



10th March 2022

Kia ora e te whānau and good evening to you all

I just wanted to give you an update of our school's Covid-19 status and provide a summary of the new isolation requirements under Phase 3 of the Red Light Settings, coming into effect tomorrow night (Friday 11th March) at 11.59 p.m.

Currently we have 28 positive cases and 55 household contacts who are all in isolation. Today we had 61% attendance at school (127 students absent in total). I want to wish all of those students and whānau affected by Covid all the best in their recovery, and isolation period. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to further assist your child while in isolation. I know teachers have been keeping in contact with their students who are learning from home, and many are joining the class for periods of time throughout the day, through Google Meet. It is a great idea to maintain connectedness wherever possible.

I would also like to share with you that our students who are attending school appear very settled, engaged in their learning and happy to be here. There is a lovely feel, or tone, in the school as we work together to keep each other safe, and look out for each other's well-being.

Below is a summary of the new isolation requirements provided by the Ministry of Education today:

### ***Changes to isolation requirements***

*From 11:59pm tomorrow Friday 11 March isolation requirements for positive cases of COVID-19 and their household contacts will be reduced from 10 to **seven days**.*

*This change has been made due to up-to-date public health advice: there is a decline in infectiousness of Omicron over time and in most cases, transmission occurs within seven days.*

*This reduction in the isolation period will ensure we maintain a balance between controlling the outbreak effectively and minimising the impacts of isolation requirements on people's lives.*

*Evidence also shows that the risk of re-infection within the first three months after someone has had Omicron is very low. For this reason, recovered cases will **no longer** need to isolate again if they become a household contact within 90 days of having the virus. This has been **extended** from 28 days.*

*From 11.59pm Friday 11 March, all cases and household contacts who are currently isolating can end their period of isolation after Day 7. **Those currently in isolation will not have to complete their Days 8, 9 and 10 of isolation.***

*Please see the information below for changes that will be in effect from **Saturday 12 March.***

### **Cases of COVID-19**

*Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for seven days.*

*Day 0 is the day symptoms began or the day the test was taken (whichever came first). Cases will isolate for a full seven days and are free to return to normal activities on Day 8, if they are not symptomatic.*

*Students who test positive for COVID-19 are not required to self-isolate past seven days under public health regulations, but they should **not return to school if they are still feeling unwell.***

### **Household contacts**

*Household contacts are required to isolate for the same seven days as the case.*

*They can return to their normal activities on the same day as the first case in their household, so long as all test results have been negative, and they are not symptomatic.*

*Household contacts should continue to self-monitor for symptoms up to Day 10.*

*Household contacts will be required to take a self-administered rapid antigen test (RAT) on Day 3 and Day 7 of the case's isolation period.*

*If symptoms develop at any time during isolation:*

- *the usual advice remains in place to undertake an additional RAT*
- *if the test is negative and symptoms persist or worsen, test again 48 hours after that negative test*
- *if symptoms resolve there is no need for a further test until the required Day 7 test. If this is negative, they can return to daily life on Day 8.*

*If a household contact has new symptoms on the day of release:*

- *they should undertake an additional RAT and stay at home while unwell*
- *if that test is negative and symptoms persist or worsen, test again after 48 hours. If symptoms resolve, there is no need for a further test.*

*If a household contact has finished their period of isolation they do not need to return to isolation if a new case is identified in their household. However, **this only applies for a period of seven days** following their leaving isolation.*

*Should a new household member be confirmed as a case eight or more days after the household contact has left isolation, then they must start a new period of self-isolation for seven days.*

## **General advice**

*Anyone that has had COVID-19 or who is a contact of someone who has COVID-19 should avoid attending high-risk settings until ten days have passed since they were infected or exposed to the virus. These will include, for example, aged-care facilities, correctional facilities and hospitals (unless the individual is requiring care).*

*As always, undertake a rapid antigen test (RAT) if symptomatic. If the RAT is negative and symptoms persist or worsen, you should test again 48 hours after the negative test. If symptoms resolve, there is no need for a further test.*

## **Advice for anyone who is unwell**

- *Anyone who is sick should stay home until they are well.*
- *When a child has respiratory symptoms, they should stay at home and seek advice from their GP or Healthline. Staying home is key to controlling the spread of **any** virus in a school setting.*
- *Many children will have a long-lasting runny nose or cough after viral infections. If it is over 10 days since the onset of COVID symptoms and they are no longer feeling unwell, they are very unlikely to be infectious and can therefore return to school.*
- *However, if they are continuing to feel unwell or their symptoms are worsening after 10 days, they should not return to school and a GP review, or a call to Healthline, is recommended.*

In response to the information above, we are therefore expecting most students to return earlier than the initial 10 day date on the proviso that they are symptom free. Please call us if you are unsure about the date your child can return to school.

Thank you to everyone for informing us of new cases/household contacts. Fingers crossed we start to see less positive cases popping up in the near future as we look forward to returning to some sort of normalcy. Thank you all for your ongoing support.

Best wishes from the team at MIS.

Kind regards

Jenny Clark

Principal