



13 September 2022

Kia ora Parents, Caregivers and Students

### **New Long-term Strategy for COVID-19**

You will be aware that New Zealand has moved to a new, long-term approach to COVID-19. These changes have been made based on public health advice and reflect high levels of immunity and declining case numbers across New Zealand. This new approach will result in some changes to the way Howick College operates.

Mask wearing at school will become optional from **Tuesday 13 September**. For students and staff who choose to continue to wear masks at school, we will support them in their choice. Students should be advised that we will be using this change in mask policy to have a uniform reset. Students are reminded of the appearance and grooming requirements at Howick College:

- No extreme hair styles and/or unnatural hair colours
- Students must be clean shaven
- Jewellery minimal – one ring per hand, one small gold/silver stud or sleeper earring per ear on earlobe.
- No bracelets, necklaces or facial jewellery
- Eye make-up and nail polish are not permitted

Students should continue to monitor their health and stay at home if they are unwell. If they are showing any Covid-19 symptoms, they should complete a RAT test.

Household contacts of a person with COVID-19 do not need to isolate, but instead are asked to complete a RAT test each day, for five days. Therefore, ākongā who are household contacts but test negative and do not have COVID-19 symptoms, should continue to attend. It is the best place for them to be so they can be engaged in their learning, and connected with their teachers, classmates and friends.

All the other recommended public health measures will stay in place as we know they reduce the spread of infectious illnesses including COVID-19. These include ensuring our indoor spaces are well-ventilated, maintaining good hand hygiene, encouraging everyone to cough or sneeze into elbows and, most importantly, staying home and getting tested if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Thank you for your ongoing support in protecting our community.

Noho ora mai

Dr Paul Bennett  
**Associate Principal**