

26 March 2020

COVID-19 Update

Good evening,

Today I received an update from the Ministry of Education on the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to note we continue to have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in schools or early learning services in New Zealand.

The most likely scenario is if a student or staff member is confirmed with COVID-19, Health may require our school to close for a day or two, to undertake tracking and tracing of close contacts. A reminder that a close contact is generally described as someone who was in near proximity (1.5 metres) of a person confirmed with the virus for 15 or more minutes.

Assemblies and other events

We will be postponing community assemblies and our International Assembly until further notice. In the case of our International Assembly we will advise the new date for this event.

We wish to repeat our request to all our Ōrākei Community, students, parents and staff alike, to follow the following safety steps:

- Pay careful attention to personal hygiene practices, especially regarding coughs and sneezes, and discuss this with your children.
- Please encourage your children to wash their hands well for at least 20 seconds with warm, soapy water. Additional hand sanitisers have also been installed in classrooms and hub spaces.
- Please keep your children at home if they do not feel well and seek medical attention as required. The same will apply to all our staff and we request the same of parents – to stay away from visiting school if you are not feeling well.
- We still ask that you report all absences to the school in the usual way.
- Please continue to inform us of any overseas travel plans for your family.

Ōrākei School continues to follow the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education advice and guidance on all matters regarding precautions and we continue to monitor the situation both within NZ and further abroad.

The Ministry of Health's current advice is that with continued vigilance, the chance of widespread community outbreak is expected to remain low. We all have a role to help minimise the spread of the disease.

If you want to know more about COVID-19 the Ministry of Health is the best source of information for New Zealand and they update this information regularly. A link to their site is located here <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

We will continue to undertake appropriate planning and have a staged response that can be escalated should the situation dictate. The main way that we will communicate this is through our FlexiBuzz.

Online learning

You may be aware in the media there has been talk of the potential for the Government to direct schools to close. At this time, we have not been advised or directed by the Ministry of Education to do this. However, we are reviewing and planning how we can maintain our teaching and learning programmes should this eventuate. One way we would intend to deliver education would be through our SchoolTalk online platform.

We will communicate logins and provide more information on this to you in the near future.

We thank you for your support with our requests and we will continue to keep you informed.

Kind regards,

Michael Earl

Principal

Ōrākei School