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Dear Parents/Caregivers

You will be aware that COVID-19 virus is a worldwide concern at the present time. There have been a number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand and several schools have students who are in self-quarantine at home. This is not because they posed a risk of spreading infection to others, but as a precaution due to household contacts who have been confirmed as positive cases.

There are no confirmed or suspected cases linked to Buckland School but as a community we need to be aware that it is likely we will have further cases within New Zealand. For further information about the infection and how it is spread, the [Ministry of Health](#) has some very useful information. There are some [Q&As](#) on the Ministry of Health website and also a Ministry of Health Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/minhealthnz> If you have concerns related to planned overseas travel there is also additional information on the [Safe Travel NZ](#)

You may like to visit the following link to the Ministry of Education guidance to parents, caregivers, whanau and teachers regarding talking to your children about this virus: <http://www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/pastoral-care-and-wellbeing/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-coronavirus/>

We are receiving regular information from both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and have been passing relevant information on to you through newsletters. Please keep yourselves up to date with this information.

Our school has an **emergency management plan** that covers emergencies, such as fire, earthquake, lockdown and also pandemics. We work with a firm called Harrison Tew on this plan and training is provided for staff each year.

We also have in place a detailed Pandemic plan which has been developed with the Ministry of Health and Education. This plan is constantly updated as more information is received from these groups regarding this illness.

The staff are reinforcing hand washing and coughing messages and have put extra cleaning of IT equipment and rules around their use into operation. Soap, hand sanitizer and tissues are also provided for student and staff use. These measures will help to ensure that all students at our school are kept as safe as possible. Teachers have also shown children of suitable age a video on the virus. (This video is available to parents in the link above for younger students at parent discretion.)

We will keep you informed as we are directed to next steps. Meanwhile, important messages about preventing the spread of Covid-19 and other seasonal viral infections including influenza are:



- Teach your children the importance of frequent hand washing – especially before meals and after toileting
- Teach your children to use a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing or cough and sneeze into their elbow
- Keep your children at home if they are ill or coughing.
- Visit a doctor if you are worried about your health or the health of your family

An important part of emergency planning is ensuring we have **up-to-date contact details** for all students and staff. If your details have changed since last year or since enrolment this year please email the new details to our executive officer: GMills@buckland.school.nz

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me directly. Thank you.

Regards

Mavis Glasgow

Principal