



Whānau Pānui – 5 April 2022

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COVID update

You may be aware that the COVID-19 settings have changed as of today. Yesterday it was announced that the country will remain at the Red setting until at least Thursday 14 April, which is the last day of the school term.

The changes have been made as Public Health advice says that the high vaccination rate and the other protections in place, like mask wearing, are enough for most places and people.

Thanks to everyone for their support of the ways we need to work within the framework.

A summary of the changes to the COVID-19 settings:

- The removal of vaccination mandates for education workers will take effect from 11.59pm Monday 4 April.
- Removal of the My Vaccine Pass from the COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic light system).
- No requirement to display QR code posters (although we will keep them just in case, we need them again).

With the removal of vaccination mandates for staff and volunteers, the school is now like any other workplace and is required to conduct a health and safety assessment to review whether any work (paid or unpaid) in our school or kura requires someone to be vaccinated.

We will carry this out as soon as practicable and follow the guidance from [WorkSafe](#) but it is expected that only some roles that carry particular risk, such as working with immunocompromised students.

If you have any specific concerns about staff – in the future – not being fully vaccinated, **then please contact me**, so this can be considered in our health and safety review.

As mentioned, this may be because your child is at significant risk if infected. To be clear, this is what would normally have to happen as part of an individual health and safety plan. This will require medical advice and we will work through a plan with you to assure safety.

The COVID Protection Framework

Everywhere:

RED	ORANGE	GREEN
Face masks required in most indoor settings	Face masks required in many indoor settings	Face masks encouraged indoors
Indoor capacity limits of 200 people. No outdoor capacity limits	No indoor or outdoor capacity limits	No indoor or outdoor capacity limits
Self-isolate for 7 days if you test positive or live with someone who has COVID-19	Self-isolate for 7 days if you test positive or live with someone who has COVID-19	Self-isolate for 7 days if you test positive or live with someone who has COVID-19

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Unite against COVID-19



Red at School

- **There is no change to masks in education settings.** Medical-grade masks remain a requirement for **all staff and students** working indoors at Years 4-13, and **they are required on buses and other similar transport** (e.g., school vans, groups in cars, etc.).
- **Visitors must continue to wear a mask inside.**
- Masks will not be required outdoors, unless in some situations where it is very difficult to have any space, such as lining up in the canteen line.
- Capacity limits will be removed for outdoor events and activities.
- *Indoor capacity limits for extra-curricular activities increase to 200 people, or a maximum capacity based on the maximum number of people who could occupy the space if each person was one metre apart (whichever is lower).*



Orange at school

- Masks are strongly encouraged to be worn when indoors and are **required for children aged 12 and over on school transport.**
- As at Red, there will be no mask requirements when outdoors.
- All parents, caregivers, whānau, and other visitors are encouraged to wear face masks on site when indoors.
- There will be no outdoor capacity limits.
- Indoor capacity limits are also removed. However, for non-curriculum related events and activities you are strongly encouraged to use allocated seating for large events (such as those with more than 500 people) or apply a maximum capacity limit based on the maximum number of people who could occupy the space if each person was one metre apart.

Green at school

- There will be no face mask requirements and no capacity or gathering limits in any setting, indoors or outdoors.

- at school and engaging in learning with their friends.
- Thanks for continuing to keep a close watch of your whānau for anyone with symptoms. If unwell, please stay at home and get advice about getting a COVID-19 test.

Attending School

- As we all know, it's great for any child's wellbeing and learning to be **at school with their friends, teachers, and other school staff.** You also know that we have very good systems in place to keep everyone as safe as possible.
- It is great to see that attendance is trending upwards again, as absences due to COVID-19 are reducing.

If you have any concerns about sending your child to school, please get in touch – our team is here to help. We want children to be

“Every Day Counts”

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem that much but...

If your child misses	that equals...	which is...	and over 13 years of school that's...
1 day a fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 Years
3 days a week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

The effect of absence on progress

A whole year has 365 days; a school year has 190 days. That leaves 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping and other appointments.

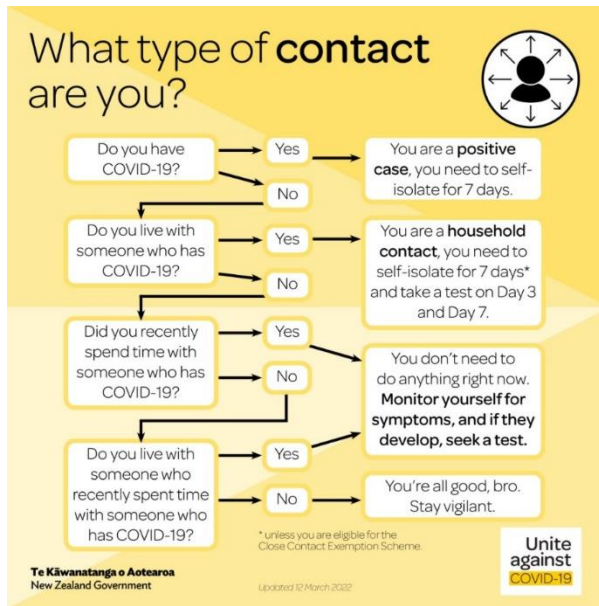
No Absence	10 days absence	12 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence	38 days absence
190 days of education	180 days of education	178 days of education	171 days of education	161 days of education	152 days of education
100%	95%	94%	90%	85%	80.00%
Very Good		Worrying		Serious Concern	

Best chance of progress and success. More likely to be socially happy.

Harder to make progress or experience success. Harder to make friend and more likely to be less happy at school.

This is **persistent absence** and Very hard to make progress and social outcomes are often poor. Referral to Attendance Services is likely.

Guidance about COVID-19 Cases and Contacts



Remember, **Day 0 for isolation is the day symptoms began or the day the positive test was taken** (whichever came first). You should then count your seven days from there.

The Ministry of Health has provided further clarity on when household contacts should isolate.

- If someone becomes a confirmed COVID-19 case, then that case and all other people in their household must **isolate for seven days**.
- If someone else in the household, then tests positive for COVID-19 during those seven days:
 - the **isolation period for that person only re-sets** – that person must isolate for an additional seven days from the day they test positive, or symptoms begin
 - other household contacts who do not test positive are still able to leave isolation after the original case has completed their seven days isolation.

For the next 10 days after a household completes seven days isolation, evidence shows that due to their exposure to COVID-19 they are less likely to catch or transmit the virus. This means:

- if someone else in the household tests positive within those 10 days, **the whole household will not have to re-isolate, only the positive case**
- if someone else in the household tests positive and it has been more than 10 days since the household completed isolation, household contacts should re-

isolate along with the new case for seven days.

- Any person who has had COVID-19 within the last 90 days/three months **will not need to isolate** as a household contact **unless they become symptomatic and test positive again**. This is because reinfection rates for people who have had COVID-19 are low for the three months after they have the virus.

Uniform – Winter Uniform (Terms 2-3)

The cooler weather is just around the corner, and we are seeing the transition to the winter uniform that is required in Term 2.

For more information, please refer to our [Uniform requirements on our website](#).



We appreciate the support of whānau, / parents, caregivers, and taiohi / students in following these expectations and expressing respect for our school.

And like any team, we want to have our uniform being worn consistently.

Correct uniform is expected from the time of leaving home to the time of returning home. The overall standard is that taiohi / students appear "neat, tidy and clean".

A short list of items to get right by Term 2

- Shoes are black polishable and smart shoes
- THS Socks for boys or black tights for girls
- Get a jersey or a jacket (see below)
- Get plain, logo-free hats (black or navy blue). Popular hats are \$60. A plain logo-free option is \$6 to \$10.



New Jersey (Triple Tech™)

You may be aware that we have sourced a new THS jersey that is warmer, more comfortable, and less expensive at \$99. Please enquire at Snowden's.

The jersey is called a [Triple Tech™ jersey](#) and has a tighter knit and a polypropylene (thermal) comfort layer.

Developed and manufactured exclusively by NZ Knit Co, TRIPLE-TECH™ is the fabric from which we manufacture New Zealand's ultimate school jersey. **Hardwearing 80/20 wool/nylon on the outside and 100% COOLMAX on the inside**, TRIPLE-TECH™ fabric is soft against the skin, breathable, moisture wicking with excellent shape retention and warmth.

The regular soft-shell jacket is still available, as an extra layer or alternative.

Non-uniform items

For clarity we do not expect, and will confiscate other items, such as hoodies and other non-uniform items.

Hoodies and visible thermals are **casual** and **informal** and can appear untidy. These may be confiscated, as per the policy and uniform procedures.

Any **thermals or undergarments must not be visible** whilst wearing the school uniform. There are **short sleeve options for thermals** that will keep the core body temperature warm.

If it is not visible, then it does not affect the overall look of the uniform, and it is permitted. Otherwise, it is not.

Support for uniform and other needs

We appreciate that some of our whānau experience difficulties in obtaining correct school uniform items and other requirements for school (such as stationery and devices).

We are here to help, so please contact Student Support Officer / Kaimahi Tautoko, Mrs Stephanie Hinson at studentsupport@thameshigh.school.nz or contact your child's Rōpu or Whānau kaitiaki.

Student Support can advise you about items of uniform that we have had donated (cleaned) or that we may be able to obtain for you, using our Student Equity Trust Fund.

We still have many basic stationery packs available, please enquire at Student Support.

If you have items that you wish to donate, then please contact Student Support.

Changes to phone use

Last year the board sought feedback about the impact of phones on wellbeing and learning. Some outcomes of the survey last year were:

- Overall, 67% of respondents were concerned or very concerned about the impact of phones on wellbeing, anxiety, and online content.
- Parents were more concerned than students, but still over 50% of students were concerned.
- There was more support for increasing the limits on phone use than the current settings.

Following this consultation and exploring the issue further, the board have decided **that phones cannot not be used at school during school hours** (8.45 am to 3.10 pm). This includes break time. This is a change to the current settings of the code of conduct of the school, under the behaviour policy. The change will take effect once the management of the school believe we are ready. We have sought feedback from our Student Council and staff on this. For instance, what will happen to phones that are being used in these hours? After warnings, how long will phones be held in safe keeping? A day? A week?

To give more time to consult on the management of this decision with staff and provide education (advance notice) about the new expectations, we will decide on the changing date, which may be the start of Term Two.

The board has made this decision as it is concerned about impact of phones on the **wellbeing and behaviour of students at school**. Several issues stem from the use of phones during the school day,

The board is also concerned about the ongoing **distractions to learning**. In terms of using phones for learning, students can bring their own learning device (laptop) or use a school-provided one if they do not have one. This consideration was important to make sure that learning is supported.

The other main reason is the board are concerned that the **social interaction** at school is being affected by using phones, as opposed to talking and playing games and other such activities. The board believes that students should be encouraged to have positive face-to-face conversations and interactions, and the other forms of interaction can occur outside the school.

Having guidelines that clear and without exceptions will mean there is no leeway and therefore scope for debate.

The board explored the issue and found that many schools are taking this stance for the same reasons this has been reviewed. Reports in the media show the impact of such changes are positive. Schools that are relatively nearby that have taken this stance include Paeroa College, Waihi College and Hauraki Plains College.



In terms of needing phones to communicate with parents, then that is possible outside school hours, and any urgent communications can be relayed through the school office as needed.

Parents Forum

One of our key aims is to improve our connections and communication with our community. With Covid-19 restrictions and other interruptions there has been a delay to the start of our hui for 2022.

We propose the first hui for 2022 to be on **Monday 16 May**. The hui will be on 'focused' topics, events, and general business.

If you are interested in being involved, please email Tracey Reed (Principal's PA) at traceyreed@thameshigh.school.nz

Recommended reading - website

[Attendance, absences, etc. including exit passes](#)

[Behaviour expectations](#)

[Stationery and BYOD \(bring your own device\)](#)

[Uniform](#) – including shoes that are allowed and not

[Our School board and meetings](#)

School Policies - SchoolDocs

A reminder that aside from our website, more detailed information about our policies and procedures is hosted on SchoolDocs.

We invite you to visit the site <https://thameshigh.schooldocs.co.nz> (note that there's no "www."). Our username is "thameshigh" and password "sealey"

There is a simple search tool to help you find what you may be looking for.

As always, I welcome comments.

Please email principal@thameshigh.school.nz or call 07 868 8688

Ngā manaakitanga

Michael Hart
Tumuaki / Principal

Key Dates

As always, dates may be subject to change and will be advised.

Thu 14 Apr	End of Term 1
Fri 15 Apr	Good Friday
Mon 18 Apr	Easter Monday
Mon 25 Apr	ANZAC Day
Term 2:	Monday 2 May to Friday 8 July
Mon 9 May	Teacher Only Day
	– NCEA Accord Day
Tues 10 May	THS Cross Country
Mon 30 May	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Mon 6 Jun	Queen's Birthday
Wed 22 Jun	Year 9 Vision and Hearing checks
Mon 27 Jun	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Fri 8 July	End of Term 2
Term 3:	Monday 25 July to Friday 30 September
Mon 1 Aug	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Wed 10 Aug	Sport Team photos
Mon 23 Aug (changed)	Teacher Only Day
Mon 29 Aug	- NCEA Accord Day
Mon 5-23 Sept	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Mon 26 Sept	Triennial school board elections
	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Fri 30 Sept	End of Term 3
Term 4:	Monday 17 October to Friday 9 December 2022.
Mon 24 Oct	Labour Day
Mon 31 Oct	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Wed 2 Nov	Senior Prize giving
Mon 7 Nov-	NCEA Exams
Fri 2 Dec	
Fri 25 Nov	Teacher Only Day
	- NCEA Accord Day
Mon 28	Teacher Only Day
	- NCEA Accord Day
Fri 9 Dec	Last day Term 4