



Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March

## COVID – 19 UPDATE

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As you will know we are in times that are changing rapidly as new information comes to hand. New information and changes will be the norm during the next few days and weeks. At school, we see our role as providing normal routines, to reassure our children and our community.

We are continuing to monitor the Ministry of Health initiatives to make changes and put in place the latest information as soon as possible. The Ministry of Education (MoE) continues to update us as well. The MoE has a great reference page for families and schools <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/pastoral-care-and-wellbeing/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-coronavirus/>

We continue to reinforce the importance of hygiene. We have added a greater number of hand sanitizing stations, soap dispensers and hand towels across the school. Teachers are also reminding children about handwashing, and of coughing or sneezing into their elbow, rather than their hands. We have added posters around the school to reinforce and make visible good hygiene practices.

We have adopted the 'no hugs, no handshakes and no hongis' approach as mentioned by Jacinda Arden in the weekend. We would really appreciate you reiterating these messages at home.

The latest information sees events or gatherings of 500+ people being cancelled or postponed. We are a school of 500+ students and although we have split assemblies this year we have made the decision to cancel assemblies for the remainder of the term. Guidelines for assemblies are being released soon, these may also have implications around how much space there needs to be between each child which again would make it impractical to hold assemblies. The classes who were scheduled to share their learning this term will be able to book into a later date in the year.

Thank you to everyone for keeping sick children at home. This is an important part of keeping our whole community as well as possible during this uncertain time. If your child is feeling unwell, please do not send them to school. If your child displays symptoms during the school day that indicate they are unwell, we will request that they go home. Please make sure that your contact details are up to date.

Please be aware that on return to New Zealand from overseas travellers are asked to self-isolate for 14 days. The Ministry of Health has advised that there can be people self-isolating and those that are at work or school in the same house. Refer to their website for further information <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-staying-home-self-isolation>

At this time the Government has indicated that schools will remain open. As part of our further planning we will be looking at distance learning through online resources and how this might look at home. We will be sending home a link to a short survey later in the week to gain an idea of what access we may have in the community.

Thank you for your understanding as we work through this uncertain time to provide stability for our children. The Health and Safety team will be meeting on Wednesday morning as we focus on our pandemic planning and any further developments. We will be providing further information in the newsletter on Thursday.

If you have any questions please feel free to pop in for a chat or send me an email. If we don't know the answer to your questions we will work towards finding out what the best solution is through the Ministry of Health or MoE.

Take care.

Regards,  
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