



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Yesterday the Prime Minister announced changes to the COVID-19 response to Omicron. It is sobering for us to think of those families that have lost loved ones due to this Omicron outbreak and our thoughts are with them. As a community we cannot take this infectious disease too lightly.

The main tool for fighting COVID-19 has been vaccination. Now that there are 95%+ people vaccinated and the Omicron surge seems to be dissipating, the government has relaxed some of the measures and changed some of the requirements under the 'Red traffic light' framework.

What does this mean for us at school?

***Vaccine passes and the use of QR codes will disappear as of Monday 4 April, 2022**

***The vaccine mandate requiring staff working in a school to be fully vaccinated and boosted will disappear on Monday 4 April, 2022**

***The number of people in an indoor space can increase to 200. This means we are going to re-look at school assemblies for Year levels and Whānau Houses for Term 2.**

***Sport can resume the way it used to be. Students can now participate in club competitions without a requirement to be vaccinated.**

The other tools for reducing transmission and infection rates are the use of masks and the following of the hygiene guidelines which I reiterated in my last two emails. Wearing a mask reduces the chances of catching COVID-19 by 53%. Mask wearing will continue at school under the 'Red traffic light' framework until further notice. All students and staff inside classrooms and buildings must continue to wear a mask correctly. If students are in corridors, halls, etc they should be wearing a mask too. If the students are outdoors then they do not have to wear a mask. Students on all school buses must continue to wear a mask.

Schools are still safe places, as most of the COVID-19 cases come from home or in a social situation. One thing that was highlighted yesterday was the fact that if a new strain and/or pressure comes back on to the framework, then the government has the option of reintroducing the tools they are removing.

Likewise, at school, we have made the call not to roster students home leading up to the school holidays. Please be warned that if we get an unexpected surge in staff cases and we cannot cover classes during this time then we may have to re-introduce the rostering home, but at this point in time we welcome all the students back next week.

Kia kaha, kia manawanui, kia hauora. Ngā mihi,

Chris Betty
Principal
