

MORRINSVILLE COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL: J.M. Inger, M.Ed.Admin (Hons), B.A., Dip.Tchg



LETTER TO PARENTS AND STAFF

29 January 2020

Tena koutou katoa and welcome back to the 2020 school year.

I apologise for my first email of the year coming to parents of our students now, before school starts, but we need to be very careful as a school about the rapidly-evolving international concern about the coronavirus, as the health of students and staff is of course a priority. This is a new virus and its specific nature is currently unclear, including whether it can spread between humans when the carrier is asymptomatic. However it certainly appears that you can have the virus at an early stage and not be showing any symptoms. The incubation period for the virus is currently considered to be up to 14 days.

Firstly, we have no international students coming to our school from Wuhan or the Hubei province in China, so our risk at Morrinsville College is minimal.

However, there remains a chance that some of our community may have been exposed to the virus in their travels over the recent summer break, and the last fortnight in particular, and especially if they have travelled in China. Clearly, we need to err on the side of caution to ensure the safety of everyone at school.

Here are some steps that I have been advised by the Secretary of Education to take and which I would like to take:

- As always, anyone who is unwell should not be at school at any stage during the year. In this case, if there is any chance that your son or daughter may have been exposed to the coronavirus, either because of their travels or close contact with anyone else who might possibly have been exposed to the virus, please advise us and **keep them at home for at least 14 consecutive days** so that we can be sure that they do not have the virus.
- If there are any symptoms, such as, runny nose, headache, cough, sore throat, fever or a general feeling of being unwell, please contact Healthline at 0800 611 116 or your doctor for medical advice. Healthline has translators and interpreters available 24/7 in 150 languages and they do have Mandarin and Cantonese speaking staff available if these languages are preferable for you.
- Please also advise our school Office staff if there are any symptoms that might suggest that your child has the coronavirus, and also who they might have been in close contact with if these people have anything to do with our school.
- If one of our students still attends school while showing symptoms that may be the coronavirus, my staff members have been advised to inform me. If I believe on any reasonable grounds that they may have coronavirus (or indeed any communicable disease), under the provisions of the Education Act I can decide that a student with a suspected infectious disease will not be allowed to attend school until they have been cleared by an authorised health professional.

John Inger
Principal