



Kia ora Whanau,

Yesterday the government introduced a four stage alert system for COVID-19 and announced that NZ is currently at **Alert Level 2: Reduce**.

Whilst there are increased limitations placed on travel, gatherings and social contact, schools are still open and as a community we are closely following the guidelines provided to us by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health.

Protecting our most vulnerable

While the majority of people who are confirmed with COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate symptoms, some individuals are at risk of more severe symptoms. Older people, particularly those with pre-existing health problems are more likely to get severe illness and are therefore considered at risk. High risk individuals also include people with underlying medical conditions, such as:

- a compromised immune system
- liver disease
- cancer
- kidney disease
- heart disease
- diabetes mellitus

People over 70 years of age and those with compromised immunity and certain existing medical conditions are asked to remain at home as much as they can from now on, and avoid any non-essential travel. Staff, children and young people in schools and early learning services are therefore asked to follow this advice.

Staff

We are encouraging our staff who fall into these categories to stay at home. In most cases they will be able to continue to support school curriculum in some capacity. This will inevitably have knock on effects on our day to day organisation, the way in which we are able to operate and usual teaching and learning in some areas. We intend to do our best to ensure that school remains a place of routine, learning, joy and safety for our students.

Students

The health, safety and well-being of our community is our main priority. We wish to minimise risk at this time. Based on Ministry of Education guidance, students with compromised immunity or certain medical conditions, should not attend school due to their condition. In order to maintain accurate records, we ask that you email our office to report the absence with the specific reason.

If your daughter is unwell for any reason, she should not attend school.

Responsible Actions

It is really important that we continue to care for and support each other at this time. Due to limitations placed on our face to face to contact with each other, we need to be creative with how we care for our family and friends, particularly those who are most vulnerable at the moment.

Usually our instant reaction in crisis or distress is to visit, comfort and look after each other closely. However, at the moment this itself brings about some risk and therefore we are asking you to think about how you can support others in different ways, including communication by phone, email and online video platforms.

Continued good hygiene practices

We continue to emphasise good hygiene practices at all times.

Regular washing and drying of hands is the best way to protect yourself from this virus. Soap and water is most effective. Hand sanitizer is also available.

Please also remind your daughter to avoid sharing food and drinks.

PE & Sports

We will continue with PE and in-school sports and games within current Ministry guidelines.

- We are unable to use team bands and bibs at this time. We ask that students bring their house colour T Shirt to wear instead of their school PE top.
- Physical activities will be more individual to avoid close contact between students.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided to students to use when entering and leaving the Gymnasium.
- All equipment used will be sanitized after each lesson.

Preparing for Remote Learning

We have begun preparing for the possibility of school closure to ensure we can provide an ongoing learning programme and support for all our students. We will have more information in regard to this in the coming days.

Further information and updates are available at:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/latest-updates/>

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

Thank you for your continued support, respect and care during these times.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Anna Swann