SUMNER SCHOOL
Per ardua ad alta

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25 July 2022

Tēna koutou e te whānau,

IMPORTANT Covid Protection Framework update - Mask wearing for Years 4-8

A warm welcome back to you all. We hope all the children enjoyed the school holiday break and took the opportunity to refresh and recharge, and that our parents and whānau are looking forward to school starting back!

As we are sure you are aware, the winter bugs are certainly upon us. In previous years we have found there is an increase in winter illnesses in schools at the start of Term 3 as students bring back infections after travelling and socialising during the break, and this winter is certainly no exception! This year cases of COVID-19 are increasing in many parts of the country, and we are also seeing high numbers of other winter illnesses.

In light of this, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education are strongly recommending that all schools amend their mask wearing protocols for the **first four weeks** of Term 3 to **require mask wearing while indoors for students Year 4 and above.**

We have ordered a replenishment of mask supplies for our staff and students, but if your child has a mask at home, we would appreciate you packing these for Monday in case our mask orders are impacted by delivery delays.

This recommendation does not include any situation where mask wearing might not be practicable, such as while eating and drinking, playing certain musical instruments, indoor sport, where it will have a significant impact on teaching and learning (for example, students with particular learning needs), certain activities such as singing or drama performance on stage, and PE. In these situations, particular attention will be paid to ensuring there is good ventilation during the activity, and physical distancing where practicable.

We know that some of our tamariki/ākonga are exempt from wearing a mask. If they have an exemption, or we have agreed that mask wearing is not practicable for them, we will continue to support them to not wear a mask. Apply for a face mask exemption pass – Unite Against COVID-19.

This decision has not been taken lightly. We appreciate that many of our community have had Covid already and may therefore have an added layer of protection, and that mask mandates and other restrictions have been removed in an effort to 'get back to normal'. However, the school environment by its very nature is a higher risk area. For this reason and following guidance from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, the Sumner School Board has decided to put this temporary extra measure in place.

This approach will also help protect our teaching team, who have worn masks throughout Term One and Two to ensure we have every chance of being able to continue to deliver our 'business as usual' learning experiences for our ākonga. We will continue to closely monitor absentee levels and emerging advice from the MOE over the coming weeks and adjust our approach accordingly. It is important to reiterate that the Board and Principal are committed to continuing to adopt a risk assessment based process to all that we do at school. While we have enjoyed being able to connect more and more with our parents and whānau in Term 2, we will be continuing to ensure that we are responsive to the cases in our community and continue to make changes slowly and steadily

at a pace that we feel is safe and manageable so that we do not risk undoing all our work as a community so far. **The safety of our ākonga (learners), staff and community must continue to be our first priority.**

We hope that you have managed to avoid becoming unwell over the holiday period, but if a child in your family did test positive over the holidays we would appreciate a quick email to let us know (admin@sumner.school.nz). This information would be really helpful to enable us to ensure that we are heading into Term 3 with an indication of what case numbers are currently looking like within our school community, and so that we can make accurate risk assessments for our Term 3 events and activities.

A reminder that a live version of our school Covid Protection Framework guidance document is available on our school website (linked here). This document contains a full description of what to expect at school under the different framework settings. Please note that all school guidelines have been updated using the information provided to schools from the Ministry of Education. A summary reminder of Orange Setting is attached below.

We will continue to keep all the other health measures in place at school that we know slow the spread of COVID-19. These include ensuring our indoor spaces are well-ventilated, maintaining good hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette, appropriate physical distancing whenever we can and, most importantly, staying home if we are sick. A reminder to check your child/ren's winter uniform before Monday and ensure your child comes to school with a school fleece and/or coat for the colder weather.

As you will all be well aware by now, the Covid-19 response is an ever-evolving landscape, and as a school we will continue to follow the latest updated guidance from the Ministries of Health and Education to ensure we are keeping our students, staff and community safe. We will continue to notify you via the School App, if/when any changes occur to guidelines.

Lastly, we are planning for our Term Three Learning Conferences scheduled for week 2 to remain in their current form (with families being able to choose a face-to-face or virtual conference), but will make a final decision regarding the structure of conferences on Friday 29 July (end of week 1) once we have an indication of case numbers within our school community. If we are seeing high infection rates within the community we will move all conferences online as per our Term One Conference format. This decision will be shared with families via our school App.

Thank you for your support in protecting our school community.

Nāku noa, nā

Tim Lowe
Associate Principal

Orange CPF Setting at Sumner School

At Orange, there will be increasing community transmission that is putting pressure on our health system. The whole health system will focus its resources, but can continue to manage primary care, public health, and hospitals.

There may also be an increasing risk for at-risk people. Schools and kura are open for on site learning for all students. Schools are prohibited from requiring students to be vaccinated to access education. This includes parents, caregiver and whānau supporting students and their learning.

Case notification procedure:	• At Orange **please continue to notify us of any positive cases of children at school** by emailing principal@sumner.school.nz • Please also **continue to notify us if your family needs to isolate** due to a positive case arising within your household. • We will also continue to notify the school community via the School App of case numbers and locations as they arise within our school.
Arrangements for drop off (8.30-9am) and pick up:	**We will continue with our usual drop off and pick up routines, including a 3pm finish for all children. Within this setting, all children will be farewelled from their classroom door by their class teacher - there will be no gate system in place.** • **Parents are able to enter the school site** at drop off and pick up times, but under Orange, **drop off and pick up will happen at the classroom door**. • At Orange **we ask that parents do not enter learning spaces without prior arrangement with the class teacher**. • Parents and caregivers dropping off or picking up students before and after school are **strongly encouraged to wear a mask**.
I need to talk to my child's teacher, what should I do?	At Orange **parents and caregivers will not be able to enter classrooms during pick up and drop off times**, but quick conversations can occur at the door with the class teacher. At this setting we ask that you **make an appointment with the class teacher** if you would like to discuss something more important that will take longer than 2-3 minutes, or that you'd prefer not to discuss at the classroom door. Your child's teacher will happily arrange a time to meet or call you to talk more fully.
Can I come into the School Office?	Yes, parents and whānau are welcome into the School Office during normal Office hours (8.30am-3.30pm), but please **make sure you are wearing a mask.** Please also **be mindful of the number of people in the School Office**. If there are **more than 2 people waiting, please wait outside**.
What should I do if I need to come onto site during the school day (9am-3pm)?	If you are entering any learning spaces during 9-3pm please **come to the School Office to sign in.**
Distance Learning:	**We will continue to support off site learning for those required to self-isolate.** Support will also be available for children with complex medical needs, and who are learning from home following advice from a health professional
Masks during the school day (9am-3pm):	• At Orange, **Masks are required on school transport** for ākonga aged 12 and up. • Initially for the first four weeks of Term 3, face masks for all ākonga from

	Years 4 to 8 are required to be worn at school. • We continue to be told that wearing a mask is a key health measure that slows the spread of COVID-19 in indoor settings. For that reason, **we ask that visitors to the school, including parents and whānau, wear a mask whenever they are indoors on school grounds.**
Children with complex medical needs:	Children with **complex medical needs** are **encouraged to take additional precautions** when leaving home. If you think this applies to your whānau, **please contact us**. In this instance we will work with parents, caregivers and students to develop a plan to support attendance on site.
Curriculum related activities:	As a school we will **apply a risk based assessment to the planning of events.** Large activities **with students**, if they are to go ahead, will take place in well-ventilated areas or outdoors.
Non-curriculum related activities:	When bringing others on site, including our parents and caregivers, any **general rules for events applicable at the time will apply.**
Staffing within our school:	Staff are able to work across more than one group/class of students within the school. Staff such as itinerant music teachers and relief teachers will be able to work across different schools.