



25/07/22

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I hope you and your family had a restful school holiday. Our teachers have planned some wonderful learning experiences for your children in this coming term and we look forward to seeing you at some of our school events.

We are still receiving information from the Ministry of Education regarding Covid. We continue to take the health and safety of your child seriously and I ask you to read the information below.

Masking up for the start of Term 3

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 holidays. This year cases of COVID-19 are increasing in most parts of the country, and we are also seeing high numbers of other winter illnesses. In light of new guidance from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health we are having to make some changes to our mask wearing procedures.

*From Tuesday 26th July, we are now **STRONGLY RECOMMENDING** mask use in years 4-6. We encourage other children throughout the school to wear their masks.*

This recommendation **does not** include any situation where mask wearing might not be practicable, such as while eating and drinking, 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 outside, and PE. In these situations, particular attention should be paid to ensuring there is good ventilation during the activity, and physical distancing where practicable.

We know that some of our children are exempt from wearing a mask. If they have an exemption card or a letter from their health provider, or we have agreed that mask wearing is not practicable for them, we will support them to not wear a mask.

[Apply for a face mask exemption pass – Unite Against COVID-19](#)

For Greenhithe School, our staff will also be strongly encouraged to wear masks during teaching times where it is practicable to do so. All of our communal areas will continue to require masks. This includes the office, if you need to visit this space, please ensure you wear a mask. If visiting a staff member or a classroom, it is also important that you wear a mask.

Please make sure that your child comes to school ready to wear a mask or contact your child's teacher if they have an exemption, so as not to cause any distress to your child. Students should bring masks from home. If students cannot bring masks there will be a limited supply of masks for students in each classroom, we are expecting to receive additional child and adult size masks next week. The Ministry has informed schools that the

increased level of encouragement of mask use and request for compliance is currently for the first four weeks of school but this could be extended.

We will continue to ventilate classrooms, in line with the recommendations. The teachers will be giving children outside time when the weather allows, which also allows children and staff a break from the mask use, as they are outside. Masks will not be required for any outside activity, again ensuring the children get mask free time during the day (as well as during the break times and fruit break etc).

With these increased recommendations, we will continue to be following our usual teaching and learning programme and ensure that the innovative and fun classroom environments continue to run as normal.

At this time we are creating a strong recommendation for mask use in Year 4-6. This is based on our numbers and our local situation. However, as other schools on the North Shore and across Auckland have done, if our local conditions change, we may have to move back into *required mask use* within our school.

Please let us know if your child tests positive for Covid or is in isolation. However, the general rule of keeping your child off school if they are sick continues to apply, and we will obviously send children home who are unwell, as we have always done. We will continue with our other health and safety mitigations such as regular hand washing, ventilation of classrooms, sanitising and cleaning routines.

Thank you for your support in protecting our school community.

Noho ora mai

Stephen Grady
Tumuaki/Principal
Greenhithe School