



Kia ora koutou

Like me, I am sure you have heard the announcements made by the Prime Minister, this evening. I wanted to let you know what this means for us at Firth Primary, as we move to Alert Level 2.

The Prime Minister advised that Alert Level 2 schools are safe environments for children, young people and staff and that additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing.

The key Public Health approach is to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and second to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school is infected.

Physical distancing is a good precaution to prevent the spread of disease. We do however know it is challenging in schools, so good hygiene practices and regular cleaning are even more important here. This includes staff and students coughing into their elbows, handwashing and drying and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Alert Level 2 applies from midnight tonight for 72 hours.

What does this look like at Firth Primary School??

Our school has safe and sensible practices to maintain the health and safety of everyone on the school site.

We will:

- Each child will have a designated seat (this may be at a table or on the carpet) and will be seated in the same space on a daily basis
- Each individual child will bring their own named drink bottle
- Each individual child will have their own learning tools, e.g pens, books, pencils, tote trays in their designated space
- Toileting times will be staggered with classes and cleaning of the toilets between the classes after use will be carried out
- Students will wash their hands and sanitise on entry and at various times throughout the day
- Classroom surfaces will be wiped regularly with sanitiser throughout the day with a thorough clean at the end of each day by our cleaner
- Playground will be restricted to a maximum of 20 students at any given time and will be sprayed at the end of each day
- Sports equipment will be shared only class groupings
- Masks and gloves will be provided for those students and staff who wish to wear these
- Students will be dropped off from the front gate and escorted to their classrooms by teachers
- **There will be no access to our site for parents and/or visitors. Students will be picked up and dropped off from the carpark footpath in front of the school**

- If buses are running our students will be provided with a mask to wear to and from school and sanitiser on and off the bus

The Ministry has advised that schools are not classified as gatherings. For most day to day activities at schools, the rules for gatherings do not apply. [Under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Order](#), schools are exempted from physical distancing requirements when people are there to receive, provide, or support education services. However as soon as your event or activity brings people onsite who are not there for education purposes, including students, parents and caregivers, then the rules for gatherings do apply. **Therefore our whanau barbeque on Tuesday evening will now be postponed.**

It's important however that not just at school but at home, safe hygiene habits are practised by everyone, as this is essential to minimise the risk that someone gets infected with Covid-19. You don't have to cross the street to avoid anyone. Just avoid getting in their 'moist breath' zone". We all just need to remember to have some breathing space at Alert Level 2!

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the covid19.govt.nz website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

If you have any questions about our health and safety plan, or have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact me.

We will be in touch again soon to update you when we have more direction from the Ministry of Education.

Ngā mihi

Michelle Ryan
Principal