

## Managing (with) Covid in 2022 @ Te Rāwhiti Kindergarten & Te Rā School

Kia ora e te whānau

With a few more days of summer holiday bliss to go before we welcome back your children, the teachers and support staff here at Te Rāwhiti and Te Rā are preparing for the start of the term. This includes our approach to managing Covid-19 in the coming months to ensure that kindergarten and school remain happy and healthy places of learning and play for all our tamariki.

It has become increasingly clear that our country, and with that our kindergarten and school, will be expected to deal with Covid in a more nuanced way. The shift from elimination to “living with the virus in the wider population”, and perhaps even within our local community, is reflected in the government’s Covid Protection Framework (CPF, or ‘Traffic Light System’). For us in the education sector, the differences between the settings ‘Green’, ‘Orange’ and ‘Red’ are a lot more subtle than those between the previous Alert Levels 1-4.

Most importantly, kindergarten and school are **open** for teaching and learning in **all** settings – **Green, Orange and Red**.

Curriculum related activities should go ahead pretty much as usual in 2022. General health & hygiene measures continue to apply.

As last year, visitors who enter our grounds (during or outside of school hours) are asked to scan the COVID tracer app **QR code** displayed in various locations. This includes parents and caregivers unless they are dropping off/picking up from the kindergarten.

As per standard practice we ask that members of the public who **enter our grounds between 9am and 3pm** to sign into a **visitor’s book** state time of arrival and departure as well as the purpose of their visit. This is a health and safety measure that is unrelated to the CPF and applies to parents/caregivers except those who drop off or pick up from kindergarten.

While/when/if our region is in **Orange** or **Red**:

Kindergarten and school remain open, but we take additional steps to reduce the number of people on-site for **non-curriculum related** purposes.

Rules that apply for such events/purposes depend on the respective guidelines for each setting. This may affect festivals that involve our community, School Sharing Assemblies, or class plays. We will communicate on a case-by-case basis what this means or if an event is postponed or cancelled.

These settings may also affect how we manage the use of our grounds and buildings outside of school hours, e.g. playground access.

During ‘Orange’ and ‘Red’, we ask office visitors to ring the bell by the window so that we can ensure that only one visitor is present in the reception area at any one time.

On-site meetings, e.g. to speak with a teacher, can go ahead but are by appointment with the respective staff member. We will follow protocols of physical distancing and encourage face masks, hold meetings outdoors or in well ventilated areas. Teachers may use video meetings as an alternative to meetings in person.

## FAQs (updated 17 January 2022):

**Are unvaccinated parents/whānau barred from entering the kindergarten or school grounds?**

→ No.

*When the CPF requires us to limit access to our grounds and buildings to essential visitors, particularly at drop off/pick up time, this applies regardless of anyone's vaccination status.*

**Can unvaccinated parents volunteer as parent helpers?**

→ No.

*As long as the Health Order is in force, staff, support people, external visitors and volunteers who have contact with children and students at kindergartens or school (other than their own family members) must be fully vaccinated. This applies during all CPF settings. Kindergartens and schools must maintain an on-site register of the vaccination status of volunteers.*

**Do children, including those aged 12 and older, need to be vaccinated in order to attend their kindergarten or school?**

→ No.

*Te Rā School classes will not attend in interschool or EOTC events if vaccination of children is a requirement by organisers or venues.*

**Will children be given or offered vaccinations at kindergarten or school?**

→ No.

*Vaccinations are widely available at different locations within in our community.*

**Will children have to wear facemasks at kindergarten or school?**

→ Possibly.

- *In 'Green' or 'Orange', facemasks are optional for all age groups.*
- *In 'Red', facemasks are not required in kindergarten and Classes 1 and 2.*
- *In 'Red', for Class 3 and above: if activities need to be indoors and if physical distancing is not possible, children should use face coverings during these activities. This also applies to the staff providing or supporting the provisions of education for these classes.*

**For school children, can we expect home-based learning similar to what happened during Level 3 and 4 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021?**

→ Possibly.

*School lockdowns are not an integral part of the current version of the CPF, but it is still possible that they need to occur.*

*If it is anticipated that the school will be closed for **longer than two school days**, learning materials and support will be provided by the respective class teacher.*

*When the school is open for instruction, support for off-site learning may be provided for any school children who are advised to remain at home for more than two school days. This applies for children who are self-isolating to due having tested positive for Covid-19 or due to being close contacts of a confirmed case. This also applies for children with*

*complex medical conditions where non-attendance on-site is advised by their health practitioner and where a medical certificate is provided to the school principal.*

*Home learning will not be supported by the school where parents choose that their children stay at home. In this case, the school will follow up on non-attendance as per our usual attendance procedure.*

**Will kindergarten and school close for instruction if there is a confirmed positive case?**

→ **Highly likely.**

*If the positive case is a child/student or staff member who was present at kindergarten or school while being infectious, we may close both kindergarten and school for a short time (1-2 days) to give staff time to*

- a) consult with the health and education authorities,*
- b) identify and inform close, casual plus, and casual contacts,*
- c) inform our community about the situation,*
- d) prepare to reopen for instruction asap, for those able to attend.*

*This temporary closure may come at very short notice. If we are advised by the Ministry of Health and/or Ministry of Education that a closure is to be extended, we will communicate this as timely as possible via SchoolApp and community email, in the first instance.*

*The Ministry of Education provides more information about this question here:*

<https://www.education.govt.nz/covid-19/advice-for-schoolskura/schools-connected-to-a-confirmed-case/>

**If parents/caregivers have specific requests, for example if they have concerns about how some CPF measures impact on their child/children, will kindergarten or school staff operate outside of government guidelines?**

→ **No.**

*Teachers, the leadership teams, support staff, admin staff, and school boards and trusts are required to follow government law and regulations. For any concerns about measures of the Covid Protections Framework impacting on your child/children, please contact your GP, your local MP or the Ministry of Education.*

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We hope this has answered some immediate questions you might have.

For anything specific to your child, please speak with their kindergarten teacher or class teacher in the first instance.

If you have any other more general questions about our implementation of the Covid Protection Framework, please contact Cat Hendra at [office@tera.school.nz](mailto:office@tera.school.nz).

We look forward to welcoming the children back soon!

Noho ora mai rā

Nā Kerstin Wagner (for the school) & Shelley Wrigley (for the kindergarten)

**This MOE webpage provides more information and further links:**

<https://parents.education.govt.nz/essential-information/covid-19-information-for-parents-and-whanau/>