

Wesley College Hostels

COVID Protection Framework RED – Whānau information

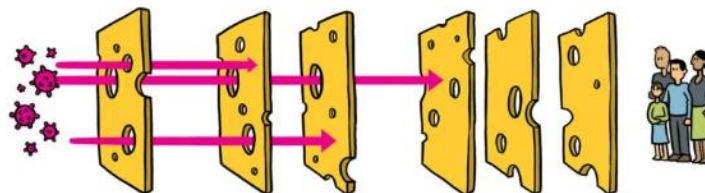
Dear parents and whanau,

As you will be aware we will begin the school year in Red setting under the Covid Protection Framework. As many of the communications outline, it is a matter of when rather than if the school community is affected by Covid-19. We appreciate for many this will cause a degree of uncertainty. This information is designed to ease these concerns and ensure that we, you and your child have shared expectations with regards to boarding operations and processes under the Red setting.

Based on international and local evidence and experience, the risk of COVID-19 transmission within secondary school setting is considered relatively low, however there are some increased risks associated with living in a residential setting.

Widespread vaccination and wearing of face coverings are effective ways to reduce risk of transmission in these settings. Can we make a plea now that if your son is not vaccinated that you consider doing so prior to returning to the hostel.

There are many things that we as a school and hostel can do to further reduce the risk and impact of a COVID-19 case in our school and hostel. It is useful to conceptualise this as having layers of preventative measures in place to protect staff and students, as the cheese model below explains. The more layers of protection in place (eg, vaccination, ventilation, face coverings etc.), the harder it is for the virus to get through.



To help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, we will:

- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
- Create a culture where face covering wearing is normalised, even though current government requirements do not require boarding schools to implement face coverings.
- Support access to COVID-19 vaccinations for all staff and eligible students

- Maintain physical distancing as much as possible
- Encourage good hygiene practices
 - Hand hygiene
 - Cough and sneeze etiquette
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, including cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces, as well as regular cleaning
- Ensure students or staff members with COVID-19 symptoms get a COVID-19 test and remain at home until a negative result is received and they are symptom free for 24 hours, or are placed in isolation as soon as practicable.
- Reduce mixing of students and staff
- Follow public health advice (testing, self-isolation) for any cases and contacts within our school community
- Manage school events, sports and cultural activities in a manner that prioritises the safety of our students and staff at all times

Key information you need to know

We appreciate that some will want to have the opportunity to chat and ask additional questions which we welcome. It is important to us that all students and whānau feel comfortable returning to the boarding school.

Vaccination – All staff are vaccinated and comply with the vaccination mandate for schools and educational settings. We cannot stress enough the importance of vaccination in a residential setting. In order to operate safely, plan for outings and respond appropriately to any potential exposure event we need to know student’s vaccination status.

My Vaccine Pass and NZ Covid Tracer App – Students will need to be able to show their vaccination status and be able to sign in to public places using the NZ Covid Tracer app. You as parents, should you need to come onsite will also be required to sign in using the Covid Tracer App as well as show your own proof of vaccination for any school gathering and event that is not considered core curriculum.

Isolation – As parents and whānau you will be required to collect your child at the earliest possible convenience should they be required to isolate under public health orders. We appreciate that for some this may be difficult and we strongly encourage you to have a backup plan of a residence of a family member or friend here locally in Auckland.

A key part of our response to Covid is having adequate plans in place to isolate students and staff should they show signs and symptoms. This without doubt is one of our biggest challenges given some are a long way from home and the nature in which students live, go to school and interact in the wider community. We are converting an area into isolation a zone so we can be as flexible as possible in our response. We are also well aware that in some circumstance’s students may need to isolate overnight due to geographical issues, or other unforeseen events that we are sure will come up.

In light of this we will be using house 9B as an Isolation building for all of term one. This allows us to use a building that has easy bathroom access, good ventilation and single cell rooms. Having a space to maintain public health is of more importance at this time.

Sick students at home - should your child show signs and symptoms of being sick whilst at home please do not send them back to the boarding school. This creates pressure on our system and they will need to be isolated immediately. Should this be the case the odds are reasonably good that you will have to turn around and collect him.

Hostels linked to a confirmed case- Given it is a residential setting, Public health officials will make decisions about how to manage the case, including whether they may need to move into managed isolation, or return home to self-isolate. It is unlikely any case will remain in the hostel, however, we do have plans in place to manage isolation while working with health officials, the boarder and yourselves to develop a plan.

Will the school or hostel close? – The school and boarding school will do its utmost to stay open at all times. However, you need to be aware should staffing or illness levels dictate, we may be forced to close the school and/or boarding hostel in order to maintain public health and continuity of education. The College is very well set up for learning from home and will be sending home information regarding this in the coming weeks.

For students who are required to isolate at home due to exposure or infection, the College will provide online learning.

Face Coverings – At Red, face coverings are mandated indoors (at school) at all times for:

- all students
- all staff / kaimahi
- all visitors in classrooms or in communal areas
- students 12 and over on school and public transport

Even though this is not a requirement in the hostel we will be encouraging students where practical to wear face coverings to mitigate any possible exposure. This means:

- staff (who are able) will be wearing face coverings
- students will be required to wear face coverings when in communal areas (TV lounge, common room)

Visitors – no unnecessary visitors are allowed onsite. Unfortunately, this means parents and whānau should drop their son to the boarding school without entering the building. Should you need to enter the building please sign in, wear a mask and keep your visit to as short a time frame as possible. Please also maintain a physical distance of at least 1m from all others.

When should you return?

Year 9 students are joining us on Wednesday 2 February from 9.00am.

Years 10/11 girls/12/13 please be in the boarding house between 3.00-5.00pm on Wednesday 2nd February.

Y11 boys you have been allocated times to come in the hostel.

Boarders are to return to the hostel from weekend leave on Sundays, they are to remain there until the following weekend. When picking your child up please remain in your vehicle. There is to be no unnecessary leave during the school week.

As advice changes we will make necessary adjustments to our plan. We thank you in advance for your support during what could be a challenging time. Further health and safety measures are outlined below. Please read these carefully and discuss with your child.

We are very much looking forward to seeing you all in the coming week. Should your child not be returning, or you wish to discuss your child's individual circumstances please contact us as soon as possible.

Kind regards

Chris Field