



Thursday 19 March

Kia ora Whānau

Covid-19 Update:

Yesterday I attended a hui along with principals from all over Taranaki. We were fortunate to have representatives from both the Taranaki District Health Board and Ministry of Education there. This meeting was useful in that important facts and information was shared directly with us from a health perspective and it is this information that determines how we operate as a school.

Key information to continue to be aware of:

- At this stage there is no evidence of sustained community spread of COVID-19, cases to date are occurring through family transmission only
- There is no scientific evidence to say schools should shut
- As stated by Minister Hipkins (17 March) 'We've got to keep in mind that transmission rates internationally amongst young people are very, very low. School-aged students are not the target population.' 'At the moment, there is no scientific reason for school closures, instead he encouraged parents to continue sending their children to school, as it was a very, very safe place for them to be.'
- Ministry of Health has systems and processes in place that will come into effect should a school have a case, as has happened in Dunedin in the last 48 hours. They are the lead agency making all calls
- Ministry of Education advises that if parents are voluntarily keeping their children away, there is no requirement for teachers to provide work for them
- In China less than 1% of children under 10 caught the illness.

Additional safety measures that we already have in place at school:

- Classrooms are promoting safe hygiene
- Cleaning practices have increased to have more frequent cleaning of surfaces, handles etc
- All classes have cleaning product for regular table washing etc
- Students are encouraged to drink from own water bottles, with fountains being made unavailable
- Provision of labelled cups supplied for students to use if they don't have a drink bottle
- Swimming Sports cancelled and swimming pool closed to prevent cross contamination and potential to develop respiratory illnesses that may then impact on older members of the community
- School assemblies postponed until further notice

How you can help:

- Look out for neighbours, look out for family, look out for friends, particularly look out for our older citizens as they are the most vulnerable
- The most important thing to do is to educate your children about hygiene and the general situation, but don't alarm or create unnecessary hysteria for them. They are still only children.

Ngā mihi
Michelle Cronin
Principal