



Covid 19 Update

Dear Hinuera School Parents/Caregivers,

17 March 2020

With the recent developments in the response to the Covid 19 virus, I am writing to update you on ways that this affects Hinuera School life. I want to repeat the message from the Matamata Principal's Association, that there have been no confirmed cases in NZ schools yet, so we are simply being as careful as possible. Good personal hygiene and keeping children who have cold/flu symptoms at home remain important. If your contact details have changed recently, please make sure you update the school office. This includes address, phone and email details.

At this point the Ministry of Education advises that schools will only be closed if a student or staff member in a school is confirmed with COVID-19, in which case the Ministry of Health may require a school to close for a day or two, to undertake tracking and tracing of close contacts. Events where we don't know all who turned up or how to track them are the particular issue, so unfortunately our public events like assemblies and sports programmes are where we need to make changes. With all of that in mind, things to update you on are:

We are closing off the use of drinking fountains. Please make sure your child comes to school with a named drink bottle. We will have plastic cups that we can name in class as a backup, to ensure no students are going without water.

- Our main entry gates will be kept open at arrival and departure times, to avoid everyone needing to handle these all the time. Gate handles are being sanitised daily. Please be aware of the open gates if you are in the school with pre-schoolers, and have become used to them being shut more of the time.
- Assemblies are cancelled until further notice. Values messages and Hinni Kid Awards will be presented in class, and we'll still share a photo of recipients to celebrate with community.
- Our Junior Swimming Showcase for this Thursday is cancelled, and I will work with teachers to record student activities during their class swimming and share these with community.
- Our Triathlon on 27th March is cancelled. We will hold in class duathlon events (swim/run) and record parts of these to share with community.
- Our Senior Poetry Presentations final won't be a public assembly. Finals will be held in each class instead, with results celebrated in our newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support, as we all work together to have a happy, healthy and safe school community.

Dean McDonnell – Hinuera School Principal

MATAMATA PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION UPDATE RE COVID-19

It is important to note that we have no confirmed cases in schools or early learning services throughout NZ.

The Matamata Principals have agreed, however, to cancel or postpone any interschool or large events as advised and guided by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health in order to minimise the risk for our community.

As a collective group of Principals, we will continue to monitor the situation under advice from the MOE. As we receive further information from MOE / MOH we will keep you informed.

Events that we have agreed to cancel are:

- Cancellation of Interschool Swimming Sports
- Postponement of Energize Leadership Day
- Postponement of Firth School Colour Run

In the meantime, we continue to stress the need for good hygiene practices, cleaning hands with soap for at least 20 seconds and dry thoroughly. If coughing, please cough into your elbow or cough into tissues which are then disposed of. We encourage staff, students, parents and whanau to refrain from handshakes, hongi and other close face to face contact. We also recommend that you keep your child at home if they are unwell.

The Ministry of Health website remains the best source for information about Covid-19. www.health.govt.nz

We commend the Government's pro-active approach to minimise risk and re-iterate that the actual risk because of the Government's stance remains low.