

12 November 2021

He tangi te tītī  
He tangi te kākā  
He tangi hoki ahau.  
Te hei mauri ora

Tēnā koutou katoa,

### **Mandate Update from Taikura School Board and Proprietors Trust**

Thank you for the robust communications we have received so far, we are grateful these have been communicated respectfully. Questions raised are addressed in the updated FAQ's sheet attached to this communication.

Over the last week, we have sought and continue to seek advice, clarification and guidance from various authorities so that our update is as full and clear as is possible. We are doing our utmost to work through this in an equitable way.

We recognise the importance of maintaining accurate and informative communication and so we are sharing this update with the entire school community.

The School Board, Proprietors Trust and Management team fully support informed choice on vaccination and recognise that individuals and whānau are free to make their own decisions. We recognise too, that individuals' rights extend only so far as to not impinge on the basic rights to health and safety of others and so this will, at times, restrict the choices available to people.

It is important to be clear that choices about vaccination are not related to Steiner education or to the special character of our school. The vaccine mandate was not introduced by the school, but by the Government, and our school is required to, and will abide by it, as are all schools in Aotearoa.

For clarity, the mandate does not apply to students, other than a requirement to inform the school of their vaccination status for 12-year-olds and over.

We have raised questions and concerns related to the mandate to the Ministry of Education and SEANZ (Steiner Education Aotearoa New Zealand) SEANZ have since written to the Minister. In addition, the Taikura governance bodies will be writing to the Minister expressing our concerns about the timing and impact of this mandate on our school and kindergartens.

You may wish to send feedback to the Ministry of Education or ask them questions, if so, go to:

Education questions and feedback:

- <https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/contact-us/regional-ministry-contacts/>
- <https://www.education.govt.nz/covid-19/>

Health questions:

- <https://covid19.govt.nz/>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

Our tamariki bring us together, and around them, a community of people dedicated to Steiner education has grown. We have been handed a mandate, and while this is a legal requirement, we are obliged to follow it. We have seen how this issue can divide and polarise a community, it may not be easy to accept differences, but we can work to retain an openness to the other and choose to work together as a community to uphold the Steiner education we treasure for our tamariki.

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Please know that our lines of communication remain open. The situation is dynamic and becoming clearer as the Ministries release further information and our understanding grows. We will continue to keep you, our entire staff and the community updated. All correspondence can be directed via [suzan.bart@taikura.school.nz](mailto:suzan.bart@taikura.school.nz)

### **Mandate Update from Taikura Principal**

Our focus as a Management group is to ensure continuity of learning for our students as well as support and acknowledge all of our staff across our kindergartens and the school. Currently individual conversations are being had with staff who may be impacted by the vaccine mandate and we respect that staff have until the end of Monday to finalise their personal decisions in regards to this.

The Tuesday deadline does not signal the end of employment for any of our staff, but in following the mandate we will not have staff onsite during school hours who have not had at least one vaccination. Support and plans are being put in place for staff while we continue to ensure our students remain the centre of our decision making. Our priority is to ensure that our students' educational journey is able to continue with as little disruption as possible next week and that our curriculum continues to be delivered.

For our parents it is important to confirm that the current vaccination mandate does not restrict parents/caregivers from coming onto our school site for daily drop off and pick up or meetings. We are however still operating under Alert Level 2 restrictions and these have been updated to include the requirement for parents to wear masks while on site alongside scanning or signing in and maintaining distancing. We thank you for the ongoing efforts being made by our parent community in respecting these requirements onsite.

As mentioned previously the ongoing Alert Level 2 restrictions mean that we have had to reimagine our end of year events and activities across the school and kindergarten and we intend to update parents and students of these next week.

The meaning and purpose of the world  
Will be fulfilled if human deeds are done in light of wisdom  
And with a warm and loving heart  
*R Steiner*

Ngā mihi mahana,

Erin Simpson  
Taikura School Board  
Presiding member

Sue Simpson  
Proprietors Trust  
Chairperson

Pippa Caccioppoli  
Taikura School  
Principal