

Kia ora tatou

I hope you and your family are enjoying your weekend. I'm melting slightly - we used to have about 3 hours a year (in total) of this kind of weather in Nottingham, so I'm constitutionally incapable of coping without large amounts of ice cream.

As you will be aware, there have been no new cases of Covid-19 connected with the "Valentine's Day" outbreak this weekend. As you will also be aware, we are still at Level 2 tomorrow. I've been around and about this weekend, and it's been clear to see that many of the Level 2 guidelines are not being followed as carefully as they were when we were last at Level 2.

I've therefore spent some time today consulting with staff and thinking through whether we should make any changes to our arrangements for tomorrow. **I've decided, though, to keep our current Level 2 measures in place for one more day, in the expectation that we will be at Level 1 on Tuesday.** I want, though, to explain the reasoning.

1. We are still at Level 2. This requires workplaces to keep workers 1 metre apart and "customers" in shops 2 metres apart. In school, there are no legal requirements for us to do this, and of course we know who everyone is. This is therefore similar to the requirements for workers, so staff should ideally keep 1 metre apart. At Pinehurst, we think that we have the same obligations to our staff as other workplaces, even if the legal framework does not protect them in the same way.

2. In a school, we can't keep children physically apart from each other. We therefore use masks as a way of increasing protection in a situation where we cannot distance. At Level 2, "face masks are strongly encouraged if you are in close contact with others." Children are in consistent close contact with each other and with staff, so masks are one way to reduce risk.

3. We think that our measures therefore try to meet the spirit of the Level 2 requirements as well as the letter of the law.

4. Although there have been no new cases for a few days, and the current outbreak seems well-contained, I don't feel comfortable changing our arrangements when we are only one day away from potentially moving to Level 1. We are cautious about our health arrangements, and I feel we are being consistent in our caution.

So this means that we will have bubbles and masks again tomorrow, as well as all the other Level 2 arrangements we have put in place. During the day on Thursday and Friday, students and staff were generally excellent at keeping to our arrangements, and I know they will be so once again on Monday. This means that tomorrow's events which were cancelled last week, either by us or by providers, are still cancelled, and events which we said would go ahead are still going ahead. And a reminder to all parents: please sign in with the Covid app if you are in school, and please follow our guidelines around physical distancing and face coverings.

I'm expecting that, when I next write about this, tomorrow evening, we will be heading into Level 1! I understand that the announcement will be around 4 pm once again. Thank you once again for your patience and support for everyone in our Pinehurst community. Enjoy your evening and see you in the week.

Kind regards,
Alex

Alex Reed
Executive Principal

Pinehurst School
a: 75 Bush Road, Albany, Auckland 0632, NZ
t: +64 (0)9 414 0960 EXT 603
m: +64 (0)21 194 8584
e: Alex.Reed@pinehurst.school.nz