



BIRKDALE NORTH SCHOOL

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Wednesday 29th March

Tena Koutou

I am writing to keep you updated about how our school is continuing to respond to COVID-19 in New Zealand.

As you may have seen, in the last few days the media has reported a reduction in the number of daily cases.

While we know that cases in school will rise and fall with that of the level in our community, our health experts tell us that children are much more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 in the community than at school. We also know that nationally in mid-March no more than 4% of teachers in any seven-day period reported as testing positive. It is currently around 3.5%.

As you know, it's great for any child's wellbeing and learning to be at school with their friends, teachers and other school staff. You also know that we have very good systems in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.

This is why we remain open at Red.

I wanted to remind you that in our school we are keeping the additional layers of protection in place to help prevent or reduce the risk of onward spread.

We know that being fully vaccinated and boosted reduces the risk of severe illness due to COVID-19. We encourage you to get your child vaccinated, too.

I know that some of you still have questions about this, however, so I've included links to a video that answers many of the common questions about the vaccine:

- [Common questions about the vaccine \(English\) – KidsHealth](#)
- [Common questions about the vaccine \(te reo Māori\) – KidsHealth](#)

Mask wearing for our students Year 4 and above and for adults remains in place in indoor spaces and we are getting lots of fresh air during the day. We also continue to focus on basic hygiene such as washing hands regularly, covering any coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces regularly.

Like the links above, KidsHealth has some other great resources you may be interested in:

- [Why wearing masks and creating airflow helps – KidsHealth](#)
- [Back to school with Omicron in 2022 – KidsHealth](#)

From time to time some students will need to isolate at home. This is in line with Government advice and if this happens, we will support them to continue their learning at home to minimise any interruption.

According to the Paediatric Society of NZ, in most children COVID-19 is a mild illness. It can be managed by whānau with some simple measures such as keeping fluids up and keeping an eye on your tamaiti (child).

If you have any concerns about sending your child to school, please get in touch. We want children to be at school and engaging in learning with their friends.

Your job remains the same, too: please continue to keep a really close watch of your whānau for anyone with symptoms. If unwell, please stay at home and get advice about getting a COVID-19 test.

Noho ora mai,

Jan McDonald
(Principal)