



30 September 2021

Tena tatou katoa

As you know, in New Zealand we are well underway with our largest ever vaccination campaign, and free COVID-19 vaccines are being provided for everyone who is eligible (currently ages 12 and over). At the time of this letter, 77 percent of the population have had their first dose, and 43 percent of the population are fully vaccinated.

I understand you may have questions about our staff being vaccinated. Though the Ministry of Health advises that everyone who is eligible should get a vaccination, no one in New Zealand is legally required to get the vaccine. A person's vaccine status also remains private information. While they are encouraged to be vaccinated, our teachers are not obliged to share their vaccination status and have the same right to make a choice about their COVID-19 vaccination as everybody else.

While high rates of vaccination in our community are very important, there are also a large range of mitigations in place in our school to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including staff and students staying away if they are unwell, regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces and keeping rooms well-ventilated.

It is also important to know that public health experts have said that compared to other places, schools and early learning services are not environments where we have seen significant spread of COVID-19. Household members and work colleagues who are in close contact with people with COVID-19 are the most common sources of transmission.

When considering vaccination, we encourage you to make sure you have the right information about what the vaccine is, why it's important, and what the benefits are. If you know anyone who is hesitant about getting the vaccine, there is some really great information available on the [Unite Against COVID-19](#), [Ministry of Health](#) and [Karawhiua](#) websites. Please check it out.

We'd also remind you that the vaccine is also just one part of keeping everyone safe. We'd encourage you all to keep doing all the things you've already been doing – scan in everywhere you go, wash your hands often, and regularly clean and disinfect surfaces. Together, we can continue to prevent spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Ngā mihi,

Nicky Brell & Staff