



# TAUPO INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



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## Kia ora koutou katoa

It is important to note we continue to have no confirmed cases in our school. The policy decisions being made by the Government give us time to plan for future scenarios. The most likely scenario is if a student or staff member is confirmed with COVID-19, the Ministry of Health may require our school to close for a day or two, to undertake tracking and tracing of close contacts.

If the students test positive the plan will kick in. Health authorities will ask the school to close for 48 hours while close contacts are traced and put in self isolation for 14 days. Casual contacts will also be provided with information so that they know any symptoms to monitor for and where to go to if they become unwell. They do not need to self-isolate.

### Staff and students need to stay home if they are unwell in any way.

### Physical Distancing

Yesterday we were provided advice about considerations and possible approaches to school assemblies. Some people have asked why assemblies are different to classroom situations. The simple answer is that assemblies are not always core to providing education, and could be reduced or rearranged without impacting on learning.

Remember that personal hygiene, and reducing unnecessary physical contact (eg. hugs, handshakes, hongi) are still the most important things to do to stop the spread of any virus.

Please note that we are deliberately using the term “physical distancing” rather than “social distancing”. Maintaining social connection is as important as ever to people’s wellbeing during this time, if not more so. If you have students who are required to self-isolate, you could encourage their peers to maintain social contact with them through phone calls, email, pen-pal letters, class video calls, or age-appropriate social media.

### Reminder - Who needs to self-isolate?

The Government announcement at the weekend requires anyone who has arrived from overseas **after** 1am on Monday 16 March to self-isolate for 14 days, and to register with Healthline (0800 358 5453). The exception is people arriving from specified Pacific countries ([“Category 2” countries](#) as listed here), who do not need to self-isolate if they are not unwell.

People who arrived from overseas **before** 1am on Monday 16 March are not required to self-isolate, unless they have travelled from South Korea or Iran. Travellers from those countries need to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of their departure and register with Healthline.

People living in the same house as travellers that are required to self-isolate, need to minimise contact with them (avoiding being closer than 2 metres apart for more than 15 minutes). However, they are not required to self-isolate themselves.

### Encouraging student attendance

We know that some parents have concerns about their children attending school at the moment, some of which may be due to what they are seeing in the media about other countries.

There’s a simple rule here – if students are unwell (whether or not their illness relates to COVID-19) they should stay at home. Students who are not unwell should continue to attend school.

Schools will continue to be provided with the latest information and guidance from the Ministries of Education and Health, so that Principals and Boards can make well-informed decisions based on their particular circumstances.

### **Camps, assemblies and other events**

You will be aware that the Government has been making announcements about mass gatherings this week. Because of this consideration, we are stopping any full school assemblies, as this hits the threshold consideration of a gathering of 500. All other classroom, team and learning programmes are continuing as normal. This will be the state of play until we are instructed differently by the Ministry of Health and/or Ministry of Education.

In the meantime, as we do with all our activities, we take a risk assessment approach for key activities such as assemblies, school camps and travel for sporting and cultural reasons. Health and Safety is paramount when providing opportunities for positive experiences for our children, but this must be applied along with a good dose of common-sense. While school is open and operating we want life to continue normally as much as possible.

### **The following events have been cancelled until further notice**

BOP touch and swimming postponed till further notice

North Island mountain biking postponed till further notice

### **However the following are still going ahead:**

E-pro 8 is going ahead, however there is no room for adults to supervise in order to keep numbers down

Leadership camp is going ahead and the students have been given a letter today outlining our process. Please advise if you wish withdraw your child

### **Remember, the best preventative steps are:**

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry thoroughly
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid sharing anything that has come in contact with saliva, whether in your living or social environments
- stay home when you are sick and seek medical attention
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the rubbish
- get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

If you want to know more about COVID-19 please make sure that any reading you are doing is from a reliable source. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education is the best source of information for New Zealand and they update this information regularly. These are linked below.

Regards

William (Bill) Clarke

Principal

