



9 Ash Pit Road
RD 3
Rotorua 3073
07 3666 814
principal@lakerere.school.nz

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Kia ora koutou

I hope this email finds you safe and well.

New COVID-19 Protection (Traffic Light) Framework

You may have heard that everyone in Aotearoa will move to the new COVID-19 Traffic Light Framework on Friday 3 December. We will be moving to Red.

Elimination and the alert levels have worked well, with New Zealand having the lowest numbers of cases and hospitalisations in the OECD. While controlled, Delta is in our communities and the strategy now focuses on minimising its impact.

With 85% of eligible New Zealanders now fully vaccinated, and by mid-December it is expected to be approximately 90%, this allows a careful reopening while continuing to protect New Zealanders.

This means that we don't have to change the way we are operating classes this year and everyone can continue to attend school onsite.

For next year, we can confirm that everyone will be back onsite for learning from the start of the school year, regardless of what setting under the new Traffic Light Framework we will be in (Red/Orange/Green). This is good news and means we can plan for a great 2022.

Health measures in place at school

This year and next, health, safety and wellbeing will continue to be a priority for us and the same public health measures you are very familiar with will remain in place:

- good hygiene and cleaning
- contact tracing systems in place
- vaccination requirements for workers (paid and unpaid)
- if you are sick, you must stay home and get tested
- good ventilation.

[For regions at Red from 3 December] One change is that face coverings are encouraged to be worn indoors for students and staff in years 4 – 13.

And if we are at Red at any stage next year:

- face coverings will be required at school when indoors for students and staff in years 4 – 13
- We will ask that only essential visitors come onsite.

With all these measures in place, public health has confirmed the risk of infection remains low when at school, with households continuing to be where COVID-19 is spreading the most. As noted by Dr Caroline McElnay, Director of Public Health:

Our experience in New Zealand and overseas with COVID-19 shows that it does not affect children and teens in the same way it does adults. Children and teens don't become as unwell if they do get infected, and they don't tend to pass the virus on so much as adults when in a classroom setting.

Compared to other places, schools and early learning services are not environments where we have seen significant spread of COVID-19. Household members and work colleagues who are in close contact with people with COVID-19, are the most common sources of transmission.

However, if we do have someone confirmed with COVID-19 in our school, we have a plan in place to manage this and will contact you as soon as possible.

If you'd like to learn more about the framework visit [COVID-19 Protection Framework](#).

Ngā mihi

Rick Whalley
Principal