



Dairy Flat School

WHĀIA TE ITI KAHURANGI ME TE ATAWHAI TĀNGATA TAHI
Strive for Excellence, Care for All

Kei aku nui, kei aku rahi, tēnā koutou katoa i roto i ngā āhuatanga o te wā.

Welcome back after what we hope has been a wonderful summer for your whānau.

Our team is feeling refreshed and ready to go for the 2022 year and can't wait to welcome all the children back onsite.

In regard to COVID-19 we have moved fully into the new traffic light framework for all our school and kura activities and events this year.



Events and activities

Large hui and gatherings especially when indoors continue to be one of the riskier activities we can undertake. We have therefore reviewed all our events and activities for the upcoming term to ensure we meet the health guidance for **RED**.

Please keep an eye on the school calendar for upcoming events. In **RED** we ask all whānau (adults) to stay off site.

Under the **RED** Settings NO non-essential visitors on site. We understand that this may be anxiety provoking for whānau especially if you have young or new children attending our school. Please contact the Principal **Katie Hills** if you have any questions or concerns.

If you do need to come onsite to collect your child or drop something off, please contact the school prior to entering **09 415 9071**

Schedule



Schools remain open at all levels of the “traffic light” system. In extreme situations we will have plans to deliver remote teaching which we will communicate with you. We will only be providing face to face instruction, however if your child has high and complex health needs please contact **Susan Thompson** to discuss learning and support options.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF

Staggered drop off and pick up times in place.

No caregivers to park cars. Use drop off by driving in, pulling up to the drop off zone and allowing your child(ren) to leave the vehicle. Staff will be available to walk your child(ren) to class. We will no longer be undoing seat belts and retrieving bags etc out of cars.

Families new to DF and new 5 year olds... A separate email will be sent to you to outline drop off and pick up procedures.

Drop off

8.15 - 9.00 NO earlier please. Staff need time to prepare in the mornings and will not be available to supervise children in class

Pick up

2.40 Year 1-2, room 10, and families

2.55 - 3.10pm Year 3-6



Buses will operate normally. Year 4 up are required to wear a mask on the bus. Please be prepared that buses may be cancelled at short notice if a bus driver becomes unwell and there is no replacement available. Fingers crossed this will not happen

Grouping

Children will remain with their teacher in class and play outside with their team only. No mixing of teams. Teachers will stay with their teams to minimise risk. No assemblies or large gatherings will be held during the RED setting.

We will be running a normal class programme, including swimming, physical education.

As much as we enjoyed seeing everyone with wheels, scooters, roller skates and skateboards, staff were finding it difficult to manage them and the children at pick up and drop off times. For now we will **not** be allowing any wheels during the **RED** traffic light. We will revisit this in **ORANGE** and **GREEN**.



Extra activities

Music lessons and individual tutoring sessions will continue under **RED** settings.

aPlus - Before and After School Care -

This will start on the 8th February. Please check out their website for more information. click [here](#)

Ventilation

We have used the Ministry of Education self-assessment tool to review all our ventilation in readiness for the start of the year. Providing fresh air remains the most

important thing we can do in our learning spaces to minimise risk for ākonga and kaiako. We will also be receiving a CO₂ monitor in the coming weeks to further support our ventilation plan.

Omicron and testing

We have all seen very large numbers of cases overseas and we will very likely see much larger numbers of cases in Aotearoa than we have previously experienced in the last two years. While Omicron is more transmissible than previous strains, most people who get COVID-19 will have a mild to moderate illness and will fully recover in their own home.

However, some of our community who are immune compromised, are ill or have other vulnerabilities, even when they are fully vaccinated, could be more affected by Omicron. So, we all need to continue to play our part to minimise the spread of the virus.

In regard to testing, the health system currently has capacity to process 40,000 PCR tests a day. PCR testing is the most accurate test for COVID-19 and will continue to be used while New Zealand is in the stamp-it-out phase.

Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) will begin to be used more widely over time. They are not as accurate as PCR tests and this means that some people who do have COVID-19 will get a negative test result back. There are currently 4.6 million RATs in the country and 10s of millions ordered.

Face coverings/Masks



Staff and children in Years 4 – 6 must wear face coverings when inside at school when we are at **RED**. For Rooms 12 and 14 being composite classes it is strongly encouraged to wear masks but not compulsory.

Public health advice is that an appropriate face covering will fit snugly and seal well around facial contours. This can include single use, disposable masks (medical masks) and reusable fabric masks with three layers.

Don't worry if you don't have these specific types of face coverings, as public health experts also say that any face covering is better than no face covering.

The Unite Against COVID-19 website also has information on [how to make a face covering](#).

For those of you with children who might be reluctant to wear a face covering, there is some [helpful advice from Michigan Health](#), including using simple, specific explanations about why they need to wear a face covering, adults being the role models, providing small rewards for wearing them, bringing face coverings into play such as drawing face coverings on characters in colouring books, or letting them choose/make the mask.

Vaccination for five to 11 year olds

Vaccination, including a booster shot, remains an important tool to help prevent the most serious harm from the COVID-19 virus. If children and young adults who have been vaccinated do develop COVID-19, they are far less likely to get seriously ill and less likely to transmit the virus to others. We will not be checking vaccination status at school. We will not have a vaccination caravan or vaccination station set up at Dairy Flat School to get vaccinated. We will not have any promotional material/ shows or the like at Dairy Flat School. We feel the decision and responsibility is with the whānau. If you would like to discuss any of this please do not hesitate to contact [Katie Hills](#) or [Susan Thompson](#)

Managing cases in our school

We have a good contact tracing system in place so that if there is a confirmed case who has been at school while infectious, we can quickly identify who was a close contact of that person. We will then advise those contacts of what they need to do.

Only if the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education advises to do so, would we consider closing a physical onsite school and moving to distance learning for everyone. At Red we will keep everyone learning onsite for as long as we can.

Please make sure your contact details we have on file are up to date, so we can get in touch with you if needed.

Preparing for COVID-19

You can also prepare for COVID-19, making sure you and your household have a plan and know what to do. This will mean your whānau and community can help each other if needed. Find out more here:

- [Be prepared for COVID-19](#)
- [Download the COVID-19 Readiness Checklist \[PDF, 121 KB\]](#)
- [What to expect when self-isolating at home](#)



Self-isolating at home because of COVID-19

Many people will be able to manage self-isolation with help from friends and whānau, but there is help available if you need it – both with health support and access to food and other essentials.

- [What to expect when self-isolating at home | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)
- [Getting extra support if you have COVID-19 or are self-isolating | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)
- [COVID-19 positive – managing your symptoms | Health Navigator NZ](#)

If you know anyone in your community affected by COVID-19 and who may need help, such as food and other financial assistance, Work and Income has a range of [supports available for individuals, families, employers and self-employed people affected by COVID-19.](#)

Work and Income support

The beginning of the year can be a tough time for parents who are faced with many costs and it is important you are aware of what assistance you may be able to get from Work and Income. These are available to people on a low income as well as those on a benefit.

Check what you might get here

- [School costs](#)
- [Out of School Care and Recreation \(OSCAR\) Subsidy](#)
- [Other Childcare Assistance](#)
- [School and Year Start-up Payment \(for people getting Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit\)](#)
- [Help with living costs \(including food and rent/mortgage\)](#)

Use the links above or call 0800 559 009 to find out more, or to apply.

MoneyTalks can assist with [free budgeting and debt help](#)

The Ministry of Education has some helpful information on their [Parents and Whānau website](#) to support your tamariki to get back to school. There is also a very important reminder about how you can [take care of yourself](#).

While this might all feel a little overwhelming at times, we know that all these measures will help our children return to school, reconnect with whānau and friends and do what they enjoy.

We are also here to help. Please get in touch if you have any concerns or need help in any way [Katie Hills](#) or [Susan Thompson](#)

See you soon!



Dairy Flat School Staff

