

## MARAURAU O TE PAE API'I | MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

### INFORMATION PIECE

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**23 August 2021**

Extending precautionary measures for the Cook Islands in response to the changing scope of the community outbreak of the COVID-19 Delta variant in New Zealand, is not only sensible but will ensure our students and staff across all our education premises are kept safe and well informed.

Our Cook Islands schools and tertiary providers continue to take lead from Te Marae Ora and under Alert Level 2 all our educational facilities remain open as COVID-19 is not present in the Cook Islands but there is a case of community transmission in New Zealand. Acknowledging that the goal at Level 2 is to remain in operation, but to operate safely, so is the goal for delivering learning at our schools and providers during this time.

When visiting our schools and tertiary providers many will see that our premises are fully equipped with CookSafe tagging capabilities which have been actively used for some time now by staff, students, and visitors. As is the expectation when visiting businesses and places within our community, our schools kindly ask that you tag in when visiting even if it's a quick drop-off or pick-up opportunity.

Schools have been doing a fantastic job with incorporating increased handwashing and hygiene practices into our new learning norms. These hygiene practices continue and include wiping down of surfaces and items and regular handwashing and sanitizing. Having previously received hygiene packs full of cleaning products, sanitisers, wipes, and towels in Term 3 2020 thanks to a partnership between the New Zealand High Commission and the Ministry of Education, they have everything required to maintain good hygiene. Just in case schools are running low on supplies, they will be receiving a fresh supply of products this week from the Ministry as part of our preparedness strategy with Cook Islands Tourism.

Consideration of the needs of our school communities is very much high priority. Staff who are unwell are asked to remain at home, as is best practice for keeping everyone safe, and classes are then covered so learning can continue. The same is expected of our students, so if your child is not feeling well the best place for them is home until well again.

Learning and teaching programmes embed COVID-19, preparedness and alert level concepts across the curriculum which is helping to extend students understanding of COVID-19 and recent announcements, while engaging with the various precautionary measures each day. In supporting our national efforts further, all large scale school events such as school gala or market day events, sporting or cultural events are being postponed.

Our schools and providers are committed to keeping everyone safe and informed. The Ministry and all education premises are extremely grateful to all families and the wider community who are helping to reinforce our COVID-19 precautionary measures while at home.

Always keep safe, stay informed, and take care of yourselves and others.

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