

11 March 2022

Kia ora tatou

I hope you've had a good week, and that you've had the chance to enjoy this week's Pinehurst Newsletter.

We have a very brief update for you today, as there hasn't been much Covid action today (I'm very glad to say!).

New Cases

There has been one new case in the last 24 hours. A Year 13 student recorded a weak positive at home yesterday afternoon, although he has no symptoms. He was in school until yesterday afternoon, so may have been infectious on Wednesday and Thursday.

In keeping with our adjusted policy, we tested the students who sit near him in class or who spent significant amounts of time with him in school. You will remember that we have decided to move to this approach for College students because the evidence of the past two weeks is that there is very little transmission in school, and that the only infections we have seen have been amongst close contacts who have spent a significant amount of time together. In this case, I was satisfied, as the student is in Year 13, is very careful, as are his friends, that this approach was the most sensible.

This brings our total number of students who have tested positive to 27 (9 in Primary; 18 in College). A total of 9 members of staff have tested positive. Both of these numbers are very low in comparison with most schools.

Rapid Antigen Tests

We tested the close contacts of the Year 13 student who tested positive, and we tested students and staff returning to school after isolation. All tests were negative.

Staff Isolation

There were 4 Primary and 8 College teachers in isolation today, most of whom were teaching online. All of the Primary teachers and five of the College teachers end their isolation periods on Monday, and will come back to school provided they have no symptoms and after a negative test.

A final word from me on three things:

1. Firstly, thank you for your continuing caution. The Year 13 student who tested positive is an example of a family who were very careful, identified a case early, and protected the community.

We also have a number of students at home whose parents or siblings at other schools have tested positive, and the quick action by their families has made a huge difference to our school.

2. So this weekend, please inform me if anyone in your household tests positive, especially if a student does so. The earlier you do this, the better, as it enables us to make arrangements to test students as appropriate (remember that we are continuing to test whole classes in Primary if we need to, and we will test students who may be close contacts in College, which will include whole classes in some cases), and to keep the rest of the community informed, and so better able to check for symptoms and do additional tests if necessary.

3. **We expect all College students to be in school next week** unless they have to isolate, either because they have tested positive or they are a household contact. And thank you to the 350 Primary parents who have made their hybrid learning choices for next week, but that still leaves over 50 still to come in - **please do this as soon as possible**, as we need to plan for next week. So far, over half of the students are planning to be in school next week, which is great to see. We would encourage as many students as possible to be in school, as we have had just one case since Saturday in Primary.

Many thanks and have a lovely weekend!

Alex

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