

7 March 2022

Kia ora koutou

I hope you're had a good weekend, and that the week has started well for you. School has been lovely today - yes, the breeze, the sun, the sweating trees (of course!), but mainly the students and their teachers. I've been around the whole school, popping into all Primary lessons and some College ones along the way, and it's been a pleasure every step of the way. Focused work and smiling faces!

I'm going to continue with the daily updates this week as part of our commitment to openness about the way we're operating at the moment. Please let me know if you have any questions at all.

### **New Cases**

- Since Friday's message, we have had four new student cases. Three of these have been in Year 4 and are linked. None of these students, of course, were in school today, and the second and third cases seemed to develop symptoms within 2-3 days of exposure, as has been the consistent pattern with younger children. I wouldn't expect any additional cases from this class.
- The fourth case is a Year 9 student who was already isolating as a household contact. This means that he was not infectious at school.
- We have also had a College teacher test positive, probably from contact at home. He is very unlikely to have been infectious at school, has no symptoms, and is currently isolating.

The overall picture with new cases is that they are growing very slowly indeed. This means that we have had 16 students test positive so far, and I'm glad to say that the first four students to test positive are now either back at school or learning online (but are able to come back if they wish). The students who have come back onto site are tested before going into school, and are symptom-free. Which means that they are less likely to pass on an infection than just about anyone else! We are delighted to welcome them back.

### **Rapid Antigen Testing**

We tested all in-school Year 4 and Year 6 students, as well as any returning P8 or P9 students, a handful of siblings, students returning to school after isolation and staff this morning. All tests were negative.

At the moment, we are planning to test a number of individuals tomorrow, and there are no year groups we need to test. We will, obviously, keep this under review and will let you know if we make any late decisions.

## Staff Isolation

I thought I would update you on our staffing situation. You will be aware that the rules around self-isolation are causing staff shortages in schools (and everywhere else!). Other schools have sent home whole year groups, or are 'rostering' students, so they are at home on some days of the week, to ensure that they can continue to supervise children at school. We do not expect to need to do that, and we have been fortunate so far that we have been able to spread our resources in such a way that we can continue to teach all students a full timetable at all times. We expect to be able to continue to do this. But we currently have four Primary teachers and seven College teachers isolating, and I do expect this to grow a little.

Our teachers are sometimes teaching online from home, and sometimes teaching students who are at school from home - this obviously adds a layer of complication, so please bear with us if there's the occasional organisational detail to fix. I'm very grateful to our staff for their continued resilience and flexibility.

Have a lovely afternoon. Kind regards

Alex

### Alex Reed

Executive Principal

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#### Pinehurst School

a: 75 Bush Road, Albany, Auckland 0632, NZ

t: +64 (0)9 414 0960 EXT 603

m: +64 (0)21 194 8584

e: [Alex.Reed@pinehurst.school.nz](mailto:Alex.Reed@pinehurst.school.nz)

[www.pinehurst.school.nz](http://www.pinehurst.school.nz)

