



16 March 2020

Dear Parents / Caregivers

You will be aware the government has announced New Zealand is stepping up its pandemic Coronavirus/COVID-19 response plans. This means that the situation here and overseas is changing, New Zealand's borders have been tightened in an attempt to reduce the spread of this virus in New Zealand.

We have been advised that there is no reason for alarm. We will remain open until further notice. We are receiving regular updates from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. Please use these links if you are looking for further information.

We are monitoring our school pandemic plan to ensure we have systems in place to help us if anything changes. Meanwhile, you can reduce the risk of your child catching Coronavirus/COVID-19 by:

- Remind your child(ren) the importance of hand washing and drying – especially before meals and after toileting.
- Remind your child(ren) to use a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing, or coughing or sneezing into their elbow.
- Remind your child(ren) not to share food or drink (including drink bottles). Children should bring their own full drink bottles to school.
- Keep your child(ren) at home if they are unwell.

We ask if you are planning to travel overseas at any point from today, or are in close contact with a person who has arrived in New Zealand from today, we ask you notify the school office with the details as soon as possible.

The symptoms of Coronavirus/COVID-19 and how it they differ from the flu are included with this letter.

In the meantime, to stop other flu-like illness from spreading, it is important for students and staff to stay away from school when they are unwell. How long they should be home depends on their illness. If a student is, or becomes, sick at school, a parent/caregiver will be contacted to arrange for the student to be collected from school.

We are continually updating our **emergency contact details** for all students and staff. If you have any changes to your personal or emergency contact details, please contact the office. In the event of an emergency your child(ren) will not be released to anyone not on the emergency contact list.

The Board of Trustees and I are proactively working closely with staff to ensure that all students are kept as safe as possible.

Again, we would like to stress there is currently no reason for alarm. If you have any questions or concerns at this stage, please contact me directly.

If you need medical advice, please telephone your local GP or Healthline on **0800 611 116**.

Yours sincerely



Murray Overton
Principal

CORONAVIRUS/COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

The World Health Organisation (WHO) says coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that range from the common cold to more severe diseases, including Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV).

Common signs of COVID-19 infection include:

- fever
- a cough
- shortness of breath
- breathing difficulties.

The Ministry of Health says difficulty breathing is also a sign of possible pneumonia and "requires immediate medical attention".

Symptoms typically show between two and 10 days after someone has been infected.

The Ministry stresses that having any of these symptoms doesn't necessarily mean you have COVID-19.

FLU SYMPTOMS

The flu has similar symptoms to COVID-19, but there are also some extra signs to look out for. These include:

- fever
- a cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- body aches
- headache
- chills
- stomach upset, vomiting or diarrhoea

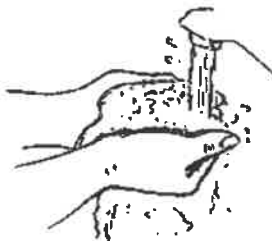
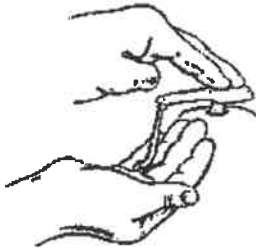




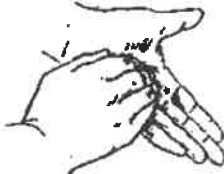
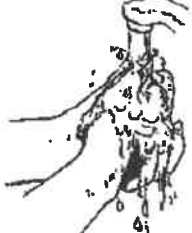

The Ministry of Health says it may take between one and four days for flu signs to show.

The worst symptoms usually last about five days, but coughing can last up to two-three weeks.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS AGAINST ILLNESS

HANDWASHING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing (sneeze into your elbow)
- Use a tissue and dispose of this once used
- Always wash your hands after coughing and sneezing or disposing of tissues (see chart)
- Always wash your hands before eating (see chart)
- Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes
- Avoid contact with individuals at risk (e.g. people with underlying or chronic illnesses such as immune suppression or lung disease) until the influenza-like symptoms have resolved
- Avoid contact with people who have influenza-like symptoms
- Students are expected to use a tissue and cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and to wash and dry their hands afterwards.

Hand Hygiene with Soap and Water		
1. Remove jewelry. Wet hands with warm water 	2. Add soap to palms 	3. Rub hands together to create a lather 
4. Cover all surfaces of the hands and fingers 	5. Clean knuckles, back of hands and fingers 	6. Clean the space between the thumb and index finger 
7. Work the finger tips into the palms to clean under the nails 	8. Rinse well under warm running water 	9. Dry with a single-use towel and then use towel to turn off the tap 
Minimum wash time 10-20 seconds.		

Source: Vancouver Coastal Health's Regional Pandemic Influenza Response Plan.