

11 March 2022

Dear parents and caregivers,

Omicron Update

I hope you and your families are all well. As expected, COVID-19 case numbers continue to surge. Fortunately, most symptoms are relatively mild but having said that, we appreciate the impact that the isolation and absence periods have on individuals and families. If your child is feeling unwell, please remember to keep them at home and get advice about getting a COVID-19 test.

Case Numbers

Our school community as of today, has **210** individual cases of people who have tested positive (this number includes staff and students). We also have a large number of students isolating as household contacts. The situation is still quite volatile, but we are carefully monitoring each week. Thankfully, we anticipated the impact on staffing and put in place a temporary year level 'learn from home' roster. This has allowed the school to remain open and function as smoothly as possible.

Isolation Period Change

From midnight tonight, the Government has changed the period of isolation for Household contacts and positive cases from 10 days to 7 days. It is important that all students strictly adhere to this health order and do not return to school before the full isolation period is completed. There are no exceptions.

Year 11 Rostering Home - Week 6

Next week, **Year 11** will be rostered to learn from home. Teachers will prepare and set work on Monday for students on *Google Classroom*. As mentioned earlier, we are monitoring our plan each week and will only roster home if absolutely necessary. At this time, we are still committed to other year levels learning from home, but we may not proceed with Year 9 and Year 10 if parent supervision is problematic.

Absent from School

If students are absent from school owing to COVID -19, parents should email cv19@howick.school.nz and students should email each of their teachers. If a student is not too unwell or is isolating as a household contact, then they can maintain learning from home through *Google Classroom* and by emailing their teachers with any questions they might have.

School Events and Activities

There has been an amendment to the Health Order in relation to school activities. From 15 March, all students will be able to participate in all school-organised teams and groups regardless of their vaccination status. This will apply to on-site and off-site curriculum and co-curricular activities such as EOTC and sport. We will no longer request student vaccination information for these activities. There are no changes to the limitation of adult spectators/participants and corresponding vaccines passes.

Support

Finally, we know how hard the impact of COVID-19 has been for many families in New Zealand. If you know of a family in your community who is struggling, please encourage them to reach out for support if they need to access food, medicine, or financial assistance. Help is available via the [COVID-19 Health Hub](#).

If you have any concerns about sending your child to school, please do get in touch.

Regards

Mr I L Ropati
Principal