



19th March 2020

Dear Parents, Whanau and Caregivers,

As you are probably aware the situation around COVID-19 is rapidly evolving. We want to assure you that the health of our students and staff are a priority for us all at Marotiri School. We are taking, and will continue to take as needed, precautionary measures to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID 19 to our students, staff, whanau and our school community. Our school is following the advice of the Ministry of Education, which is communicating with schools on a daily basis.

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, Health may require our school to close for a day or two, to undertake tracking and tracing of close contacts. A reminder that close contact is generally described as someone who was in near proximity (1.5 metres) of a person confirmed with the virus for 15 or more minutes. For those with compromised immunity that is 2 metres.

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.

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.

At this stage we are implementing heightened hygiene practices and limiting the time our school and our community is all together. **To ensure better hygiene, please try to send your child to school with a water bottle so that they do not need to use the water fountains.**

Other actions we can all take to be vigilant about our own health and the health of our children.

‘One Sick-All Sick’

Firstly, we are adopting a ‘One Sick-All Sick’ procedure. This means that we would like you to keep all the children in your family home if anyone in your household is unwell and away from work or school **with flu like symptoms**, even if they are not displaying symptoms themselves. We think this is a prudent and simple step to enhance everyone’s health. (The symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, coughing and difficulty breathing)

Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019

Details on the following link, Please have a look to ensure we all have the same knowledge.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

Self-Isolation from Overseas Travel for the whole family

Secondly, if anyone in your family has recently returned from overseas from a destination with travel restrictions and is in self-isolation in the family home then please keep all of your children at home as a part of this self-isolation. This is an extension of the ‘One Sick-All Sick’ concept. Additionally, it seems pointless to isolate one family member and let the rest roam free in the community.

Establishing a Travel Register for Staff and Students

Thirdly, please let the school office know by email or phone if anyone in your family has overseas travel plans between now and the end of Term 3. This will help us to plan for the following two-week self-isolation that will need to occur upon their/your return to NZ. **Please Note: Ministry of Health strongly advise against all non-essential travel.**

Ministry of Education/Ministry of Health - Why schools should remain open

There are a number of reasons why it is important for schools to remain open as long as possible

- **Continuity of learning** – Distance learning can be a useful backup, but for most students, most teachers and most schools face to face learning is more effective. It is important that students can keep accessing the best education we can offer them for as long as possible. That means continuing to attend school until there is good reason not to.
- **It's safer than being somewhere else** – One of the biggest concerns for health authorities is untraceable social contacts. Students who are not at school are highly likely to congregate in other places where it is not possible to identify who they may have been in contact with. When students (and staff) are in school it is much easier to trace any potential contacts they may have during the school day, and notify them if any of those contacts is suspected of contracting the virus
- **Keeping calm and carrying on** – Maintaining normal routines and social contacts is important for the

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 **Interaction** or any full school assemblies, until further notice. 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.

Go Girls Cricket Festival

The school has been advised that all Go Girls Cricket including practice and the upcoming Festival on the 25th March have been cancelled.

Rugby

Information to hand :- No Club and Community Rugby until 18th April 2020.

Teams / Classes can still be involved in Non-Contact Training Activities / Taster Sessions with sensible hygiene protocols observed.

To be clear the suspension applies to all forms and levels of rugby (including Ripa, Junior and School Rugby).

Glen Eden Intermediate School Pasifika Performance Group

Hosting of the GEIS students has been cancelled. Hopefully we may be able to reschedule later in the year. Thankyou to all those families who offered to billet students

Other Notices

Student Lead Conferences will go ahead as planned unless the school advises you otherwise.

A reminder, to make your booking through Skool Loop.

Tuesday 31st March – 1.15pm start

Thursday 2nd April – 3.15pm start

If you do not have the Skool Loop App on your phone, please phone the school office as soon as possible and we will book your time for you.

Boxes of Tissues

We are needing to restock our supplies. For those unsure of the process, we ask families to donate a box of tissues which are stored in the office and distributed around the classes as required. Your contribution is very much appreciated and not an onerous burden if shared by all families.

Kind regards

Rose Symes and Staff