.

Many of these factors were more apparent for students in more disadvantaged situations. These students were also more likely to take longer to return to full and regular onsite attendance. One teacher told ERO that it seemed like "the rich got richer and the poor got poorer in terms of achievement and progress".

What has worked in supporting learning?

Schools have innovated and sought to support student learning through Covid-19 in a wide range of ways. Principals and teachers reported, in interviews, what strategies they had seen that were effective, and students and whānau told ERO, in focus groups, about the factors that they had appreciated. The main strategies were:

- using digital technology for distance learning
- flexible and personalised teaching and learning post lockdown
- connecting learning to students' home contexts
- recognising learning in lockdown and extending it post lockdown.

Using digital technology

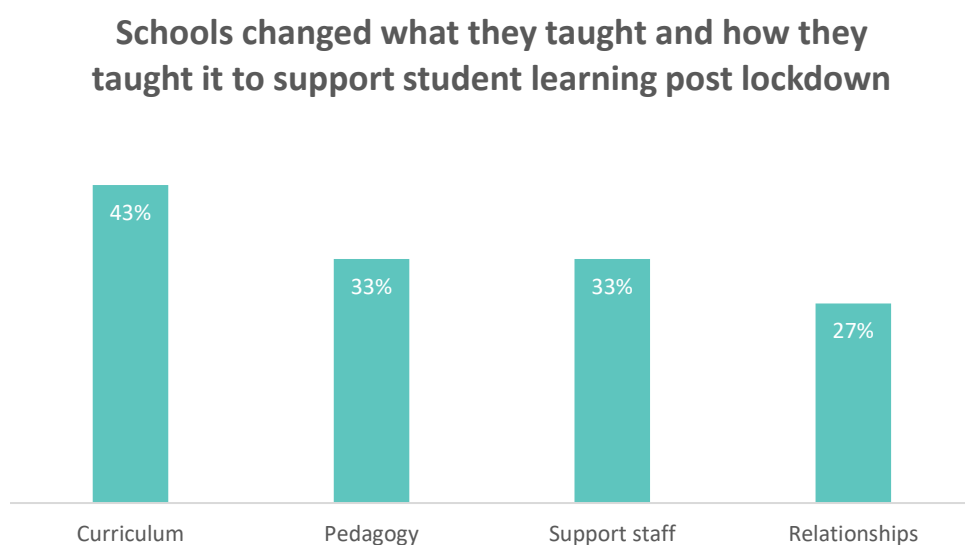
Most principals told ERO that the use of digital technology for distance learning was a crucial part of their provision during lockdown. This was particularly successful where schools had already been using digital technology as an established part of their teaching practice. In these schools, teachers and learners were familiar with the platforms and adapted quickly and easily to the remote learning situation. In other schools, the lockdown created the impetus for teachers to upskill quickly so that they could deliver teaching and learning experiences online.

In around two thirds of schools, leaders told ERO that they intend to retain some elements of distance learning (usually online) and increase the use of digital technology in their curriculum. Many leaders had recognised elements of digitally enabled practice that had been beneficial for student engagement and learning during lockdown and want to build on this. Some leaders also saw that continued online learning would help prepare them for potential future lockdown situations. To support this focus, many leaders reported that they intended to access relevant professional learning and development (PLD) for teachers.

More flexibility and personalised teaching and learning

School principals and teachers reported that they had pursued a range of responses to support student progress and achievement after lockdown. Figure 12 below shows the most common responses reported by schools. These are not mutually exclusive – schools were often pursuing multiple strategies to support student learning. Change to the curriculum (43 percent of schools) was the most common response. The other responses reported by schools included changes to pedagogy (teaching practices) (33 percent), making use of support staff (33 percent) and strengthening learning-focused relationships with whānau (27 percent).

FIGURE 12: *Percentage of schools where teachers and/or principals reported different kinds of responses to support student learning post lockdown*



Where schools had made changes to their **curriculum** these often included an increased focus on:

- wellbeing
- culture and diversity
- digital literacy
- practical and creative work
- integration across learning areas
- literacy and numeracy
- life skills
- Covid-19 as a topic
- key competencies.

Where schools had made changes to **pedagogy** they tended to increase:

- differentiated teaching
- ongoing use of distance learning (i.e. online delivery)
- student agency


- flipped classroom
- play-based learning (primary)
- flexible timetabling.

Schools making more use of teacher aides and support staff reported strategies including teacher aides working with disengaged or at-risk students or for support staff to help free up time for teachers to support students. They also reported engaging more with:

- learning support co-ordinators
- resource teachers: learning and behaviour
- social workers
- counsellors.

Finally, schools sought to strengthen learning-focused relationships with whānau with strategies including:

- collaborative reporting on student progress
- more frequent contact (phone, online)
- learning experiences based on home life
- parental involvement in student goal-setting.



Wiremu is part of the Trades Academy at a decile 3 secondary school. At the beginning of the school year, the teachers helped the Academy students to map out their vocational pathways. Wiremu wants to complete a building apprenticeship. As part of their assessment, Wiremu and his mates started building a house due for completion in September 2020. "During lockdown, the students were anxious about completing the build. Teachers sent them videos and other information about building houses, and organised regular catch ups. When they returned to school, the students worked hard and completed the house in July 2020, two months before the deadline".

Teacher

Connecting learning to students' home contexts

In focus groups, students told ERO that they generally felt their engagement in learning had been supported by schools during lockdown by:

- **Teachers**, who were checking on how they were doing and showing care and concern. Some also talked about teachers providing structure and routine, which they noticed was helping maintain connection to schooling.
- **Parents**, who helped with their schoolwork, providing activities to keep them occupied, and spending time with them. One group of students talked about how lockdown was really nice because it meant that they had a good amount of time to spend time with their parents. Students talked about enjoying spending time with their parents and their whānau.

- **Siblings** in the house, who were able to help them with some of their schoolwork, particularly if they were having trouble understanding things.
- **Friends**, who would help with working on projects.

Teachers found ways to make learning fun. Students often talked very positively about games, challenges, and tasks that sought to engage their creativity.

Many students in the focus groups mentioned preparation of food as being an effective engagement tool during lockdown. Teachers provided recipes and suggestions and linked learning with curriculum areas such as maths (e.g. measuring quantities) and reading comprehension (e.g. reading recipes).

In a few cases, teachers helped by dropping the necessary ingredients to students' homes. Parents worked with students to help prepare food and support the connections to their children's learning.

Most students reported that they appreciated the flexibility they were offered by their school about when they did work during lockdown. Many liked starting schoolwork later, and some suggested that they completed work in the evening or at night and compensated by sleeping in. One student suggested that though they did not like having catch-ups with their teachers scheduled in the morning, they were more engaged with their work as a result.

Recognising learning that happened during lockdown and extending it with onsite learning

Some teachers told ERO that they had framed lockdown learning around the Key Competencies, which are included in the New Zealand Curriculum and are woven into all the teaching that goes on at school, and school values. The focus was on developing critical skills like communication, and students' independence and agency. Students reported they appreciated having agency and choice over what work they did, and when they did it.

Several teachers indicated that self-management and student agency was an area where they had seen significant progress. Some parents and whānau echoed this finding, saying they had witnessed their children working and developing self-management and research skills. Students were keen that this learning was 'captured' and recognised, as they felt that they had made substantial progress.

"My son has autism. During lockdown, he was sent an education package which didn't suit his style and level of learning. But his teachers were fabulous – they worked together with the other agencies to make sure my son was supported at all times. They checked in with us on a daily basis and set some simple tasks for my son, but more importantly they advised us to have fun learning together as a family. I learnt to talk with my sons, not at them! I have four sons and learnt new things about each one of them, even my autistic son."

Parent

"During lockdown, I worked on a farm and one of my friends jumped on a fishing boat. Learnt more about the trades and have a sense of achievement about doing things I would not normally do."

Secondary school student

Part 2: What was different for Māori, Pacific, Auckland students and students in low decile schools

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all students across New Zealand, but the impacts on students have been uneven and could have increased inequities in the education system. In this section, we set out what the experience was like for different groups of students and how well they have dealt with the consequences of Covid-19.

1. What was different for Māori students?

Māori secondary students had similar levels of concern to other student groups

Māori secondary students are similarly concerned about their learning as other students, for example, about a third (30 percent) of Māori, of Pacific and of New Zealand European secondary students were feeling positive about the rest of the year. Similarly, one-in-three Māori, Pacific and New Zealand European secondary students said they were able to cope with their schoolwork and, finally, 30 percent of Māori, Pacific and New Zealand European secondary students said they were feeling up to date with their learning.

Once student age and school decile (socio-economic level of the school) were accounted for, there appears to be little difference in how Māori students reported their wellbeing and learning, compared to other student groups.

However, Māori students were more likely to have had to face significant challenges during and after lockdown because they are more likely to be enrolled in low decile schools, who reported facing more challenges than mid or high decile schools during the Covid-19 pandemic (discussed below).

Māori secondary students were less likely to enjoy learning from home during the lockdown

The experience of secondary Māori students was less positive in decile 4-10 schools (Figure 13). Only 52 percent of Māori secondary students in decile 4-10 schools agreed or strongly agreed they were able to learn from home, compared with 60 percent of New Zealand European students.

However, Māori students (56 percent) were more likely to feel that someone in their home had become more interested in their learning following the lockdown, compared to 44 percent of Pākehā students.

An explicit te ao Māori focus was important

Some leaders in schools with a substantial Māori population included an explicit te ao Māori and identity focus for their students. They ensured that te reo Māori, kapa haka, and tikanga Māori elements were included in learning packs and online provision. One principal told ERO that with online learning, they had seen themselves as 'visitors' in the homes of Māori students, and had deliberately worked to maintain tikanga protocols in the online environment.

Some students in focus groups reported how much they had appreciated this, and that it helped them to feel connected to learning and to the school.


Where schools had strong connections with local iwi and marae, this also supported whānau Māori. A few principals reported working with local marae to distribute material support during lockdown.

Some Māori students experienced challenges

Principals told ERO they had identified two specific challenges being faced by Māori students during lockdown and when transitioning back to school:

Leaders were aware that, in some cases, Māori students had less access to devices and connectivity.

Some whānau Māori were slower to return their children to school at the lower alert levels, due to anxiety around health in the context of having extended family living together.



"Māori performing arts has continued, we take this very seriously. We live it"

Principal


2. What was different for Pacific students?

Pacific students had similar levels of concern to other student groups

It is likely that, overall, Pacific students have had to face significant challenges during and after lockdown because they are more likely to be enrolled in low decile schools, who report facing more challenges than mid or high decile schools during Covid-19 (discussed above).

However, Pacific students are similarly concerned about their learning as other students for example, about a third (30 percent) of Pacific, of Māori and of New Zealand European secondary students were feeling positive about the rest of the year. Similarly, one-in-three Pacific, Māori and New Zealand European secondary students said they were able to cope with their schoolwork and, finally, 30 percent of Pacific, Māori and New Zealand European secondary students said they were feeling up to date with their learning.

Most of the difference in how students are faring is related to their age (e.g. primary or secondary student) and the socio-economic level of their community and school (e.g. low and high decile schools). Once these two factors were accounted for there appears to be little difference in how Pacific students reported their wellbeing and learning compared to other student groups.



"Doing te reo and karakia helped to keep me grounded."

Student

Pacific students in low decile schools enjoyed learning from home and were more supported at home

Some differences have come through in our research:

- Pacific secondary students in decile 1-3 schools were more positive about being able to learn from home than other groups.
- Pacific secondary students in decile 4-10 schools were less positive about being able to learn from home compared to Pākehā students.
- Pacific students in decile 1-3 schools more often reported having someone in their household who could help them with their learning under lockdown.
- Pacific students and Māori were also more likely to report that someone in their home had become more interested in their learning after the lockdown.

FIGURE 13: Percentage of secondary students who agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to work from home

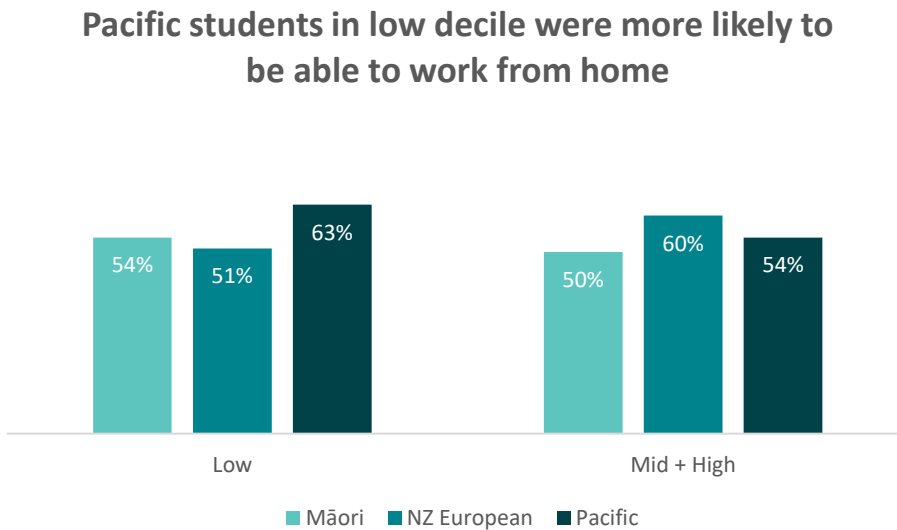


FIGURE 14: Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed learning from home

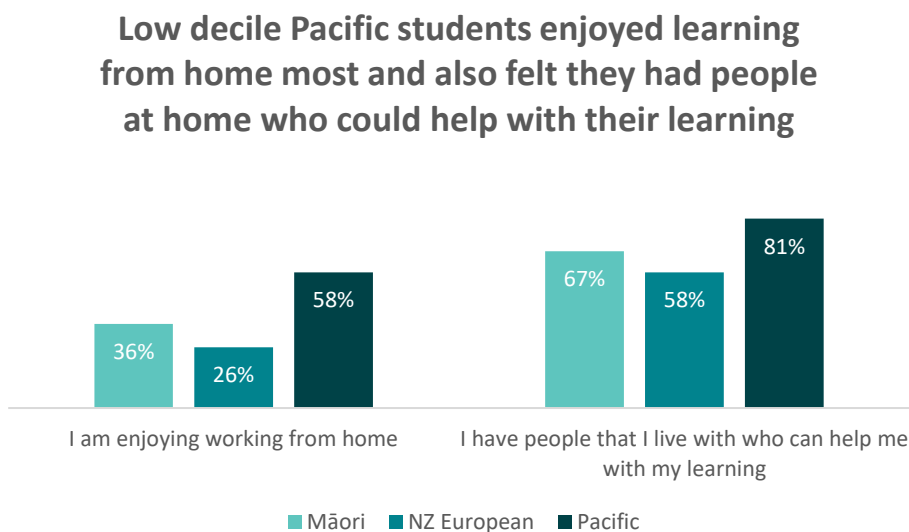
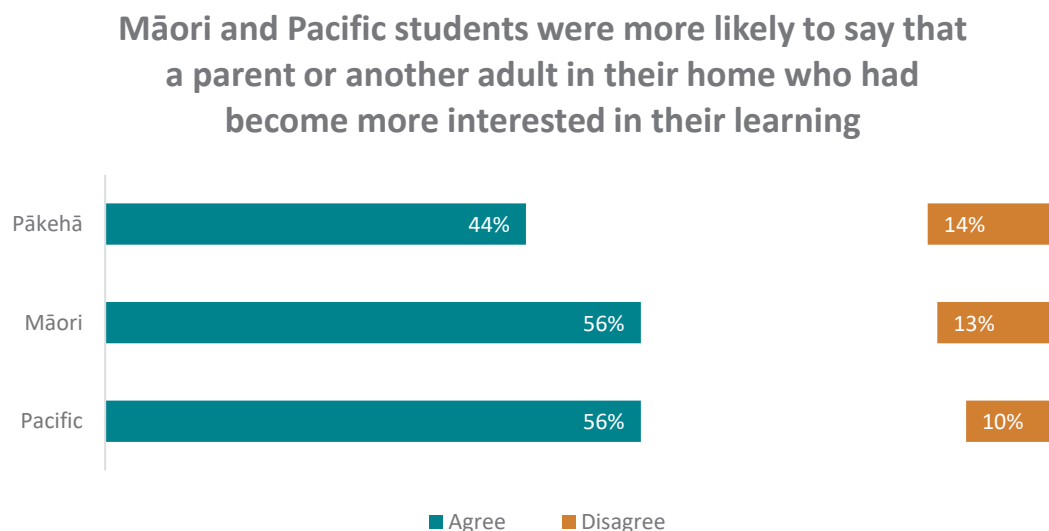


FIGURE 15: Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that 'in my home, there is a parent or other adult who has become more interested in my learning this term', by ethnicity



At the focus groups, some Pacific students talked about the family support they received. One Pacific student reported that she has two younger siblings who attend primary and intermediate school. Their parents work long hours and the siblings usually do not see their father during the weekdays. She and her siblings liked the lockdown because they could 'hang out' with their parents at home:

"We cooked together, played games, watched movies, went for walks, laughed and talanoa. It was really nice to spend time with my dad."

Student

Some Pacific students have encountered extra challenges

Principals told ERO they had identified some specific challenges being faced by Pacific students during lockdown and when transitioning back to school:

- Equity of access to devices and connectivity was an issue in some cases.
- Extended family situations meant that some Pacific students were slower to return to school.
- In some cases, language barriers with Pacific families created some additional complications to schools' communication efforts.

3. What was different in low decile schools?

A key finding from our work is that low decile schools (students from low socio-economic communities) were facing more challenges than mid or high decile schools. There are two main aspects to this:

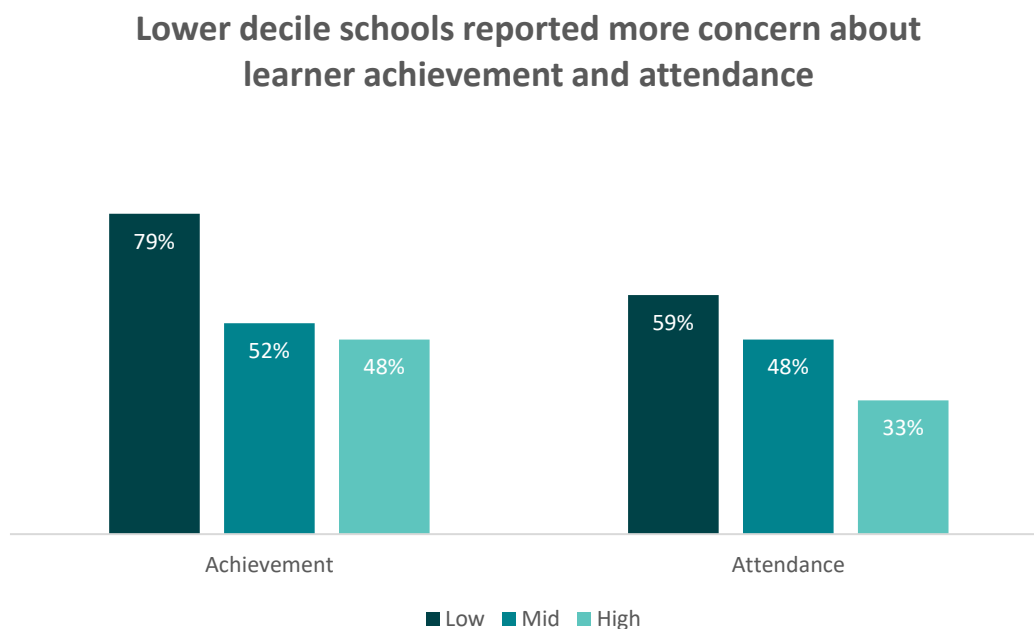
- Principals and teachers in low decile schools were more concerned about achievement, attendance and engagement post lockdown.
- Students in low decile schools had less access to online learning.

Low decile schools had more concerns about student achievement and attendance

Teachers and principals in low decile schools were almost twice as likely to tell ERO that they had concerns about student achievement and attendance, compared to high decile schools:

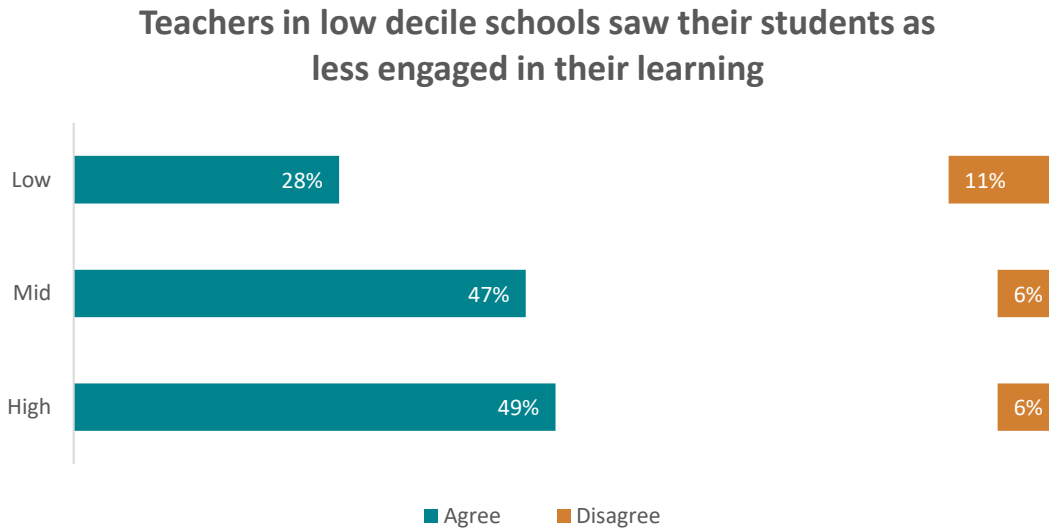
- Fifty-nine percent of low decile schools (decile 1-3) were concerned about student attendance, compared to around a third (33 percent) of high decile schools (decile 8-10).
- Nearly 80 percent of low decile schools told ERO they were concerned about student achievement in their school, compared to 52 percent of mid-decile schools and 48 percent of high decile schools.
- Only a third (28 percent) of teachers in low decile schools agreed or strongly agreed they were confident their students would be able to catch up, compared to nearly half of teachers in high decile schools.

FIGURE 16: Percentage of schools where achievement and attendance were of concern, by decile group



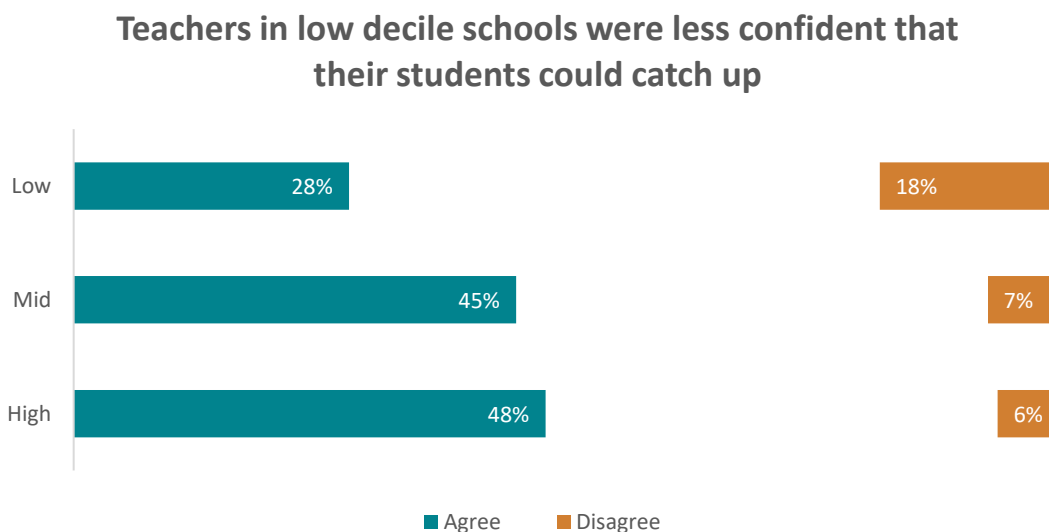
The concerns about student achievement in low decile schools could be due to less student engagement in these schools, according to teachers surveyed in Term 3. Less than a third of teachers in low decile schools (28 percent) agreed or strongly agreed their students were engaged, compared to just under half of teachers in high decile schools (49 percent).

FIGURE 17: Percentage of teachers who agree and disagree that their students are engaged in their learning (post lockdown)



Teachers in low decile schools were also less confident that their students would be able to catch up with their learning, following the disruption caused by Covid-19. Figure 18 shows that three times as many teachers (18 percent) in low decile schools disagreed that their students would be able to catch up with their learning, compared to teachers in mid and high decile schools (6-7 percent).

FIGURE 18: Percentage of teachers who agreed and disagreed that they were confident that their students would be able to catch up on their learning




However, there was a mismatch between teachers' views and those of students. In contrast to the higher level of concern reported by principals and teachers in low decile schools, a third of NCEA students in low decile schools reported they were keeping up with learning, compared to only a quarter in high decile schools. This could be because schools have been prioritising the wellbeing of their students during and after the lockdown. Schools may have wanted to manage student anxiety about their learning progress.

Access to digital devices was more of a challenge for students from lower decile schools

Two thirds of teachers, leaders and board chairs told ERO they were very aware of inequitable levels of student and whānau access to digital devices and connectivity in low decile schools, compared to only a third in high decile schools.

Leaders and teachers saw frequent communication as a critical requirement for engagement during lockdown, and lack of access to devices and connectivity made this harder, especially for more disadvantaged students who were more likely to have to share devices. In addition to the Ministry of Education, many schools distributed devices to their students and whānau, which was appreciated. Having access to devices was "a godsend" according to one mother in a whānau focus group. She had five children and they all were given iPads by the schools so they could all do work at the same time. For some students, even having access to a device, which they had to share with someone else, could still make their learning more difficult:



"Not having access to the internet and having to share my mum's laptop."

Intermediate student

Where device or connectivity access was an issue, some teachers tried to bridge the communication gap with phone calls, and by creating physical learning packs that did not require digital technology.

The Ministry of Education's Home Learning TV | Papa Kāinga was also an available resource for those who did not necessarily have reliable access to online learning. There was evidence that suggested students who did not always have access to a device were more likely to watch Home Learning TV instead.

Students in low decile schools were also more likely to have had to share a device and to have watched Home Learning TV across all year groups. In decile 1-3 schools, 19 percent of students had to share a device and 22 percent of students watched Home Learning TV. In decile 4-10 schools only 14 percent of students had to share a device and 17 percent of students watched Home Learning TV.

Looking forward, student access to devices and the internet will be something schools will want to be aware of when planning any digital learning or preparing for future lockdowns.

4. What was different for students in Auckland?

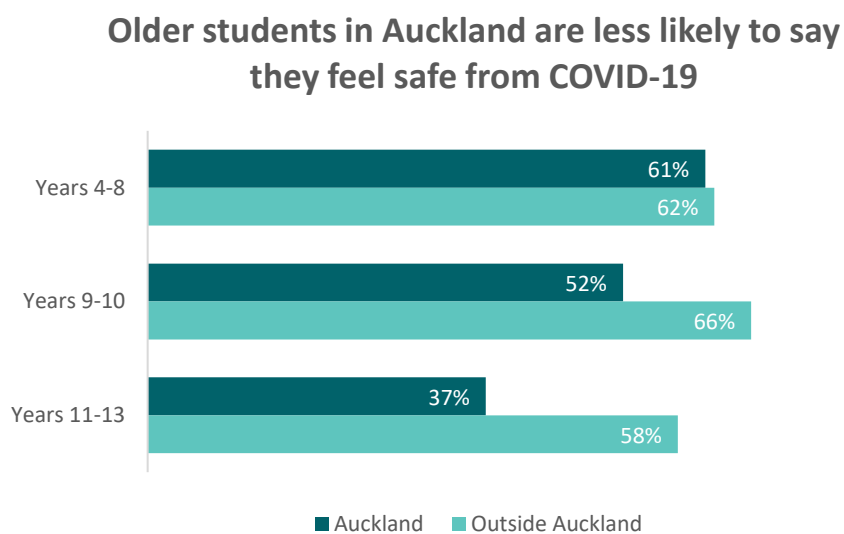
Schools in Auckland have had to deal with an additional localised outbreak of community transmission, and a second lockdown at Alert Level 3. The effects of this were visible in four main ways:

- Senior secondary students in Auckland felt less safe than those outside Auckland
- Teachers and principals in Auckland were more concerned about their students' engagement than those outside Auckland
- Principals of low decile schools in Auckland were most concerned about learning
- Teachers in Auckland were feeling less optimistic about the rest of the school year (2020)

Senior secondary students in Auckland were more anxious about Covid-19

Secondary students in Auckland were significantly less likely to report that they felt safe from Covid-19 than those outside of Auckland. The effect was most pronounced for those in Year 11-13 (see Figure 19), with only 37 percent of Auckland senior secondary students saying they felt safe from Covid-19, compared to 58 percent of senior secondary students outside of Auckland. There was no major difference for primary students inside and outside Auckland.

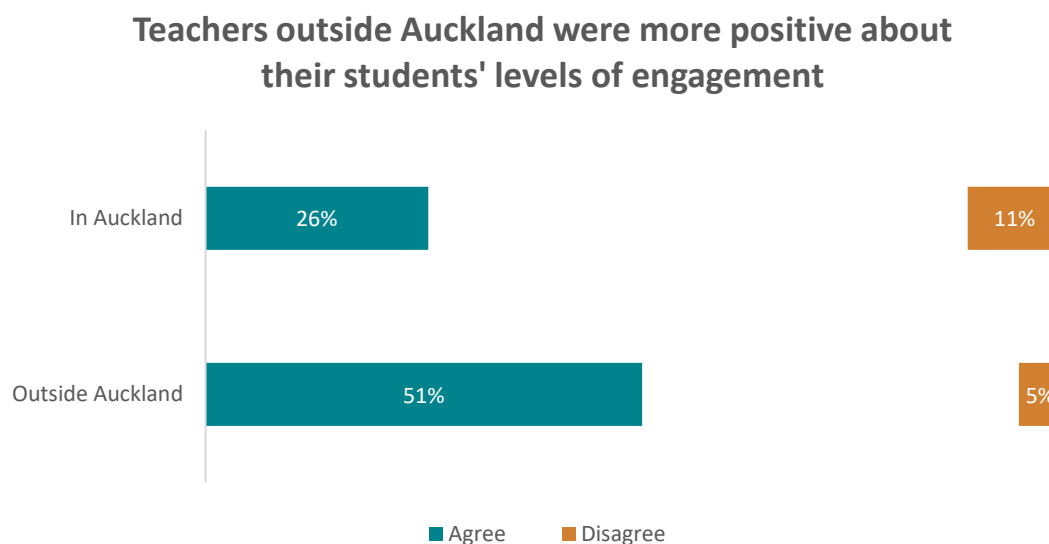
FIGURE 19: Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that they were feeling safe from Covid-19 inside and outside Auckland, post-lockdown



Auckland teachers and principals were more concerned about student engagement

Teachers based in Auckland schools were less likely to feel their students were engaged. Only 26 percent of teachers in Auckland felt their learners were engaged, compared to 51 percent of teachers outside of Auckland (see Figure 20).

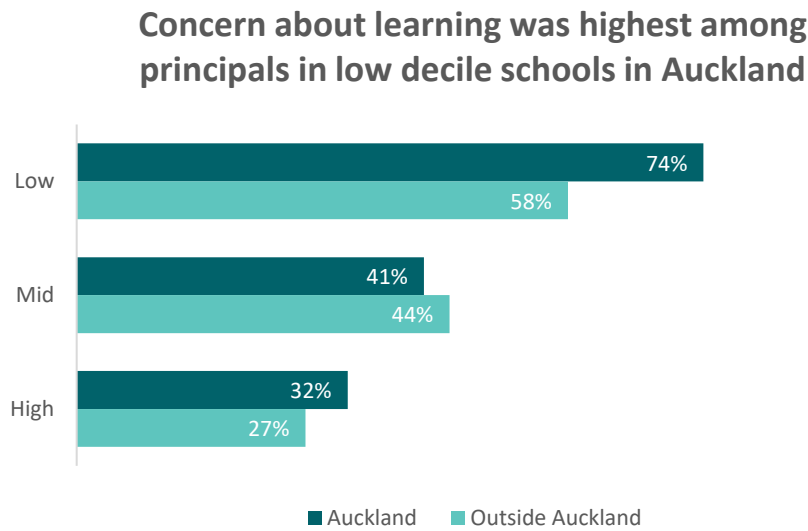
FIGURE 20: Percentage of teachers who agreed and disagreed that their students were engaged in their learning inside and outside Auckland, post-lockdown



Principals in Auckland's low decile schools were most concerned about students' progress

Principals in low decile schools in Auckland were more concerned about their students' learning progress than principals in low decile schools outside Auckland. Three-quarters of principals in low decile schools in Auckland were concerned about their students' learning, compared to 58 percent of principals in low decile schools outside Auckland. The Auckland difference in concern for student progress was much greater for low decile principals than for principals of mid and high decile schools, as Figure 21 shows below.

FIGURE 21: Percentage of principals who reported that a quarter or more of their students had fallen behind in their learning, by decile, inside and outside Auckland, post-lockdown



Teachers and principals in Auckland are less optimistic

These concerns for students' learning may explain why teachers inside Auckland were feeling less positive about the rest of the school year (45 percent agreeing and strongly agreeing), compared with teachers working outside Auckland (53 percent). The difference was slightly smaller for principals, with 48 percent of Auckland principals agreeing or strongly agreeing compared with 53 percent of principals outside Auckland.

Taken together, these findings are concerning as they show a compounding effect, with the impact of Auckland's second lockdown falling more heavily on low decile schools in the area.

Part 3: The impact on teacher and principal wellbeing

The Covid-19 pandemic has led to many changes for how teachers and principals support and teach their students. In lockdown, they have experienced competing demands of working from home, transitioning to distance teaching and in some cases having to teach or support their own children while also attending to the needs of their class. After lockdown, they have needed to meet the needs of students with higher levels of anxiety, lower engagement, lower attendance and potential learning loss.

What we found: Teacher and principal wellbeing

The changes faced by teachers and principals have created uncertainty and anxiety for them, as well as increased concern about the lives of their students, colleagues, their own families and their communities. This is both important in itself and in terms of the impact it has on students. If teachers and principals are feeling stressed, then it is harder for them to support their students' wellbeing and learning.

What did we see?

From our surveys and interviews with teachers and principals we found two main things:

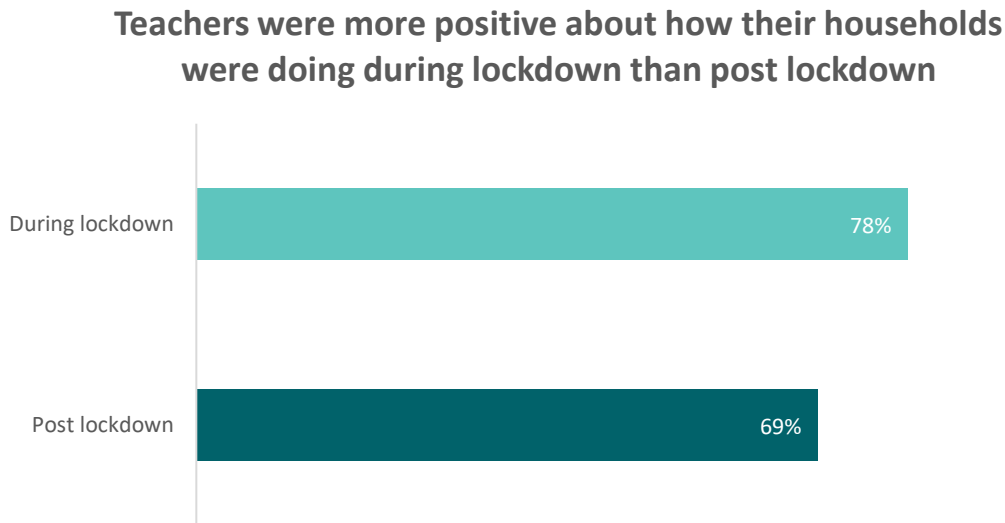
- teachers and principals appeared resilient
- new principals were particularly optimistic.

Teachers and principals appeared largely resilient

Most teachers (78 percent) told ERO they felt happy at least most of the time. Seventy-seven percent felt things in their life were worthwhile but fewer teachers were optimistic about the rest of the year (2020), with only 50 percent of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing they felt positive about the rest of the school year.

Most teachers (69 percent) remained largely positive about how well the people they live with were doing but they were less positive than they had been during lockdown (see Figure 22). This may reflect the ongoing challenges households were facing living under Covid-19.

FIGURE 22: Percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that their bubble/household was doing well, during and post lockdown

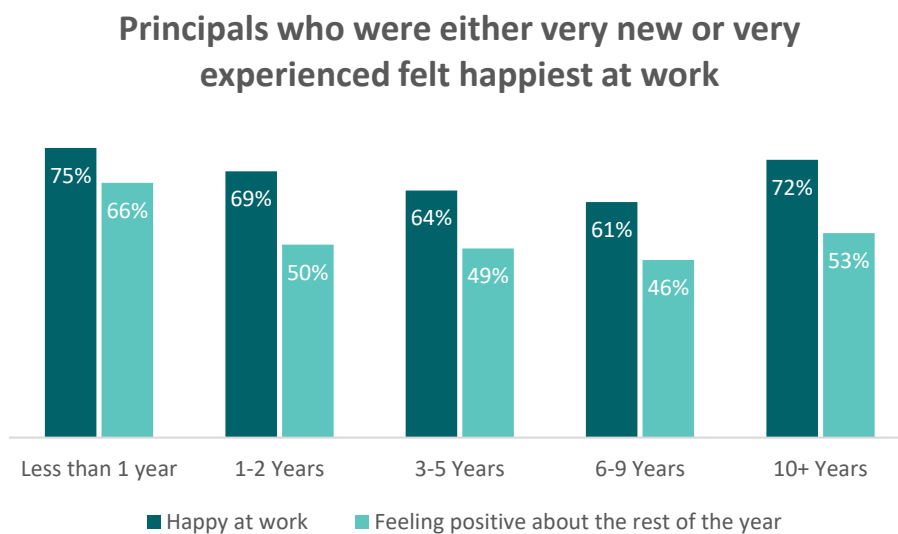


Two thirds of principals felt happy at work and two thirds said they had someone they could talk to during Covid-19. A majority (52 percent) were feeling positive about the rest of the school year (2020).

New principals were particularly optimistic

Principals who had been in their role for less than one year were most likely to feel positive about the rest of the school year (see Figure 23). Seventy percent of these principals felt positive, compared to 45 percent of those with 1-9 years of experience. The most experienced principals (with 10 or more years of experience) were more positive about the future, compared to principals with 1-9 years of experience.

FIGURE 23: Percentage of principals who agreed or strongly agreed they were feeling positive about the rest of the school year, by tenure as a principal



What were the challenges?

We have identified four main challenges to teacher and principal wellbeing:

- teacher stress and exhaustion
- managing their workload
- younger teachers struggling the most
- principals shouldering a lot of responsibility.

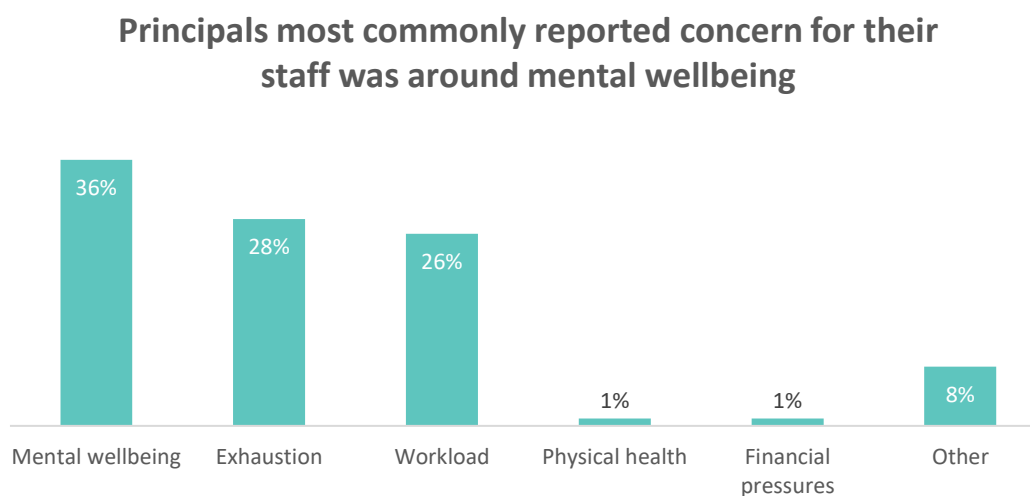
Teacher stress and exhaustion

During lockdown, 73 percent of schools reported one or more challenges relating to exhaustion and sickness, teacher stress about workload, teacher anxiety about health, or principal stress.

Leaders and teachers had worked through the Term 1 holidays getting prepared for distance learning, and so by the end of Term 2 many were very tired and in need of a break. Many leaders mentioned that they had ensured the Term 2 holidays were a real break for teachers.

However, after lockdown Figure 24 shows there was still high level of concern with 36 percent of principals reporting staff mental wellbeing as their main concern, followed by staff exhaustion (28 percent) and workload (26 percent).

FIGURE 24: Percentage of principals who reported their main concern about their staff, by type of concern



Workload and stress remain high

During lockdown, working from home meant that there was less of a clear demarcation between working and non-working hours for teachers and principals. Leaders had to be deliberate about setting expectations for when teachers were available. One principal told ERO: "It was difficult to shut the lid of the laptop and let the day finish. We did the hours that we needed to."

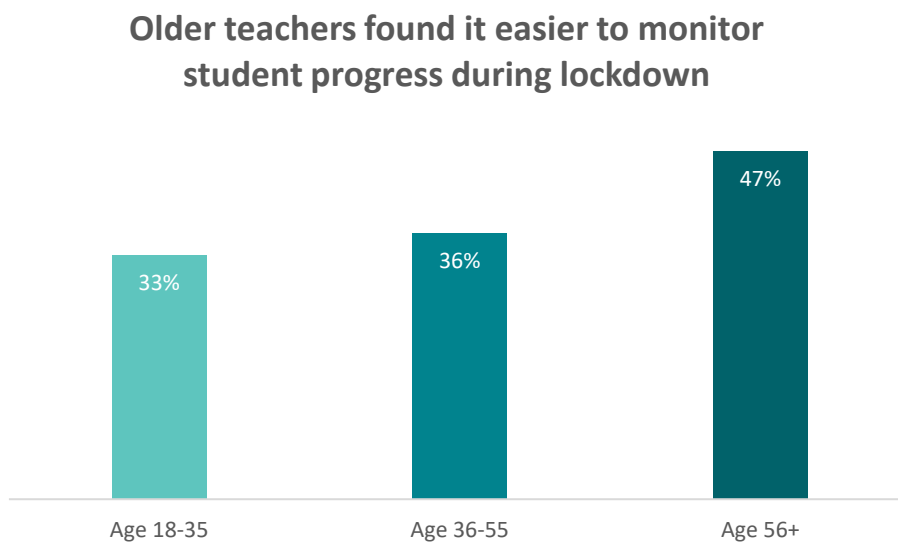
However, after lockdown, it appeared there were ongoing issues with managing workload and stress for teachers and principals:

- Forty-two percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their workload was manageable, while 14 percent disagree or strongly disagree.
- Only a quarter of principals (26 percent) felt their workload was manageable.

Young teachers appeared to struggle the most

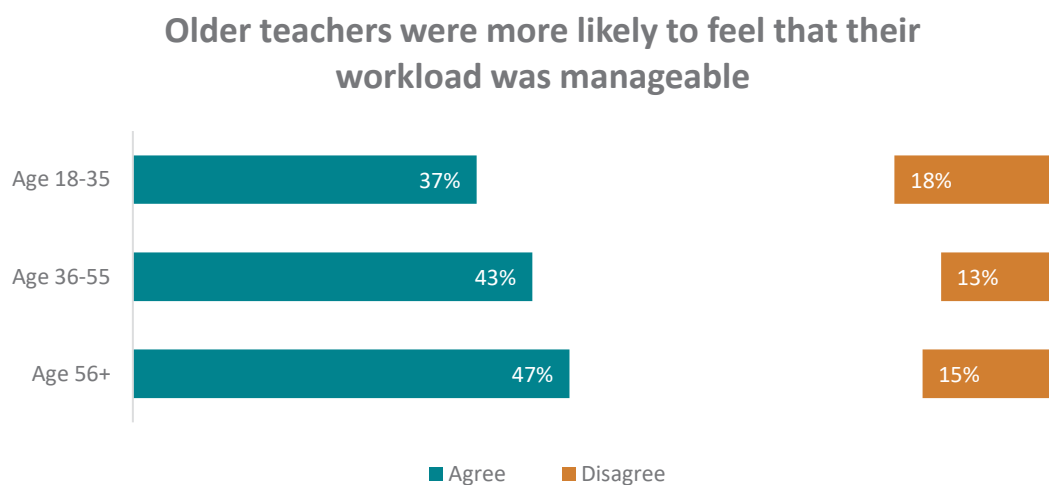
In lockdown, young teachers appeared to struggle the most, being more likely to find their workload unmanageable and less confident that they could monitor student progress. During lockdown, 32 percent of teachers aged 18-35 agreed or strongly agreed they could monitor student progress, rising to 36 percent for teachers aged 36-55 and 47 percent for teachers aged 56 and over.

FIGURE 25: Percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to monitor student progress during lockdown, by age group



This appears to have persisted after lockdown with nearly a fifth of teachers aged 35 years and under reporting that their workload was unmanageable compared to 15 percent of teachers aged 56 years and over. It is possible that younger teachers have had less experience to draw on when responding to the challenges of Covid-19 or they may have young children of their own to look after. Both of these factors could have made their lives under Covid-19 more stressful, which may explain why younger teachers were less positive about being able to manage their workload post lockdown (see Figure 26).

FIGURE 26: Percentage of teachers who agreed and disagreed that their workload was manageable post lockdown, by teacher age



Principals are shouldering a lot of responsibility

We frequently heard that principals took on a lot of responsibility for student learning and wellbeing, as well as staff wellbeing and, in many cases, whānau and community wellbeing. While a few principals reported having valuable support from networks and their board chairs, it is clear that the level of responsibility and stress that they have been managing is very significant. As one principal of a large mid-decile intermediate school in a main urban area told ERO:

“Everyone is sitting on my shoulders so I can’t afford to fall over or everyone falls over.”

Principal

What has worked in supporting teachers and principals?

There were two main areas that helped support the wellbeing of teachers and principals:

- Ministry of Education bulletins and support from the Ministry’s regional offices
- teachers supporting each other within schools.

Principals were very positive about regional ministry support and bulletins

Forty-two percent of leaders expressed positive feedback about the Ministry’s communications and bulletins, while noting that it was often difficult keep up with the quantity of guidance and the pace of change as the situation under Covid-19 developed. This was not expressed critically, leaders understood that the Ministry was doing its best in a changeable context.

Many leaders were particularly positive about the responsiveness of their local regional Ministry offices. Leaders often reported that they had taken on the task of filtering Ministry communications and passing on a smaller subset of the most relevant information to teachers, trustees and whānau.

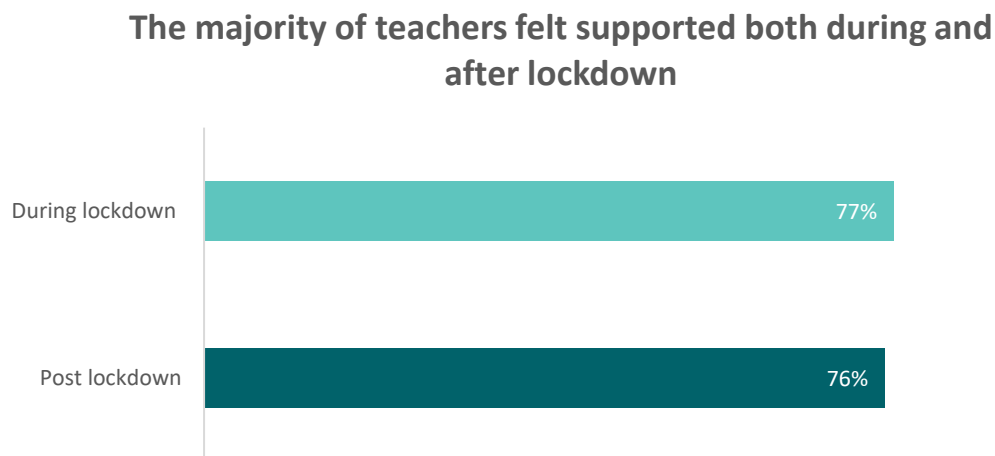
Teachers felt supported during and after lockdown

Many principals and teachers told ERO in interviews that they had been proud of the way that they had come together as a staff to support one another. They mentioned regular communication and clear lines of responsibility as important factors that had supported this. Some principals reported that they appreciated other staff stepping up into formal or informal leadership roles.

Many teachers felt their school had responded well to Covid-19:

- Eighty percent of teachers felt their school had responded effectively.
- Seventy-five percent felt their board had effectively supported the school.
- Three-quarters of teachers surveyed felt supported by their colleagues at school, and this was much the same after lockdown as it had been during (see Figure 27).

FIGURE 27: *Percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported by, and connected with, their teaching team, during and post lockdown*



After lockdown:

- Sixty-nine percent of teachers felt their school leaders had supported them to resolve challenges related to student learning.
- Seventy-two percent of teachers felt their leaders had supported them with their wellbeing.
- Seventy-seven percent of teachers had worked with their team to support students.

Part 4: Implications going forward

This report has provided an insight into how schools have navigated their way through the Covid-19 pandemic and what the impact has been on students and their whānau, teachers and principals. There are some clear lessons for moving forward to support student wellbeing, engagement and learning, help teachers and principals thrive and help schools prepare for any future lockdowns.

This section sets out how teachers, principals and schools can:

1. Support student wellbeing
2. Support student engagement
3. Support student learning
4. Enable teachers and principals to thrive
5. Prepare for future lockdowns and shocks

At the end of this section we set out how, as a system, we can respond.

1. To support student wellbeing we can:

- prepare for students in Term 1 2021 who are likely to still be anxious
- monitor student wellbeing
- target support on students and schools who most need it.

Prepare for students who are likely to still be anxious

ERO's student surveys showed that students feel less safe from Covid-19 after returning to school, in particular, secondary school students in the Auckland region. The student surveys also indicated an increased level of stress and anxiety as demonstrated by only a quarter of senior secondary students (Year 11 to 13) saying they had been coping with their learning.

These results suggest that anxiety will still be an issue among school students in Term 1. The transitions that normally occur in Term 1 (new school, new teacher, new peers, new subjects) may heighten this anxiety. Schools will need to respond to this with deliberate plans to support wellbeing.

Monitor student wellbeing

The pandemic is uncharted territory. Both how the pandemic will continue to develop and the ongoing impact on students' wellbeing is unknown. Our research has shown the impact on wellbeing so far has varied greatly between students (60 percent of primary aged students were feeling positive about the rest of 2020, compared to 22 percent of senior secondary students). It will be critical for schools to fully understand the ongoing impact on wellbeing for their students.

Target support on students who most need it

The impact of Covid-19 on student wellbeing has been uneven. Secondary students, in particular secondary students in Auckland, appear to be worst affected. This means some secondary schools, especially secondary schools in Auckland, are likely to be facing greater student wellbeing challenges.

Schools have already been adopting targeted strategies to support those most effected. In Term 1 they will need to maintain and extend these strategies. Schools that have the largest challenges may need extra support.

Schools should additionally give consideration to:

- ensuring a focused and co-ordinated response across counsellors, Social Workers in Schools (SWIS), Special Ed: Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs), Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLBs) and teacher aides.
- undertaking staff training on strategies to support student wellbeing.
- having wellbeing as a subject of regular strategic meetings.
- establishing a wellbeing group among staff in the school.
- establishing in-school 'friendship groups'.

2. To support student engagement we can:

- prioritise and understand student attendance and engagement
- work with parents and whānau to support engagement
- develop tailored strategies to engage students early in the year.

Prioritise and understand student attendance and engagement

This report shows that Covid-19 has had an impact on student engagement. Attendance is one aspect of engagement and around 60 percent of principals in low decile schools and a third (33 percent) in high decile schools said they were concerned about attendance. Regular attendance in New Zealand schools has been in decline over the last few years. Attendance has a significant impact on learning. It will be important for schools to ensure that Covid-19 does not contribute to this trend.

In 2021, families may remain more cautious about students going to school if they are feeling unwell, which could lead to an increase in non-attendance. Students will also not be able to attend after a Covid-19 test while they wait for the results.

Schools will need robust tracking and monitoring in place to identify students at risk of disengagement and plans in place to respond quickly to warning signs.

Work with parents and whānau to support engagement

The main reason given by schools to explain non-attendance was anxiety among families about exposing their children, family and whānau to Covid-19. Schools will need to continue to reassure families about schools being a safe place for their child.

The report found that the lockdowns had built stronger connections between schools, parents and whānau. There is an opportunity for schools to build off these connections and work closely with parents and whānau on student engagement.

Develop tailored strategies to engage students early in the year

Schools have responded quickly to put targeted strategies in place to engage students. In this research we discovered a wide range of innovative approaches that schools were trying, including outreach to families; leveraging the power of peer support; and having a key contact at school. Looking forward, schools may need to stand back, work out which strategies have been most effective (and for whom) and plan for continued engagement strategies next year.

3. To support student learning we can:

- recognise that this cohort of students will not be where they would have been in previous years
- understand the nature and size of the impact on student learning
- differentiate and tailor teaching for students based on identified gaps in their learning.

Recognise that this cohort of students will not be where they would have been in previous years

Gaps in achievement may have widened and not all learners may be able to catch up with their learning this year. They are likely to need additional support in 2021. Schools will need to tailor their plans for 2021 to recognise that this year students are starting from a different point.

Understand the nature and size of the impact on student learning

Our research has found that schools have been prioritising support for the wellbeing of students and, in some cases, deferring learning assessment. In the coming term, teachers will need to make sure they have a good understanding of where students are in terms of their learning progress so they can tailor their resources and plans for curriculum and teaching.

We also found that students were anxious. Teachers will need to use their expertise, experience and assessment tools to understand where students' learning is at without increasing anxiety.

Differentiate teaching for students based on identified gaps in their learning

Our research found that students did learn during the lockdowns, but how much they learnt varied and, for some students, their coverage of the curriculum was uneven. In addition, how they developed as learners also varied. For some students, learning from home made them a better learner and for others they struggled to manage their time and drive their own learning.

In response to this, schools will need to strike a deliberate balance between taking the opportunity to develop student agency and self-management through student directed learning, and using more teacher directed instructional approaches to help students catch up.

In addition, schools will need to be deliberate about how and when to use digital technology to support teaching and learning. Most students indicated they preferred face-to-face learning, but others thrived with digital tools.

4. To help principals and teachers thrive we can:

- keep a close eye on teacher and principal wellbeing
- increase support for those who need it the most.

Keep a close eye on teacher and principal wellbeing

We have found that Covid-19 has created significant challenges for principals and teachers, with many, particularly younger teachers and new principals, experiencing high levels of stress. It is possible that the 2020 summer holiday break will not be sufficient enough time to rest and prepare for another challenging school year. It will be important for boards of trustees and sector bodies to monitor teachers' and principals' wellbeing so they can act quickly when needed.

Increase support for those who need it

Our research has found that schools have appreciated the support they have received from the Ministry, regional offices, Boards of Trustees and sector associations. They also consistently reported finding it helpful to be able to share their experiences and learn from other schools' experiences. It will be important to continue to provide support and opportunities for schools to share their experiences.

5. To be ready for ongoing Covid-19 lockdowns and future shocks we can:

- be deliberate about the use of technology
- maintain the relationships with families and whānau.

Be deliberate about the use of technology

Schools have experimented with technology and are now better prepared now for future disruptions including using digital technology in their teaching. Teachers and students have increased confidence in the use of digital technology to support learning. But not all students have thrived learning digitally. To be prepared for further lockdowns, schools need to now reflect on what has worked best, and for which groups of learners, and use this to refine their plans for use of technology.

Maintain the relationships with families and whānau

Schools have created stronger relationships and engagement with whānau and teachers – this has the potential to be an enduring step forward. To be ready for future lockdowns, maintaining these relationships (and up-to-date contact lists) will be key.

Finally, at a system level we can:

- target support to the student and schools that need it
- monitor the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on student outcomes
- connect principals and schools to share their experience.

Target support to the students and schools that need it

Recognising that the ongoing impacts of Covid-19 are likely to fall most heavily on lower decile schools, secondary schools, and schools in Auckland, and target support to reflect this need.

Monitor across the system the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on student outcomes

We should monitor, at a system level, the ongoing impact on student wellbeing, attendance and learning outcomes so that we can understand which groups are most effected and whether gaps in wellbeing and achievement have widened.

In addition, we will need to continue to monitor the financial impact on schools. A quarter of schools reported financial concerns going forward. These concerns were mostly attributed to lack of international students, loss of fund-raising and increased costs for cleaning resources.

Connect principals and schools to share their experience

Schools across the country have grappled with similar challenges in response to Covid-19. There could be real benefit from creating opportunities for principals and schools to share their experiences and innovations and be informed by other approaches and evidence of best practice.

Part 5: Next steps

The coronavirus pandemic will continue to impact on all aspects of school life for the foreseeable future. The ongoing uncertainty caused by Covid-19 will mean that schools will have to continually monitor how well their students and staff are coping and be ready to provide additional support when they need it. This section provides some practical actions for school leaders and teachers to think about going forward.

To provide ongoing support to schools and the education system about the impact of Covid-19, ERO will:

- release further reports in 2021 that share the innovative practices in English and Māori medium used by services and schools in responding to Covid-19
- continue to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on student outcomes through ERO's reviews and analysis of education system data, such as attendance data and NCEA results.

Key lessons for school leaders and teachers: Practical actions to think about

Going forward, leaders may wish to work with their team to plan how they will support their students' wellbeing and learning in a Covid-19 world and discuss these plans with their board. These plans will need to be flexible enough to accommodate having everyone offsite or some students and staff onsite and some learning and working from home. Possible scenarios to consider include:

- some staff working from home because of concerns about their health or because they are waiting for Covid-19 test results
- students who are unable to participate regularly because of concerns about exposure to Covid-19
- temporary closure due to exposure to Covid-19
- lockdown – all staff and children working and learning at home.

For school leaders and teachers, we have identified practical actions they can take, set out below.

1. Learn from the first phase

- Take time to reflect on what worked well and identify any challenges that emerged through the first phase of this pandemic. As a leadership team, consider how improvements should be made and commit to making the necessary changes, in discussion with your board.
- Clearly identify priority areas of learning based on identified learning gaps as a result of the disruption from Covid-19 this year. The coming year's programme should maximise opportunities to learn and time for learning as a priority.

2. Continue to promote student wellbeing

- Consider how to ensure your school has an effective pastoral system where at least one teacher knows every student and that students have the confidence to raise concerns directly with adults in the school.
- Consider establishing a wellbeing team within the school to maintain oversight of the school's systems, professional training and development, and the specific needs of students of concern. Ensure a focused and coordinated response across all teachers, counsellors, SWIS workers, Learning Support Coordinators, SENCOs, school nurses, RTLBs and teacher aides.
- Establish and maintain data which records the details of and actively monitors changes in students who may be particularly anxious, have behavioural, social or emotional issues, or challenging family contexts, and ensure appropriate strategies are in place for these learners. Intervene early in response to identified problems.
- Consider establishing in-school "friendship groups" or tuakana-teina arrangements for students of concern.

3. Continue to support student engagement through relationships with whānau

- Consider how you can build on the stronger connections established with parents and whānau to reassure them about school being a safe place for their child. This includes sharing of protocols and procedures that the school has in place.
- Continue actively engaging parents and whānau in the life of the school and as partners in their children's development – including supporting parents with information and support about strategies to promote the wellbeing of their children.
- Remember that transitions can be times of vulnerability for students and ensure that appropriate supports are in place.
- Include strategies to ensure that individual students who may, for some reason, not be able to attend school stay connected and engaged in their learning while at home.

4. Use differentiated teaching strategies

- Be explicit in respect of the focus of teaching – ensuring learning intentions are relevant, clear and well understood by learner.
- Ensure that learning is scaffolded from where the student is at and what they know, and that they have adequate time to apply and embed new learning.
- Ensure that learning remains a collaborative process where students can work together to solve problems, apply and develop their knowledge and insights.
- After school programmes are another option which can support groups of learners who are at risk of being left behind.

5. Monitor your own wellbeing as a leader and that of staff

- Remember that looking after your own wellbeing is essential. As a leader, consider how you can draw on your support networks and take the time to connect with them. Balancing your work and personal life is important.
- Leaders have a direct impact on their staff and therefore student wellbeing. Regularly reviewing how effectively wellbeing is supported through schools' systems and processes is a first step. Leaders should work collaboratively with trustees, students, parents and whānau to make actionable plans for ongoing improvement.

Links to useful resources

- [Ministry of Education Covid-19 Information and Advice](#)
- [New Zealand Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Healthy Active Learning](#)
- [Wellbeing@School](#)
- [Wellbeing for Success](#)
- [SPARKLERS resource hub](#)

Appendix 1: Methodology

ERO used a mixed-methods approach across multiple data sources, yielding both quantitative and qualitative data, for this investigation. The target population were all English-medium schools in New Zealand. Data were collected across surveys of principals, teachers and students, interviews with principals, board chairs and teachers, and focus groups conducted with teachers, trustees, students and whānau. Surveys were conducted both during and after the national lockdown, while the interviews and focus groups were conducted after the national lockdown.

Quantitative data were statistically analysed using STATA, and qualitative data were thematically analysed using NVivo.

Surveys

ERO conducted two rounds of surveys, through the Ask Your Team platform.

For the first round of surveys, we recruited a nationally representative sample of 67 primary and secondary schools and invited teachers and students from these schools to answer a short survey online about their wellbeing and experience of learning and teaching during the lockdown. The sample was designed to ensure a mix of schools from different school sizes and decile groups were selected, and there was a separate survey for students and teachers. Responses were collected for three weeks from 23 April to 13 May, covering the tail end of Alert Level 4 and the beginning of Alert Level 3, when most students were learning from home. We received 10,106 responses to the student survey and 694 responses to the teacher survey.

For the second round of surveys, we invited all principals of English-medium schools in New Zealand to complete an online questionnaire. Responses were collected between 2 September and 16 September 2020. We received 1,777 responses, a response rate of 75.5%. We also surveyed teachers and students from the sample of primary and secondary schools again. These responses were collected between 31 August and 15 September 2020, which was a few months after the national lockdown, but only a day after the end of Auckland's second lockdown. We received 4,666 responses to the student survey and 686 responses to the teacher survey.

A full listing of the survey questions we asked can be found in Appendices 2 through 6 at the end of this report. ERO accessed aggregated survey results, without being able to identify individual schools' responses. Schools were given access to their own survey data to help with their own evaluation and planning. The results from the student and teacher surveys were grouped together to keep individual responses confidential.

Interviews

ERO conducted two rounds of phone interviews. The first round of interviews focused largely on schools' experience of Alert Levels 4 and 3 when most students were learning offsite, while the second round of interviews focused on attendance, re-engagement and student progress and achievement upon the return to onsite schooling.

For the first round of interviews, Review Officers interviewed principals and board chairs in 580 schools. These interviews took place from the middle of June 2020 to early August 2020. For the second round of interviews, Review Officers interviewed principals and a small group of teachers in 160 schools. These interviews took place from late August 2020 to late September 2020.

Review Officers provided written notes on the interviews which were then analysed to develop themes. More detailed analysis was conducted on samples of 144 of the first round schools, and 100 of the second round schools.

Focus Groups

ERO conducted 36 focus groups across New Zealand to gather the perspectives of parents/whānau and more in-depth perspectives from trustees, teachers and students. These focus groups were conducted from late August to the middle of September 2020. Focus groups took a conversational approach, and ERO staff reported the findings on summary sheets for each key group of informants (parents/whānau, teachers, trustees and students).

Appendix 2: Student survey questions (during lockdown)

Agree-Disagree Questions

For these questions, respondents could select from: Strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know.

1. I have people that I live with who can help me with my learning at home
2. I have adults I can talk to if I am worried about something
3. I feel safe from coronavirus (Covid-19) while I am learning from home
4. I know about the coronavirus (Covid-19) and what to do if I feel unwell
5. My bubble is doing well
6. I know how to contact my teacher if I need help or have a problem
7. I have been able to learn at home
8. The learning materials and resources that my school have given me are useful and easy to use
9. My teachers are providing me with feedback that helps my learning
10. I get to keep learning my favourite subjects while at home
11. I'm coping well with my schoolwork while learning at home
12. I have friends I can talk to while I am at home
13. I am enjoying learning at home

Yes-No Questions

For these questions, respondents could select from: Yes, no. Questions 4 and 5 had comment boxes for students to elaborate on their answers.

1. Has a teacher from your school contacted you to see if you are ok?
2. Have you watched a programme on Home Learning TV or Papa Kāinga TV?
3. Do you have to share a device with others who are also learning from home?
4. Would you like to be part of a follow-up survey? If yes, please ask a parent/caregiver. If they agree, please enter your email address.
5. Is there anything else your school could do to help you while you are learning from home? If yes, please explain.

Multi-Choice Questions

1. What type of device do you use most to access the internet?
 - a) Laptop, Chromebook or computer
 - b) Tablet (e.g. iPad)
 - c) Phone
 - d) I don't have a device I can use
2. Which of these have you been doing at home this week? Choose any number.
 - a) Used a screen to watch videos, movies, tv or to play a game
 - b) Did some exercise
 - c) Had fun with my family
 - d) Played a game
 - e) Read/looked at a book
 - f) Talked to a friend outside my house
 - g) Did something else (please describe)
3. Which one of these types of learning do you do most of?
 - a) Online
 - b) Activities from school
 - c) With my parents / caregivers
 - d) Home learning or Papa Kāinga TV
 - e) Something else (please describe)

Appendix 3:

Teacher survey questions (during lockdown)

Agree-Disagree Questions

For these questions, respondents could select from: Strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know.

1. I am confident that I can support the people in my life (children, other family members, friends, loved ones)
2. My bubble and I are doing well under the circumstances
3. I am confident that I can support my students while they are learning from home
4. My school leaders have been helpful in resolving challenges related to students learning from home
5. I have the resources and tools I need to teach students learning from home
6. I am confident using the resources and tools my school has provided to support 'learning from home'
7. I have been able to tailor my 'learning from home' materials to individual learners
8. Students have been able to work independently and learn from home without help from their parents or caregivers
9. I have been able to monitor my students' progress while they are learning from home
10. I have interacted frequently with my colleagues through phone calls, email, social media, video meeting, etc.
11. I feel supported and connected with my teaching team
12. I have been able to engage effectively with individual students when required
13. In the past week, my students have been positively engaged in 'learning from home'
14. I have been able to engage effectively with parents and caregivers when required

Multi-Choice Questions

1. What is your biggest concern right now?
 - a) Supporting my students' learning
 - b) My mental wellbeing
 - c) The wellbeing of others in my bubble
 - d) Lack of social interaction
 - e) My physical health
 - f) My financial situation
 - g) Other (please describe)
2. What is your biggest barrier to working effectively from home?
 - a) Childcare
 - b) Lack of quiet workspace
 - c) Lack of technology
 - d) Lack of internet
 - e) Caring for sick family members
 - f) N/A
 - g) Other (please describe)
3. Last week, did you spend most of your time teaching from a home-based setting or going into the classroom?
 - a) Home-based setting
 - b) Teaching in the classroom
 - c) Equal
 - d) N/A
4. When you have been teaching students 'learning from home', have you introduced new content or focused on enhancing their existing knowledge?
 - a) Existing content only
 - b) New content only
 - c) A mix of both
 - d) N/A
5. Have you used existing tools to monitor student progress in a home learning setting or have you developed new tools? If new, please provide an example of a new tool you have created
 - a) Existing tools only
 - b) New tools only
 - c) A mix of both
 - d) Neither
 - e) N/A
6. What are the main ways you have delivered content to your students 'learning from home'?
 - a) Online tools (e.g. Google Classroom)
 - b) Video conferencing (e.g. zoom, skype)
 - c) Online resources (e.g. school website)
 - d) Emailing lessons
 - e) Your school's learning packs sent to students
 - f) MoE learning packs sent to students
 - g) Complementing Home Learning or Papa Kāinga TV channel content
 - h) N/A
 - i) Other (please describe)

7. In the past week, what proportion of your students have been learning from home?
 - a) All
 - b) More than 75%
 - c) Between 50-75%
 - d) Between 25-50%
 - e) Less than 25%
 - f) None
 - g) N/A
8. What are the main reasons why students have not been positively engaged in 'learning from home'?
 - a) Students not participating
 - b) Distractions at home
 - c) Students unable to access online tools/resources
 - d) Lack of parent/caregiver support
 - e) Students not able to interact with other students
 - f) Teachers unable to provide prompts and support to students
 - g) N/A
 - h) Other (please describe)

Open-Response Questions

1. What is the most effective 'learning from home' instruction strategy that you would recommend to other teachers?
2. Are there any new ways of teaching you are using that you might continue to use once schools fully reopen?

Yes-No Questions

1. If ERO wanted to ask teachers for more information on particular topics in the future, would you like to be part of that process? If 'yes' please provide your email address

Appendix 4: Student survey questions (post lockdown)

Agree-Disagree Questions

For these questions, respondents could select from: Strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know.

1. In the past week, I have felt connected to my friends
2. At my school, I have an adult who really cares about me
3. I have adults I can go to if I need help
4. Learning from home has made me a better learner
5. There is someone in my home who can help me with my learning
6. In my home, there has been a parent or another adult who has become more interested in my learning this term
7. In the past week, I have been able to do the things I enjoy at school
8. My teachers care about my learning
9. I am enjoying my learning
10. I have been coping with my schoolwork
11. My learning progress has been good this term
12. In the past week, I have been able to keep up with my learning
13. I feel I am up to date with my learning
14. My teachers care about my wellbeing
15. My teachers have given me extra help with my learning when I needed it
16. I am feeling safe from Covid-19
17. I am feeling positive about the rest of the year
18. The people in my home are doing well

Multi-Choice Questions

1. What more support do you need from your teachers? If you choose "Anything else", there is a text box for you to let us know what you need
 - a) None, I am okay
 - b) Anything else
 - c) Help with my learning and wellbeing
 - d) Help with my wellbeing
 - e) Help with my learning
2. I feel happy
 - a) Never
 - b) Some of the time
 - c) Most of the time
 - d) All the time

Open-Response Questions

1. What is the main thing you liked about learning from home?
2. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Appendix 5:

Teacher survey questions (post lockdown)

Agree-Disagree Questions

For these questions, respondents could select from: Strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know.

1. My school has supported my wellbeing over the past week
2. My school leaders have helped resolve challenges related to student wellbeing during Covid-19
3. My school leaders have helped resolve challenges related to student learning during Covid-19
4. The Covid-19 response has strengthened our ties with the community
5. At my school, teachers have worked together to support students during Covid-19
6. I feel supported by, and connected with, my teaching team
7. My school has responded effectively to Covid-19
8. Our Board has effectively supported the school to respond to Covid-19
9. My school has actively gathered feedback from students on how to support them during Covid-19
10. My school has actively gathered feedback from our parents, whānau and caregivers on how to support students during Covid-19
11. The Covid-19 response has strengthened the role of parents, whānau and caregivers as key partners in students' learning
12. I am confident I can support my students' wellbeing needs during Covid-19
13. My students are engaged in their learning
14. I am confident that my students will be able to catch up with their learning
15. I am confident I can support my students' learning needs during Covid-19
16. I have discussed student progress with my students during Covid-19
17. I have discussed student progress with parents, whānau and caregivers when needed during Covid-19
18. I regularly discuss my student's progress with my teaching team
19. I have reviewed the learning goals for all my students during Covid-19
20. Students at risk of not achieving are receiving targeted support or intervention
21. Overall, I am satisfied with my life right now
22. The things in my life are worthwhile
23. The people I live with are doing well
24. I am happy at work
25. I am feeling positive about the rest of the year
26. My workload is manageable

Multi-Choice Questions

1. My relationship with my students has improved during Covid-19
 - a) No
 - b) About the same
 - c) Yes
2. My relationships with parents, whānau and caregivers has improved during Covid-19
 - a) No
 - b) About the same
 - c) Yes
3. I feel happy
 - a) Never
 - b) Some of the time
 - c) Most of the time
 - d) All the time
4. What is your biggest concern right now?
 - a) The wellbeing of others I live with
 - b) Lack of social interaction
 - c) My financial situation
 - d) My physical health
 - e) Exposure to Covid-19
 - f) My mental wellbeing
 - g) Supporting my students' learning
 - h) Other

Open-Response Questions

1. What has been most helpful in supporting your students during Covid-19?
2. What else do you need to support your students' learning?
3. What do you see as your biggest teaching challenge for the rest of the year?
4. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Appendix 6:

Principal survey questions

Agree-Disagree Questions

For these questions, respondents could select from: Strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don't know.

1. The Covid-19 response has strengthened the role of parents and whānau as key partners in students' learning
2. Our school has responded effectively to Covid-19
3. My school has actively gathered feedback from students on how to support them during Covid-19
4. Our external providers have been able to meet our needs during Covid-19
5. Our school has been able to support our students' learning during Covid-19
6. My school has actively gathered feedback from our parents, whānau and caregivers on how to support students during Covid-19
7. Overall, I am satisfied with my life right now
8. I have things in my life that are worthwhile
9. The people I live with are doing well
10. I have had someone I can talk to about my work during Covid-19
11. The Covid-19 response has strengthened our ties with the community
12. Our school leaders have worked well together to support students during Covid-19
13. I feel supported by, and connected with, my leadership team
14. I am happy at work
15. I am feeling positive about the rest of the school year
16. My workload is manageable
17. My workload has reduced since term 2
18. My Board has supported my wellbeing during Covid-19
19. I have received the support I need from my Board to support student wellbeing during Covid-19
20. Our Board has supported the school effectively during the Covid-19 pandemic
21. My school has been reviewing learning goals for all students during Covid-19
22. Students at risk of not achieving are receiving targeted support or intervention
23. I am confident my students will be able to catch-up with their learning

Multi-Choice Questions

1. What has been your biggest challenge supporting your staff during Covid-19?
If 'other' please describe
 - a) Other
 - b) Workload
 - c) Financial pressures
 - d) Physical health
 - e) Exhaustion
 - f) Mental wellbeing

2. What is your biggest concern about your school right now? If 'other' please describe
 - a) Exposure in our school community to Covid-19
 - b) Student wellbeing
 - c) Student learning and achievement
 - d) Student attendance
 - e) My staff's workload
 - f) My staff's wellbeing
 - g) Other
3. What is your main concern about your students for the rest of the school year?
If 'other' please describe
 - a) Staying engaged at school
 - b) Attendance
 - c) Learning progress
 - d) Wellbeing
 - e) Other
4. What is your main concern about your teachers for the rest of the school year?
If 'other' please describe
 - a) Workload
 - b) Financial pressures
 - c) Physical health
 - d) Exhaustion
 - e) Other
5. What do you see as the biggest challenges for your school for the rest of the year?
If 'other' please describe
 - a) Exposure in our school community to Covid-19
 - b) Student wellbeing
 - c) Student learning and achievement
 - d) Student attendance
 - e) Staff workload
 - f) Staff wellbeing
 - g) Other
6. I feel happy
 - a) Never
 - b) Some of the time
 - c) Most of the time
 - d) All the time
7. What is your biggest concern about yourself right now? If 'other' please describe
 - a) The wellbeing of others I live with
 - b) Lack of social interaction
 - c) My financial situation
 - d) My physical health
 - e) My mental wellbeing
 - f) Other
8. What proportion of your students have fallen behind in their learning due to Covid-19?
 - a) Don't know
 - b) 75-100 percent
 - c) 50-75 percent
 - d) 25-50 percent
 - e) Less than 25 percent

Yes-No Questions

1. Are there students in your school who you are concerned may not be able to catch-up with their learning due to Covid-19? If 'Yes' please detail what groups of students are you most concerned about in the text box below. (e.g. school year, gender, ethnicity, students with learning needs)

Open-Response Questions

1. What further support do you need to support your wellbeing?
2. What additional support does your school need to help you support your students' learning during Covid-19?
3. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?



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