

Tēnā koutou katoa,

I hope you have been enjoying the beautiful weather we have had over the holiday break. We are looking forward to seeing our tamariki back next week ready to kick off 2022.

I am sure many of you are feeling a bit nervous about the whole country moving to the Red Alert Level of the traffic light system. We have moved fully into the new traffic light framework so I have included the information around the traffic light system again for you to read. You will be familiar with all the health measures including our hygiene measures, adults staying off site as much as possible, regularly cleaning surfaces and asking students to stay home who are sick. At the Red setting, we will be open for learning.

## Omicron

We have all seen the very large numbers of cases overseas. While Omicron is more transmissible than previous strains, most people who get COVID-19 will have a mild to moderate illness and will fully recover in their own home.

However, some of our community who are immune compromised, are ill or have other vulnerabilities, even when they are fully vaccinated, could be more affected by Omicron. So, as we have done over the past 2 years, we all need to continue to play our part to minimise the spread of the virus.

## Face coverings

**Staff and children in Years 4 – 13 must wear face coverings when inside at school when we are at Red.**

Teachers will allow students outside breaks when they need them and we are also looking at learning opportunities that can take place outside.

Public health advice is that an appropriate face covering will fit snugly and seal well around facial contours. This can include single use, disposable masks (medical masks) and re-usable fabric masks with three layers. Please ensure your child has a mask for the first day back at school.

## Ventilation

We have used the Ministry of Education self-assessment tool to review all our ventilation in readiness for the start of the year. Providing a good airflow of fresh air remains the most important thing we can do in our learning spaces to minimise risk for ākongā and kaiako. We will also be receiving a CO<sub>2</sub> monitor in the coming weeks to further support our classrooms to circulate air as best as possible.

## Managing cases in our school

We have a good contact tracing system in place so that if there is a confirmed case who has been at school while infectious, we can quickly identify all close contacts of that person. We will then quickly advise those contacts of what they need to do.

Only if the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education advises us to do so, would we consider closing school and moving to distance learning for everyone. At Red, we will keep everyone learning onsite for as long as we can.

**Please make sure your contact details we have on file are up to date, so we can get in touch with you if needed.**

## Getting ready to return to school

The Ministry of Education has some helpful information on their [Parents and Whānau website](#) to support your tamariki to come back to school. There is also a very important reminder about how you can [take care of yourself](#).

While this might all feel a little overwhelming at times, we know that all these measures will help our children return to school, reconnect with whānau and friends and do what they enjoy.

We are also here to help. Please contact me if you have any concerns or need help in any way.

I will be in touch before we open next week. Take care and we look forward to seeing our tamariki on Wednesday 2 February.

Ngā mihi nui,

Brent