



Friday May 8 2020

Kia ora koutou

Like me, I am sure you have followed with interest the recent announcements made by the Prime Minister.

It is reassuring to hear how well our country has done at minimising the impacts of COVID-19. Alert Levels 4 and 3 have not been easy and I thank you for your ongoing support for the work we are doing.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister advised that in Alert Level 2 schools are safe environments for children, young people and staff and that additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing.

The good news is that when we are able to, we will be ready to welcome all students and staff back to our school site. We are really looking forward to it!

The key Public Health approach is to firstly minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and secondly to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school is infected.

As we have done in Alert Level 3, you can be assured that in Alert Level 2 we will know who is at school, who our staff and students have been in close contact with and take appropriate measures to keep everyone safe.

Physical distancing is a good precaution to prevent the spread of disease. We do however know it is challenging in schools, so good hygiene practices and regular cleaning are even more important here. This includes staff and students coughing into their elbows, handwashing and drying and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Under Alert Level 2, we advise any students and staff to stay at home if they are sick, and we will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms. This is going to be incredibly important and we will be asking for your support in this. We know we tend to carry on through sickness such as the common cold or a slight cough but at Alert Level 2

we need to be strict with both students and staff. We must stay home if sick (and get tested if showing any symptoms of Covid, such as a sore throat or runny nose).

Over the coming days we will be working on our health and safety plan and will be continuing to ensure that we have safe and sensible practices to maintain the health and safety of everyone on the school site. As described by Dr Payinda in his [NZ Herald article](#), "Covid's not measles or chickenpox, it doesn't hang in the air for hours waiting to infect passers-by. It travels on invisible drops of spit. You don't have to cross the street to avoid anyone. Just avoid getting in their 'moist breath' zone". We all just need to remember to have some breathing space at Alert Level 2!

It's important however that not just at school but at home, safe hygiene habits are practised by everyone, as this is essential to minimise the risk that someone gets infected with Covid-19.

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the covid19.govt.nz website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

If you have any questions or have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact me juliec@reremoana.school.nz

We will be in touch again soon to update you on our plans and provide further information about school opening and learning and teaching at Alert Level 2.

Ngā mihi

Julie Cowan
Principal