

Wednesday 18th March

Covid-19 Update

Kia ora koutou,

The changing situation of Covid-19 and the new border measures put in place on the weekend have definitely brought things closer to home for us all. The school is receiving information daily about Covid-19 and we have sent home newsletters and used our website and facebook page to pass information on. At Otumoetai Intermediate we have a pandemic plan that is ready to be implemented if needed. The following email hopefully answers a few questions that may be out there in our community.

FROM THE SCHOOL

At this time effective communication relies upon us having your up-to-date contact details. Please **take this opportunity to update your mobile number with the school** if it has changed since the beginning of the year.

You can do this by emailing the office at admin@otuinterschool.nz

In the meantime, we will continue to focus on good hygiene practices. Hand washing and good cough etiquette are very important tools in preventing the spread of illness including colds, flu and COVID-19.

Preventative Measures

- We continue to promote handwashing and drying, use of hand soap/sanitiser and coughing into the crook of the arm.
- We have increased our cleaning programme, with cleaning kits provided in each room to clean high-use areas daily.
- Drinking fountains are being cleaned twice daily.

- We have hand-sanitiser or soap available in every classroom and other key areas.
- Rubbish bins are being emptied regularly in toilet areas
- We have cancelled any whole school assemblies until further notice
- In line with the Prime Ministers recommendations, we will be doing our best to avoid handshakes, hugs and hongis.
- We have an isolation area set up should it be required and have developed any protocols for handling unwell students, staff or parents/whānau. This would involve contacting parents to collect students who may be displaying: cough, high temperature (fever), shortness of breath

In the case of a suspected case of COVID-19 occurring at Otumoetai Intermediate School (as per MOE pandemic guidelines):

1. Unwell child considered as a possible case of COVID-19 (by our designated medical officer)
2. Parents contacted and organise the immediate departure of student from school
3. Students who have been in close proximity with a suspected case will be advised (in reality, this would be the students who share the same classroom)
4. These student's parents will be contacted to collect them to go home
5. These students are to stay at home until otherwise advised

It is important that parents/whānau:

- Keep children at home if they are unwell.
- Pick children up promptly if we make contact with you.

Family Travel

- If a member of your family/whānau comes home from overseas travel and is required to self-isolate, please inform the office.
- Please inform the school if you choose to self-isolate as a precautionary measure.

In the meantime, if you require more health information contact:

Healthline - 0800 611 116

FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Reminder - Who needs to self-isolate?

The Government announcement at the weekend requires anyone who has arrived from overseas **after** 1am on Monday 16 March to self-isolate for 14 days, and to register with Healthline (0800 358 5453). The exception is people arriving from specified Pacific countries ([“Category 2” countries](#) as listed here), who do not need to self-isolate if they are not unwell.

People who arrived from overseas **before** 1am on Monday 16 March are not required to self-isolate, unless they have travelled from South Korea or Iran. Travellers from those countries need to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of their departure and register with Healthline.

People living in the same house as travellers that are required to self-isolate, need to minimise contact with them (avoiding being closer than 2 metres apart for more than 15 minutes). However, they are not required to self-isolate themselves.

Encouraging student attendance

We know that some parents have concerns about their children attending school at the moment, some of which may be due to what they are seeing in the media about other countries.

There's a simple rule here – if students are unwell (whether or not their illness relates to COVID-19) they should stay at home. Students who are not unwell should continue to attend school.

Remember that while we are seeing large-scale school shutdowns elsewhere in the world, in New Zealand we still have no community transmission. Consequently any decisions about school closures will be made on a case by case basis. In the meantime, unless students are unwell themselves, then parents should keep sending them to schools and early learning centres as these environments continue to be safe and the best place for them to continue their learning.

Schools will continue to be provided with the latest information and guidance from the Ministries of Education and Health, so that Principals and Boards can make well-informed decisions based on their particular circumstances.

Here are two links for those who wish to read more:

• **Ministry of Education -**

<http://www.education.govt.nz/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-3/>

• **Ministry of Health -**

https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus?fbclid=IwAR2_pyB9aGj2uOmQD1UeXFQ4YoR2B0sFuKAS9ggoXt0IR35gSk_vkpxrgYk

Nga mihi,

Henk Popping

PRINCIPAL