



Kirkwood
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

28 January 2020

Dear Parents and Whānau

I hope you and your family have had an enjoyable Christmas break and are looking forward to the new school year. It seems that every year has its challenges, and 2020 will no doubt be the same. I have attached information from the Secretary of Education which was emailed to all Principals on 27 January 2020. Rather than trying to rewrite I have copied it for all in our school community. In light of this information I am requesting the following:

- If your child has returned from China in the holidays, please do not send them to school until they have been well for 14 days.
- If your child or any member of your family has been mixing with people recently returned from China, please do not send them to school until 14 days after the meeting.
- If your child is unwell, please do not send them to school until they have been seen by a doctor and are safe to return.

The Ministry of Health maintain that currently there is no person infected with the virus in New Zealand, but admit that it is only a matter of time before someone is. It seems that we do not need to worry unduly, but that we should start taking precautions. Please encourage your family to cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and to wash then sanitise their hands appropriately.

Hand sanitiser is available in all classrooms at Kirkwood for all to use.

Thank you for your support with this. Hopefully we will be able to limit the impact of this virus on our school and community.

Best wishes

Phil Tappenden
Principal.

P.S. – please don't forget Friday 7 February is teacher only day – thanks.

27 January 2020 – letter from Secretary of Education as follows:

Information for school Principals and Tumuaki about Novel coronavirus.

As you will have seen in the media the situation is rapidly evolving internationally concerning the coronavirus.

This is a new virus and its specific nature is currently unclear, however it appears that you can have the virus at an early stage and not be showing any symptoms. This incubation period is currently considered to be up to 14 days.

Children and young people are currently returning to classrooms. The health of students and staff is a priority for all. I encourage you to err on the side of caution and here are some steps you can take:

- As always anyone who is unwell should not be at school or at their early learning service. If you have a particular concern about any child, student or staff member, please urge parents to contact Healthline at 0800 611 116 or their GP for medical advice. Healthline has translators and interpreters available 24/7 in 150 languages and they do have Mandarin and Cantonese speaking staff available.*
- If a student still attends school while showing symptoms the Principal of a state school can preclude them if they believe on reasonable grounds they may have a communicable disease (Section 19 Education Act). The student has to stay away for the infectious period of the specific disease. For private schools, Section 19 of the Education Act does not apply. Principals can request that a student with an infectious disease or is suspected of having an infectious disease, does not attend.*
- You can request that a staff member with an infectious disease or is suspected of having an infectious disease, does not attend.*
- For any staff member or student who may be at high risk of exposure because they have recently been to China or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with the virus, I encourage you to ask that the staff member or parent/caregiver of the student delay the start of their school year for 14 days and voluntarily stay away.*
- If you haven't already done so you need to contact your parent communities to share this and any relevant information. Please keep an eye on our website and the Ministry of Health website: Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) guidance – Ministry of Health*

Iona Holsted

Secretary for Education