



Kia ora koutou

I hope you have all enjoyed the term break despite the wild weather. I know our teachers have made time to recharge their batteries as well as getting prepared for a busy Term 3.

Below is a message all schools have received from the Ministry of Education regarding the need to wear masks again at school:

In previous years we have found there is an increase in winter illnesses in schools at the start of Term 3 as students bring back infections after travelling and socialising during the holidays. This year cases of COVID-19 are increasing in most parts of the country, and we are also seeing high numbers of other winter illnesses.

For the first four weeks of Term 3, 2022, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health **strongly recommend that all schools and kura amend their mask policy for the first four weeks of term to require mask wearing in all indoor settings for students in Years 4 and above.** (Due to us having Year 3/4 composite classes, this recommendation is extended to those in Year 3 if practical)

This recommendation 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, particular attention should be paid to ensuring there is good ventilation during the activity, and physical distancing where practicable.

Wearing masks can reduce new cases of the 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](#)

Please make sure that your child/ren come to school ready to wear masks. Students should bring masks from home. There will be a limited supply of masks for students who are unable to bring one from home.

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 already agreed that mask wearing is not practical for them, we will support them to not wear a mask. [Apply for a face mask exemption pass – Unite Against COVID-19](#)

Thank you for your support and understanding.

Ngaa mihi nui,

Tracey