# Subject line: Novel Coronavirus

Ngā mihi ki a koutou,

You will be aware of the emergence of Novel Coronavirus out of China and that New Zealand does not currently have any travel restrictions in respect to novel coronavirus. The Ministry of Health advises that there are no cases of 2019-nCoV in New Zealand to date and while the risk to New Zealand is currently low, NZ health officials are monitoring the situation closely.

As a school we too are closely watching the situation as the health of our students and staff is a priority. Should the situation change, as with other infectious diseases such as measles, mumps and influenza, we will follow advice from the Ministries of Education and Health and also implement our pandemic plan.

Novel Coronavirus is a new virus and its specific nature is currently unclear, however it appears that you can have the virus at an early stage and not be showing any symptoms. This incubation period is currently considered to be 14 days. While the World Health Organisation (WHO) does not recommend any specific health measures for travellers, WHO do advise people follow the following basic principles to reduce the general risk of acute respiratory infections including:

* avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of acute respiratory infections
* regular hand washing
* avoiding close contact with sick farm animals or wild animals and
* covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.

For those of you concerned about possible infection, the Ministry of Health has provided practical information on their website which we encourage you to read - [**Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) guidance – Ministry of Health website**](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-china-2019-ncov)

Across New Zealand children and young people are returning to school, including international students. The Ministry of Education has advised us to ask that any student / staff member who has recently been in China or has been in close contact with someone confirmed with the virus, to delay the start of their school year for 14 days from arrival in New Zealand i.e. voluntarily stay away. Rangiora High School has a small number of international students from mainland China. Others have arrived or will be arriving from Japan and Thailand - countries where the virus has also been identified. While none of these students come from areas where the novel coronavirus has been confirmed, our international staff will work with these students to observe this Ministry of Education recommendation.

As always we ask that if your child is unwell please do not send them to school. If you have a particular concern about your child, please contact your GP for medical advice or phone Healthline (**0800 611 116**). Healthline has translators and interpreters available 24/7 in 150 languages.

Below are some links that you may find useful if you have any questions in relation to Novel Coronavirus:

* The [**Ministry of Health website**](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-china-2019-ncov) will be regularly updated with information about the coronavirus, current status, and advice for travellers, and other useful links and resources.
* Healthline at **0800 611 116**. Please do call them if you have specific concerns.
* The latest advice on the 2019-nCoV is available from the [**WHO website**](https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus)

Thank you for your ongoing support. We will keep you updated as we learn more.

Karen Stewart

Principal / Tumuaki