



22 March 2020

Kia ora koutou,

Novel-Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Update

The Government [announced](#) yesterday that New Zealand has entered an [Alert Level 2](#) response to Covid-19 as a country. This has some implications for us as a school community.

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:

- <https://covid19.govt.nz/help-and-advice/for-everyone/vulnerable-people/>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-questions-and-answers>

If your teen is in this category and you feel that they should stay at home at this time, please advise attendance [via email](#), telephone (544 6099 Ext 811) or the school app with an outline of the medical issue or health condition. The Ministry of Education have exempted schools from requiring medical certificates during this period as the government is anxious not to add any more pressure to medical centres. These guidelines are in addition to the previous guidelines about staying away if students are not well or self-isolating if you have been in contact with a potentially infected person.

Bus Cancellations

The bus company that provides school bus transport in the Nelson/Waimea region has informed us this afternoon that, due to the Government restrictions placed on people over the age of 70 and with underlying respiratory conditions, **the following bus routes will NOT operate from Monday 23 March 2020 until further notice:**

7030 – Dominion Road, Coastal Highway, Westdale Road, Coastal Highway, Appleby Highway, includes Garin transfer.

7036 – Pigeon Valley South Branch Road Bridge Valley, Mt Heslington, Clover Road Paton Road.

7106 – Starts at Village Hall, Bird Lane, Higgins Road.

7110 – Redwood Valley, Extension to Ridgeview, Appleby School, Moutere Highway, Maisey Road, Coastal Highway, Appleby Highway, Lansdowne Road, Lower Queen Street.

7113 – Best Island, extension to Ridgeview Road.

7118 – Belgrove to Hiwipango, Wakefield.

7119 – Brightwater Express, travels down Paton Road, Lord Rutherford Memorial, Brightwater Domain, Brightwater School.

7125 – Belgrove Hotel, Wakefield.

We have been advised that the following buses will operate as normal:

7032, 7038, 7111, 7112, 7121, 7123, 7124.

Only students registered for the routes that are still operating will be able to travel on these buses.

Parents of bus students who are able to transport their teens to and from school are encouraged to use the drop off zone in the Waimea College bus bay on Salisbury Road.

Please inform the attendance office if your teen will not be attending school because of the bus cancellations.

Physical distancing & increased safety measures

I want to share with parents that Waimea College is taking all practicable steps to provide appropriate physical distancing and increased safety measures where we are able.

- Classroom configurations are being changed where possible to allow for physical distancing.
- Staff will move to delivery methods that do not involve sharing resources.
- In Physical Education, Dance, Drama, Outdoor Education and other subjects where physical contact is likely, staff have been requested to substitute alternative activities.
- Staff managing classes where students are using school computer suites or school-owned laptops/chromebooks will be insisting on hand-washing or sanitising at the start and end of each lesson.
- Students who have access to their own devices are encouraged to use these rather than using school machines.
- We are discouraging visitors to school. Those we do have must report to reception, sign in and sanitise their hands.
- Itinerant music lessons will be cancelled until further notice.
- Restrooms are being regularly checked and stocked with cleaning product and hand sanitiser has been distributed for use in high traffic areas.
- We have intensified cleaning routines, swapping out regular product for hospital grade cleaning produce ensuring that high-use areas are regularly sanitised.

Camps, Overnight Trips & Events

In addition to our usual risk assessment and management protocols for camps, overnight trips and events, we are also closely reviewing the additional COVID-19 considerations outlined by the Ministry of Education. After carefully assessing this information, Waimea College has determined that until further notice:

- All activities involving overnight components have been postponed or cancelled.
- All activities involving levels of contact with tourists or tourist locations have been postponed or cancelled.
- All activities involving a combination of schools are postponed or cancelled.
- All activities that where physical distancing cannot be maintained will be postponed or cancelled.

Self-Isolation

We are currently experiencing significant numbers of students self-isolating. Our staff are working hard to provide ongoing learning opportunities for students who are self-isolating based on medical/official advice where we are able. However, the volume of students requesting this support is placing significant strain on our ability to meet this demand. We also have a number of staff who are self-isolating in accordance with professional advice so this is further impacting on our capacity.

I have advised staff that while their first priority must be with the students before them in the classroom, we will do our very best to provide work for students who are self-isolating.

I appreciate your understanding as we work through this.

School Closure

The daily COVID-19 updates from the Ministry of Education continue to reinforce that the Ministry is not expecting widespread school closures while we remain at alert level 2. If at some later stage, schools are asked to close, Waimea College is advancing planning to switch to an online-learning format if required.

I will continue to provide further updates and information as this comes to hand. Thank you for your continued support during these challenging times.

There is no mistaking the challenge of this moment. Each of us is indebted to the doctors, nurses, researchers, public health experts and public servants both in New Zealand and globally who are giving everything in support of getting us all through this event. Our best wishes also to the families out there who are struggling with the effects of COVID-19 and the impacts of the efforts to control it. In the words of Helen Keller, *"alone we can do so little; together we can do so much"*. Stay well everyone.

Warm regards,



Scott Haines
Principal

