



24 May 2021

Heidi O'Callahan
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe Heidi

I am responding to your email of 22 April 2021 seeking information about the Ministry of Education's policies regarding travel to school. My letter sets out the Ministry's policies and partnerships that relate to travel to school and its impacts on environmental outcomes and student development.

The Government and the Ministry of Education recognise climate change as one of the biggest challenges currently facing our country and our planet, and the Ministry considers environmental outcomes in its work.

The Ministry's current school bus procurement for Daily and Technology bus services for eligible students incentivises transport providers to use younger vehicles to reduce vehicle emissions. As part of this procurement, suppliers were awarded additional points if they made a commitment to use younger vehicles. Participants in this tender were also awarded points for demonstrating good sustainability practices in fleet and depot management.

The Ministry also recognises that it is important for our children and young people to be well informed about climate change and its impacts. Climate change education sits within Education for Sustainability in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, and can be taught across the curriculum. In Social Sciences, for example, students might use a social enquiry approach to learn about climate change and sustainability and how they can participate as critical, active, informed, and responsible citizens.

Additionally, the Ministry has developed a range of resources to support schools in Aotearoa New Zealand in their teaching of Education for Sustainability, which can be found at <https://ssol.tki.org.nz/>. These resources include:

1. *Climate Change – Prepare today, live well tomorrow* explores the response to and impacts of climate change, globally, nationally, regionally and locally. The aim of this programme is for students to feel empowered to create and implement their own plan to take action for climate change. Wellbeing activities throughout this resource, and an accompanying Wellbeing Guide, recognise that students may have strong reactions when learning about climate change.
2. *Pūtātara: A Call to Action* focuses on global citizenship and sustainability. *Pūtātara* also explores topics such as national identity, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and personal and environmental wellbeing. *Pūtātara* promotes place-based learning and learning through inquiry to develop critical thinking skills.

The New Zealand Curriculum is non-prescriptive, with the expectation that individual schools can choose how they develop localised curriculum in a way that works in their community, and that responds to the needs of their students. This means each school decides its own teaching approaches and what tools and materials to use in the classroom. The Ministry expects schools to consult with their communities when making decisions about what they include, and how they

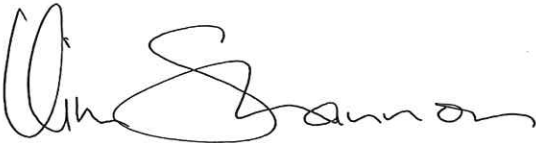
deliver, their local curriculum. Our teachers are skilled professionals who will enhance the resources they use with their local knowledge, expertise and other resources, and who will use the resources to create rich meaningful experiences for our learners.

The Ministry of Education has partnered with both the Department of Conservation and Ministry for the Environment to develop an Environmental Education for Sustainability Action plan, which gives further insight into work in this area. This is available at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/education-strategies/environmental-education-for-sustainability-strategy-and-action-plan/>

With regard to your questions relating to public health, these should be directed to the Ministry of Health as they are best placed to respond. You can contact the Ministry of Health at info@health.govt.nz.

I trust this information is helpful. Thank you for writing, and I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Shannon', written in a cursive style.

Kim Shannon

Te Tumu Waihanga

Head of Education Infrastructure Services

cc Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education