

22 June 2020

Kia ora tatou

I apologise for the extra email so early in the week, but I thought that the time was right, as we head towards the holidays, for a quick update on Pinehurst School's response to Covid-19. I haven't really mentioned it to parents over the last two or three weeks, but we have been continuing to work on our preparedness.

The time is right to mention the virus again because we now have, as you will know, some active cases in New Zealand. All of the cases are in people who have arrived from overseas, and all of the people who have had the virus are currently in isolation. The first two people were not, as you will also know, tested properly before being allowed out of managed isolation, but all of their contacts have been traced, and it seems as though the situation is currently under control. In other words, there is no community transmission and it is safe to come to school and to do everything else as normal.

I want, though, to reassure parents that we are continuing to monitor the situation carefully, and to make sure that we are ready to take action as a school if we need to. At the moment, for example, we are purchasing additional masks, hand sanitiser, and anything else that we need to be fully prepared. We are also purchasing headsets for teachers, just in case we need to do some online teaching, and we are reflecting on how we would do things a little differently should the need arise. I want to stress that we are **not** expecting to have to do this, and that this is only a precaution, but we think that it is better to be fully prepared. We are therefore making sure that our planning is in place. In the meantime, we are continuing to emphasise hand washing, hygiene and contact tracing in school.

The final thing I want to do is to stress again the need for kindness, patience and trust in each other. I have been disappointed by the tone of some of the recent attacks on the people who are trying to keep us safe, and I would hope that we all understand that we are very fortunate at the moment. And that part of the reason we have been fortunate is that people have generally listened to the Government and have had faith in each other. There will be more cases in New Zealand as more Kiwis come home, and they will all hopefully be caught at the border. And if we all work together, positively, and listen to the advice that we are given, then we will be able to manage things together.

We will send home our usual newsletter at the end of the week but, in the meantime, I hope everyone has a very enjoyable last week of term.

Kind regards  
Alex

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