



Houghton Valley School

Caring, Exploring and Inspiring Together

Ka Manaaki, Ka Rapu, Ka Whakamanawa tahi ai tātou

Sunday 22nd March 2020

Kia ora Whanau

With the announcement that New Zealand has moved to *Alert Level 2 – Reduce Contact for COVID-19*, people over 70 years of age and those with compromised immunity and certain existing medical conditions are asked to remain at home as much as they can from now on and everyone to avoid any non-essential travel.

Staff, children and young people in schools and early learning services are therefore asked to follow this advice.

We will be encouraging our staff who fall into this category to stay at home and if possible continue to support school curriculum or other school activities, for example providing pastoral care by phone, marking, and lesson planning. This will inevitably have knock on effects on our day to day organisation, the way in which we are able to operate and usual teaching and learning in some areas. We are anticipating that in the future we will have several staff away from school as a result and we will keep you informed as well as endeavour to ensure school remains a place of routine, learning, joy and safety for our children.

We are requesting that ANY CHILDREN with conditions which fall into these categories, not attend school due to their condition. Child wellbeing is our main priority and we wish to minimise any risk to children, especially at this time and based on MOE guidance, those with compromised immunity or certain medical conditions, by ensuring they are not compromised at school. In order to maintain accurate records we ask that you email our office on absence@houghton.school.nz to report the absence with the specific reason, as stated here.

High Risk Individuals

While the majority of people who are confirmed with COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate symptoms, some individuals are at risk of more severe symptoms. Older people, particularly those with pre-existing health problems are more likely to get severe illness and are therefore considered at risk. High risk individuals also include people with underlying medical conditions, such as:

- a compromised immune system
- liver disease
- cancer
- kidney disease
- heart disease
- diabetes mellitus

Further information is available at: [LINK](#) for help and advice; [LINK](#) for Ministry of Health. If you need any advice please email me on principal@houghton.school.nz and I will endeavour to support you. Irrespective of specific medical conditions, should you choose to keep your child at home, due to the uncertainty of this event, I want you to know I understand and I respect your decisions at this time. In these instances please report your child's absence and reason for absence to the office on admin@houghton.school.nz

Postponed or cancelled events/activities this week:

1. 3 Way goal setting - more information will follow

2. Lining up for Moving March
3. Outside providers/tutors - reducing the number of outside people coming into school during the day

I cannot thank you enough, as a community, for your unwavering loyalty and support, respect and affirmation during these times of uncertainty for us all. We are one and we pull together to discover our potential in times of adversity, develop our learning in times of uncertainty, and nurture our relationships in times of concern. Kia Kaha fabulous whanau.

We will continue to communicate regularly with you all and will be in touch again as soon as there are any changes to official advice.

Kia Kaha (stay strong)

Leadership Team and HVS BOT

New Zealand COVID-19 Alert Levels Unite against COVID-19

- These alert levels specify the public health and social measures to be taken.
- The measures may be updated on the basis of (i) new scientific knowledge about COVID-19 and (ii) information about the effectiveness of intervention measures in New Zealand and elsewhere.
- The alert levels may be applied at a town, city, territorial local authority, regional or national level.
- Different parts of the country may be at different alert levels. We can move up and down alert levels.
- In general, the alert levels are cumulative, e.g. Level 1 is a base-level response. Always prepare for the next level.
- At all levels, health services, emergency services, utilities and goods transport, and other essential services, operations and staff, are expected to remain up and running. Employers in those sectors must continue to meet their health and safety obligations.

LEVEL	RISK ASSESSMENT	RANGE OF MEASURES (can be applied locally or nationally)
Level 4 - Eliminate Likely that disease is not contained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained and intensive transmission • Widespread outbreaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People instructed to stay at home • Educational facilities closed • Businesses closed except for essential services (e.g. supermarkets, pharmacies, clinics) and lifeline utilities • Rationing of supplies and requisitioning of facilities • Travel severely limited • Major reprioritisation of healthcare services
Level 3 - Restrict Heightened risk that disease is not contained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community transmission occurring OR • Multiple clusters break out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel in areas with clusters or community transmission limited • Affected educational facilities closed • Mass gatherings cancelled • Public venues closed (e.g. libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, amusement parks) • Alternative ways of working required and some non-essential businesses should close • Non face-to-face primary care consultations • Non acute (elective) services and procedures in hospitals deferred and healthcare staff reprioritised
Level 2 - Reduce Disease is contained, but risks of community transmission growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk of importing COVID-19 OR • Increase in imported cases OR • Increase in household transmission OR • Single or isolated cluster outbreak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry border measures maximised • Further restrictions on mass gatherings • Physical distancing on public transport (e.g. leave the seat next to you empty if you can) • Limit non-essential travel around New Zealand • Employers start alternative ways of working if possible (e.g. remote working, shift-based working, physical distancing within the workplace, staggering meal breaks, flexible leave arrangements) • Business continuity plans activated • High-risk people advised to remain at home (e.g. those over 70 or those with other existing medical conditions)
Level 1 - Prepare Disease is contained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened risk of importing COVID-19 OR • Sporadic imported cases OR • Isolated household transmission associated with imported cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Border entry measures to minimise risk of importing COVID-19 cases applied • Contact tracing • Stringent self-isolation and quarantine • Intensive testing for COVID-19 • Physical distancing encouraged • Mass gatherings over 500 cancelled • Stay home if you're sick, report flu-like symptoms • Wash and dry hands, cough into elbow, don't touch your face