

New Zealand moves into Phase 3 of the Omicron Response
What this means for Fordell School

Kia ora koutou,

New Zealand's COVID-19 response continues amid much larger numbers of daily cases.

You may well have seen the headlines in the media about the numbers of cases being seen in schools. Please don't be alarmed by this. It is only natural as cases in our community increase, they will appear in our school. We have good systems in place to respond to this and to keep any spread of the virus – should it appear – to a minimum. This is why we remain open at Red. It's great for a child's wellbeing and learning to be at school with their friends and school staff, therefore we continue to follow our systems in keeping everyone as safe as possible.

Your job remains the same, too: please continue to keep a close watch of your whānau/family for anyone with symptoms. If unwell, please stay at home and get advice about getting a COVID-19 test.

Symptoms of COVID-19

- A new or worsening cough
- Sneezing and runny nose
- A fever
- Temporary loss of smell or altered sense of taste
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath

Less common symptoms include diarrhoea, headache, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, malaise, chest pain, abdominal pain, joint pain, or confusion/irritability.

*With Phase 3 of the Omicron response, **the key change is that it is only confirmed cases and their household contacts who need to self-isolate.** Everyone else, including those who may have had close contact with the case but aren't in the household, must continue to monitor really closely for any symptoms of COVID-19 and can continue to attend school/work.*

Rapid antigen tests (RATs) are now being used to diagnose COVID-19 as well as PCR tests. This means that you will get an almost immediate test result back if a RAT is used.

If anyone in your whānau/family is confirmed as having COVID-19, you will be asked to notify your close contacts yourself. Please get in touch with us as soon as you can if your child has tested positive for COVID-19.

Transmission of COVID-19 is still most likely to happen in your home – so please keep doing all those good things to keep your whānau/family safe. Wash your hands, get lots of fresh air, cover any coughs and sneezes, clean surfaces regularly, and seek advice if anyone is not feeling well. Please wear a mask when you are out and about. There is information online to help your family [prepare to isolate](#) if you need to. We have included with this letter the isolation plan from the Covid-19 site to help you be prepared.

The most important advice we can give to keep your whānau/family safe is to act as if everyone has COVID-19. More than a third of people who have COVID-19 will not have any symptoms if they have had three doses of the vaccine. Please think about who you visit and what health measures you can put in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Getting three doses of the vaccine will really help you to do that. Research has shown that compared with being unvaccinated, three doses of the vaccine will mean you are 67% less likely to be infected with Omicron and 93% less likely to get Delta. If you can't get COVID you can't pass it on. (Ashley Bloomfield 22/2/2022 quoting American Medical Association Journal).

Finally, we know how hard the impacts on COVID-19 have been for many families in New Zealand. If you know of a family in your community who is struggling, please encourage them to reach out for support for example to access food, medicine, or access financial support: [Help is available - COVID-19 Health Hub](#). (<https://covid19.health.nz/advice/help-available>)

If you have any concerns about sending your child to school, please do get in touch. We are here to help.

Aku mihi,

Yvette Moorhouse

Principal

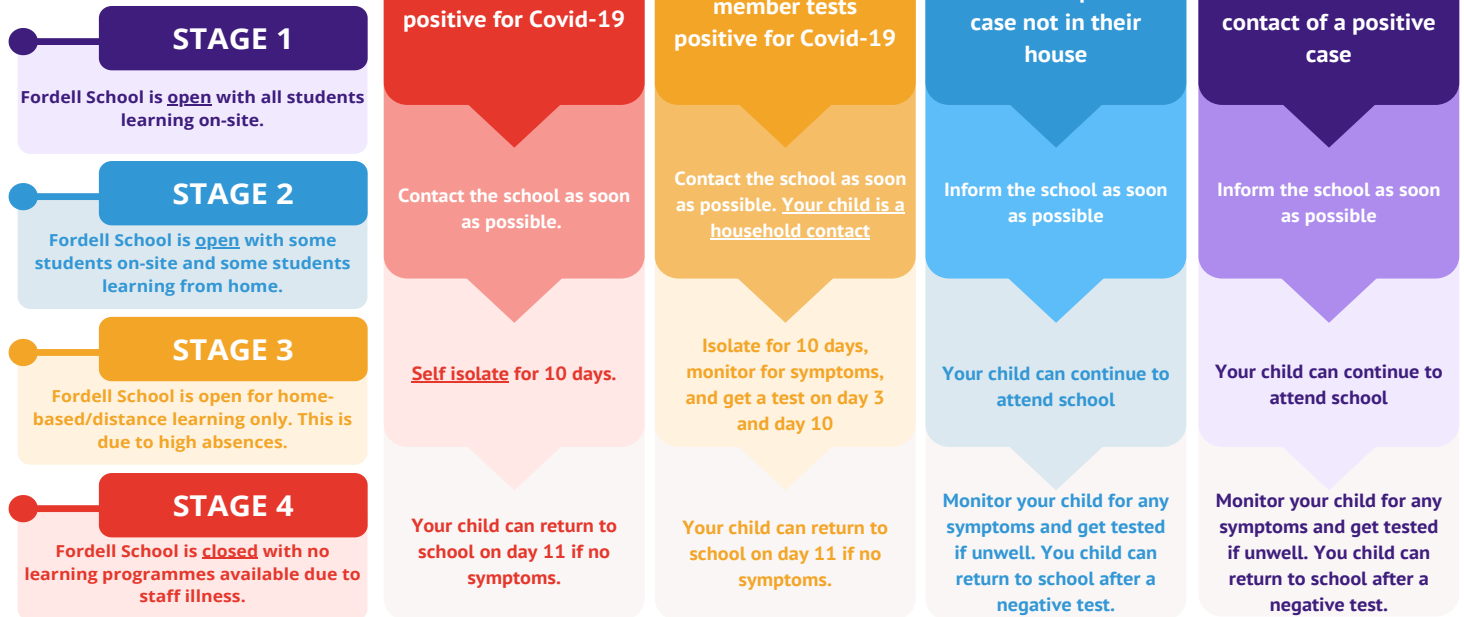
Fordell School

principal@fordell.school.nz

COVID CASE MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

As we navigate the Phase 3 of the Covid-19 Omicron outbreak, there may be cases that start to arise in our Fordell School community. Communication with our school community, once a case is confirmed, will be guided by Public Health and the Ministry of Education. Planning for the possibility of absent staff and/or students is complex and will require flexibility and patience from everyone involved in and around our school. The information on this page is a step by step guide of what to do for your child and who to notify as cases emerge.

Fordell Schools response to the Omicron outbreak will happen in four stages depending on case numbers at school and in the community.



PHASE 3 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Q** Who do we advise if our child tests positive for Covid-19? **A** Please contact the Principal at school on **3427828** or email principal@fordell.school.nz as soon as possible.
- Q** My child has tested positive for Covid-19. What does this mean? **A**
- Your child (and the household) will need to self-isolate for 10 days
 - Testing will happen on Day Three and Day Ten.
 - **If at school**, we will anonymously notify wider school community of a case to encourage watching for symptoms
 - **If at home**, your whānau will be close contacts and also need to self-isolate as per the guidelines
- Q** My child is a close contact of a case within our household. What does this mean? **A** In Phase 3, being a **household contact** means your child (along with all other members of the household) must self-isolate for ten days. Testing will happen on Day Three and Day Ten. Your child can stop isolating and return to school after a negative Day 10 test.
- Q** My child is close contact of a case not associated with our household. Can they come to school? **A** Your child can come to school. Anyone who is a close contact of a non-household member does not need to self-isolate. You are advised to watch for symptoms. Self-isolate and get tested should symptoms develop.
- Q** My child is self-isolating. What school-work will be available? **A** Make contact with their teacher and work learning activities will be available for whānau to access. If there are situations where staff are isolating as well as a class, we will shift to a distance learning programme. If a student is unwell, there is no expectation for them to do any work.

Updated guide to self-isolation



You will need to self-isolate from others if you:

are positive for COVID-19

live with a positive case

You must isolate at home or in suitable alternative accommodation. If you test positive for COVID-19, a health professional will help you decide if managed isolation is suitable for you.

Isolate for 10 days from when you test positive

Isolate for 10 days

No further tests required unless directed to

Tests on Day 3 and Day 10

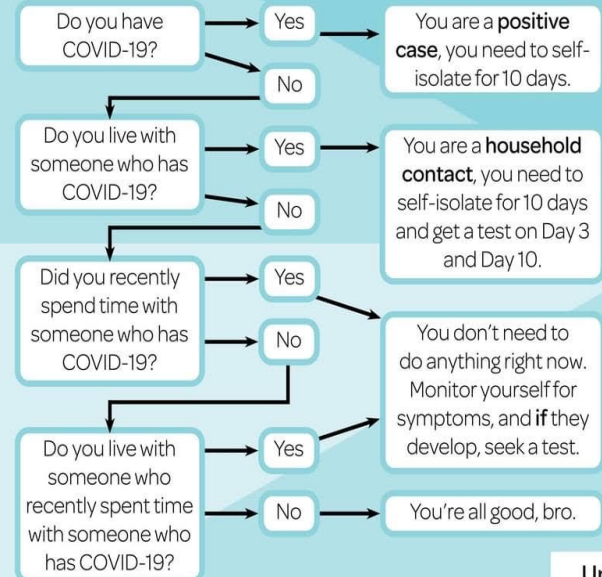
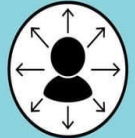
Financial support may be available - check our website to find out what you may be eligible for: [Covid19.govt.nz/financial-support/](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/financial-support/)

This information is accurate as at 24 February 2022. However, it may be updated if phases of the Omicron response change. For the most up to date information, please visit our website at www.covid19.govt.nz

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What type of contact are you?



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Have the kōrero - make a plan!

COVID-19: Our Isolation Plan

Being ready helps to keep us all safe

If someone in your household gets COVID-19, your whole household will need to isolate until everyone has fully recovered (3 days symptom-free).

Omicron spreads fast - everyone in the house may catch the virus.

So be ready, make a plan and have a kōrero.

→ WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAN FOR

- ☐ Getting food and supplies - organise with friends, whānau or neighbours to do contactless drop offs.
- ☐ Mahi work and/or kura school(s) - prepare to work and/or study from home.
- ☐ What happens with children, other dependants, or shared custody arrangements?
- ☐ If you require care services - decide if you need to isolate together.
- ☐ How will you try and minimise the spread to household members who are not unwell?
- ☐ Find activities to help pass the time.

→ KNOW AND SHARE YOUR PLANS

- ☐ Kōrero together - ensure everyone in the household, including kids, knows what will happen when you need to isolate.
- ☐ Share plans with those supporting and helping you (or who you are supporting).

→ IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Most of us can recover safely at home. If you need advice or your symptoms worsen, call your doctor, health provider or Healthline on 0800 358 5453.
- If you are having trouble breathing, call 111 immediately.
- Have personal information ready, including: full names, birth dates/ages, NHI numbers, medical conditions and prescriptions, GPs/health providers and other emergency contact details
- Prepare instructions for pets, plants or paying bills, just in case you need to recover away from home.

→ STAY CONNECTED

We are all in this together, and we will get through together.

- Stay connected - arrange regular catch-ups with your whānau, friends and community. If you are isolating, make sure these are online or by phone.
- Support your friends, whānau and workmates to make their plans to get ready.
- Find out what your community is doing - is there a group making meals to freeze, sharing planning tips, or just staying in the know?

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☐ Checklist: Get things ready to isolate

* check expiry dates and follow instructions, especially with medications

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tissues | <input type="checkbox"/> Paracetamol and/or ibuprofen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soap | <input type="checkbox"/> Drinks and other medications that help with cold and flu-like symptoms, like lemon tea with honey, cough syrup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitiser | <input type="checkbox"/> Practice healthy habits like coughing/sneezing into elbow and washing hands to reduce the spread of germs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Masks | <input type="checkbox"/> Could ventilation be improved? Even opening windows will help to get rid of the virus. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning products & gloves | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rubbish bags (try and have separate bags for tissues before putting in main rubbish bags) | |

→ Ways to feel better if you're māuiui unwell

For tiredness, fever, aches and pains:

- Get plenty of sleep and rest to help your body recover
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids
- Take medication like paracetamol or ibuprofen

For coughs, sore throats or blocked noses, try:

- Hot lemon and honey or kawakawa tea
- Saltwater gargling
- Chest vapour rubs
- Nose and throat treatments, like sprays
- Cough syrup or soothing lozenges

→ Looking after your mental wellbeing

- Try to be kind and gentle with each other as isolating together for some weeks may have its ups and downs
- Acknowledge your feelings - becoming anxious or stressed is a normal response when times get challenging
- Try and stick to routines where possible
- Put a limit on any time online and get some fresh air
- If you start to feel overwhelmed, speak with a trained counsellor any time, day or night - free call or text on 1737
- For more advice: [Covid19.govt.nz/mental-wellbeing](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/mental-wellbeing)

→ Contacts for support services

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Healthline: 0800 358 5453 • Healthline: 0800 611 116 (for advice on other health matters) • PlunketLine: 0800 933 922 (for health advice regarding babies or children) • Family Services: 0800 211 211 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health support: call or text 1737 • Alcohol Drug Helpline: 0800 787 797 • Work and Income: 0800 559 009 • Rural Support Trust: 0800 787 254 • Business support: North Island 0800 500 362 and South Island 0800 505 096 |
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For more information, head to: [Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)