



Kerikeri High School

Kerikeri, Bay of Islands
New Zealand

Sunday 24 July 2022

Dear Parents, Whānau, Staff and Students

We hope all our students and families have enjoyed a relaxing and refreshing break during the school holidays. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to school tomorrow, despite the poor weather forecast, and we are ready to get back into our busy school routines and activities.

We are sending this News Letter this afternoon, following advice from the Secretary for Education, who sent a Bulletin early Thursday evening to all schools, advising that both the Ministries of Education and Health are recommending that all students and staff wear masks when inside at School for the first 4 weeks of Term 3.

Term 2 was very disrupted with illness and isolating, and as you know we needed to roster home a Year Level a day over the last few weeks of the Term so we could keep our classrooms staffed with teachers and relievers.

We know that Term 3 is often the time when winter illness peaks, and we are also aware that some families will have been travelling around various parts of New Zealand during the break. The likelihood that we will see winter illness increase again at school this term is therefore quite likely.

As a result we are following the advice of the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education, and asking that all students and teachers, who are able to, wear masks when inside for the first four weeks of this Term.

This requirement does not include any situation where mask wearing might not be practicable, such as while eating and drinking, playing certain musical instruments, indoor sport, where it will have a significant impact on teaching and learning (for example, students with particular learning needs), certain activities such as singing or drama performance on stage, and PE. In these situations, we will do our best to ensure there is good ventilation during the activity, and that there is physical distancing where practicable.

Wearing masks can reduce new cases of the Covid 19 virus by as much as 53%. It works alongside other measures including vaccination, good ventilation, staying home when sick, and hand washing and other hygiene measures, to protect our students and staff.

[Keep up healthy habits – Unite Against COVID-19](#)

Adult-sized masks can generally be adjusted to fit older children by tying knots in the ear loops. Unite Against COVID-19 shows how to do this:

[How to wear a face mask safely – Unite Against COVID-19](#)

We know that that some of our students are exempt from wearing a mask. If they have an exemption card or a letter from their health provider, or we have agreed that mask wearing is not practicable for them, we will support them to not wear a mask.

[Apply for a face mask exemption pass – Unite Against COVID-19](#)

We acknowledge that not everyone will welcome this decision, and that there are wide range of diverse views about how Covid is best managed. None the less, we are taking this step as we believe it is in the best interest of our students and staff, in the hope that we minimize further disruption to student learning.

Please make sure that students come to school ready to wear masks. If students are able, they should bring a mask from home. However, if students cannot bring masks from home, we will do our best to supply them with a mask.

Please also remind your students who catch school buses that the requirement that they wear masks on the bus remains in place.

As we begin this third School Term, we remain committed to what we can do, not what we cannot do due to Covid, and our focus remains providing as many Four Cornerstones opportunities too our students as possible.

Thank you for your support in protecting our school community.

Ngā mihi nui,



Elizabeth Forgie
Principal



Mike Clent
Associate Principal

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