Tēnā koutou

The Prime Minister has announced [the first case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in New Zealand](https://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/media-releases/single-case-covid-19-confirmed-new-zealand). This case was identified because the person affected and their family did the right thing and got in touch with health authorities. The Ministry of Health has noted that although we have our first case of COVID-19, the chances of community outbreak remain low. Their key message for us is that it is important we all continue to be alert but not alarmed.

The Ministry of Health continues to stress that good hygiene practices are the best defence:

* + wash your hands often with soap and water before and after eating as well as after attending the toilet
  + cover coughs and sneezes with clean tissues or your elbow
  + put used tissues in the bin

We are also encouraging staff and students who are not well to stay home and seek medical advice. It is also important that we remind our young people of the importance of being respectful of other cultures and knowledge of keeping others safe from disease. For example, that some individuals may choose to wear face masks, as it is part of their cultural practice to do so to support their hygiene needs.

**Updated information from the Ministry of Health**

As announced last week by the Ministry of Health, there are now two categories for travellers arriving in New Zealand:

* **Category 1** – People who have travelled from or transited through countries in category one in the last 14 days are required to self-isolate for 14 days and contact Healthline. **Mainland China and Iran are the two countries included in this category.**
* **Category 2** – People who have travelled from or via countries lists in category two who develop symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath should seek medical advice by first phoning Healthline’s dedicated COVID-19 number 0800 358 5453 or contact their GP by phoning ahead of their visit to explain symptoms and travel history. **As at Friday 28 February countries in this category are Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand.**

We encourage you to keep updated about the status of COVID-19 on the [Ministry of Health website](https://govt.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2f59fcd18a691d315b5a045cb&id=bd9ef2636f&e=4c1fa23446).

As a school we are taking a proactive approach. As well as these regular newsletters we have reviewed our pandemic plan and continue to update / brief staff to help us **to keep your child and everyone else safe**.

It’s still important we all continue to be alert but not alarmed.

Karen Stewart

Principal / Tumuaki