

Hello Everyone,

On Saturday the Prime Minister announced that New Zealand has moved to Alert Level 2 – *Reduce Contact for COVID 19*. This means that those over seventy years of age and those with compromised immunity and certain medical conditions are now asked to stay at home, isolate, and avoid any non-essential travel.

At this Alert Level schools remain open and we plan to do so however for us this means that:

- all children with medical conditions should stay home and isolate until further notice. Mr Barker will phone all families which we know fall into this category today but you should not rely on this call to determine if your child is at risk – you will know more than we do in this regard.
- Children who live with their grandparents are asked to stay home and to isolate. This is our call and not part of the official advice but it is made with the thought that it is better to isolate now before the virus hits us rather than wait and run the risk of children transmitting the virus to their vulnerable and main caregiver.
- Families should consider their broader situation before sending children to school. This means thinking about the at-risk people in their whanau and the affect that contracting the virus would have on them. People in this category include, but are not limited to, those over seventy, close family members who have underlining medical conditions, those that are pregnant, and those who are recovering from recent or ongoing medical situations. In most of these cases we suggest that children stay home and isolate.
- All staff over the age of seventy will be sent home at the end of school on Monday as will all those who fit any of the categories as above. We will have enough staff, we think, to keep the school open and to care for those children that continue to attend school. We are committed to doing our best to ensure that children continue to feel safe and supported even under these trying circumstances.
- We will continue to encourage and teach the core tenets of prevention including practicing high levels of personal hygiene, coughing into elbows and where possible social distancing. You should do this too whether your child is self-isolating or not.
- If advice is received from the Ministry of Health and/or Ministry of Education that there is a change in the Alert level then you will be advised as soon as practicable and all advice followed.

We want to make it very clear that isolating means staying at home and limiting visitors to those that are absolutely necessary. It is not an additional holiday but rather it is at the most serious level of national emergencies. It would not be acceptable for example for children isolating to be in Kaeo township, outside the boundary of your property, at the beach (unless it is empty and social distancing is being practiced), or visiting others. Travelling outside of the district is neither prudent or sensible at this time. Isolation only works and will only minimise risks of transmission if everyone practices it. You are relied on to be sensible, consistent, vigilant and firm in this regard please.

Further information is available at:

- <https://covid19.govt.nz/help-and-advice/for-everyone/vulnerable-people/>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-questions-and-answers>

Let's work together to keep everyone safe.

Paul Barker

Principal

Kaeo School

Marco van den Broek

Chairperson

Kaeo School Board of Trustees.