



Sunday 22 March 2020

Kia ora koutou

With the [announcement](#) that New Zealand has moved to [Alert Level 2 – Reduce Contact for COVID-19](#), **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.

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

High risk students and staff are now asked to remain at home as much as possible.

We have a number of staff who are now required to stay at home under Alert Level 2 recommendations, and this will unfortunately impact on our ability to deliver our regular programmes. Many of our support programmes, such as Reading Recovery or English Language Learning support will be interrupted as we need to deploy staff to cover classroom programmes. There are likely to be more interruptions and postponements of events and activities. Our apologies for this.

Any one (child or staff member) who is unwell in any way - needs to stay at home until better. When you contact the school office be please specific as to the reason your child is away.

We are still open and children are expected to attend school if they are well, are not considered high risk and aren't required to self isolate. Please be assured that with no case confirmed in our school, your children are safe here.

Staff who are working from home will be able to support the learning of those children at school and also those children required to be staying at home through the use of online technology. Making use of our digital subscriptions (Mathletics/Mathseeds and Reading Eggs/Eggpress) is a starting place and we also have a range of other learning activities being put together, both online and offline.

While we have ways of supporting children to continue their learning at home we also do not want this to be another stress upon families, so it is up to each family how they work this.

What if there is a case related to our school?

- As soon as a case is confirmed in our immediate school community (eg. a student, staff member, or member of their household), the Medical Officer of Health and Ministry of Education will inform me about this, and we will work together to get quick and clear messaging out to you
- If there was a case confirmed of someone in our school, we will likely be asked to close temporarily by the Medical Officer of Health. This will allow time for close contacts to be traced, appropriate testing to be undertaken, and a careful clean of the school to be undertaken.
- If our school does need to close temporarily, we have a plan in place to support student learning.

Some reminders:

- Please ALL parents and visitors to our school MUST report to the office first. We want to limit the contact external adults and children have in our school. If you are dropping something to your child please leave it at the office and we will get it to them.
- Please keep talking to your child, I know many of them are feeling worried and scared (as are some adults) but don't understand all the information. I've also heard a lot of misinformation from our children. They need reassurance from us and to be reminded that they can do things to help like wash their hands, not touch their faces and keep distance from others - something that can be tricky for children. Please consider your child's mental and emotional health at this time (as well as their physical health). [This link has some good information](#) in this regard.
- We have put in place heightened cleaning processes focusing on hygiene.
- We are encouraging and reminding children to wash their hands and practise good hygiene.
- Please keep checking our school Facebook page and emails for further updates. We are also posting other links and tools to our Facebook page that might be of use - particularly things to support you talking to your children.

Further information is available at:

- <https://covid19.govt.nz/help-and-advice/for-everyone/vulnerable-people/>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-questions-and-answers>

Thank you so much for your support and understanding during what is a challenging time for everyone. We are well aware that many families in our community are impacted in a variety of ways by this pandemic such as job security, we are thinking of you.

We are getting the most up to date advice and guidance so that we can confidently make informed decisions about the safety and wellbeing of our school community.

If you wish to discuss anything please feel free to contact me via the school phone or on juliec@reremoana.school.nz

Keep being kind and looking out for each other.

Kind regards

Julie Cowan