

COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions

This information is to support our families with any COVID-19 queries, and what you need to do if there is a school connected case. We know that if we are advised of a school connected case that this will end up in disruptions to your lives and work, so in advance we thank you for your understanding and support. Please note that we are not the “health experts” but hope these FAQs help with some of the questions you may be asking yourself. Please also note that this information is subject to change, based on any updated guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Health.

Who do we advise if my child tests positive with Covid-19?

Please contact Lynda Taylor as soon as possible after you have been informed of a positive test result. Contact: 033243493 or principal@leeston.school.nz

How do we work out who is a close contact?

There is detailed guidance around this and a range of criteria. Without going into detail, because our students spend a long time in the same classroom, this then fits the criteria for being a close contact.

My child is a close contact. What does this mean?

This means your child has had contact with a positive case at our school. They will need to isolate for 7 days and be tested on day #5 (note - the 7 days start from the date that they were in contact with a positive case at school. Because of the time lag between the confirmed case/test results, this may mean that your child only needs to remain home for a smaller number of days. The day #5 test is likely when you would receive the notification of being a close contact. We will advise you further regarding testing and isolation dates.

If my child is a close contact, does the rest of our household also need to isolate?

For the most up to date information about what household members of close Contacts should do, please see www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19#actions

What actions does the school take when there is a positive case?

We follow a response plan based on guidance from the Ministry of Education. This involves:

- Seeking confirmation of the positive case, and when the infectious period was.
- If this was on a school day, we then work through contact tracing.
- We will advise classes that are close contacts, via text/email initially, and then follow up phone call.
- If this occurs during a school day, we will request that you come and collect your child (and their siblings) as soon as you are able to. Arrive at the office, then wait outside by your car. We will bring your child (ren) out to you safely.
- Rest of school advised of the case, and become casual contacts

Do I need to provide anything before my child is able to return to school?

No. As long as your child has completed the required isolation period and is no longer symptomatic, they can return to school.

A member of our household (not my child) is a close contact and is showing no symptoms. Can my child still attend school?

Yes. Your child is able to attend school, as they are a casual contact and there are no symptoms. Monitor for symptoms and if they develop your child needs to have a COVID test and the whole family needs to isolate.

We received the letter saying that my child is NOT a close contact. What do I need to do?

Most importantly, your child is still able to attend school

- You and your family should watch for symptoms.
- If any develop, get tested immediately
- Then, stay home until you receive the result
- Please keep an eye out for school communications.

A member of our household has tested positive. What does this mean?

This will mean that your child will be a close contact and also needs to isolate. Ministry of Health will provide more guidance.

Is it safe to send my child to school?

Our processes involve working through a detailed contact tracing assessment. If your child is not a close contact, then school is still open for them and we encourage you to send them to school as much as you can. As you know, our students have missed a lot of teaching and learning over the past 2 years, and we really want to see them at school as much as possible. Our school health and safety plan for RED does contain a large number of protections.

My child needs to isolate at home. What support will school provide around teaching and learning?

Our support and response will also depend on whether class teachers are also isolating at home. If our teachers are also isolating, they will be in touch to offer our distance/home learning support. If our teachers are still at school, they will look to connect with you and discuss learning ideas. Our website also has some useful links for home learning.

My child has tested positive for COVID-19. What does this mean?

This will mean that your child will need to isolate. All family members will be close contacts and also need to isolate. Ministry of Health will provide more guidance.

What are you doing to keep my child safe?

All staff, volunteers, contractors on site are vaccinated. Hand sanitiser is available in each room. Teachers ensure that there is good ventilation in the classrooms. Staff and students in Year 4 and above are wearing masks, and children in Year 3 are strongly encouraged to do so. Students in Year 4 and above are wearing masks on school transport. We are following Ministry guidelines regarding our school events.

My child is anxious or scared. What advice do you have?

Our staff are working hard to make school fun, safe and a place of learning. We encourage you to focus on the things that they can do to help - mask-wearing, washing hands, getting a test (if required). This website has some useful tips:

<https://www.kidshealth.org.nz>

All our current COVID-19 information can be found at the top of our school website (www.leeston.school.nz) under COVID-19 updates.