

Dear Whānau

We know that as parents you have concerns about your children attending school at the moment, some of which may be due to what you are seeing in the media about other countries.

We are following all the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health guidelines and have made a decision on the following:

- We will **not** hold full school assemblies for the remainder of this term. Children’s learning and achievements will be celebrated in the syndicates and Kapa Haka activities, waiata and stories will be shared in classes.
- We **will** still be celebrating our wheels morning on Friday 20th March. I will work with a group of Sapphire students to set this up and then each block will come out individually to have a go on the course we make.
 - Emerald 9.00 - 9.30am
 - Moonstone 9.30 - 10.00am
 - Sapphire 10.00 - 11.00am
- We **will** still hold our learning conversations in Week 10 but will give parents the option of online or telephonic conversations too. More information about these will come out on Friday.
- We **will** be keeping to school routines as much as possible to ensure that children feel safe and secure and we **will** continue with our daily procedures around hand washing and cold and flu protocols

At Birchville there’s a simple rule:

- If your children are unwell (whether or not their illness relates to COVID-19) they should stay at home.
- If your children are well they should continue to attend school.

We will **not** be providing home learning to families that choose to take children out of school. This is too much to ask teachers on top of their existing workload and whilst children are able to attend school.

If you make a decision for your children to remain at home indefinitely then it is necessary for you to contact the Ministry of Education and apply for home schooling.

<https://parents.education.govt.nz/primary-school/schooling-in-nz/home-education/>

Whilst we are seeing large-scale school shutdowns elsewhere in the world, in New Zealand we still have no community transmission. Consequently any decisions about school closures will be made on a case by case basis. The article on the front page of the Leader this morning supports this.

Schools continue to be safe and the best place for all children to continue their learning.

Ngā mihi nui

The Birchville Kaiako and Board of Trustees

