

Principal's Message 26th July

Contributed by Merle Campbell

Welcome back to what promises to be another busy term. I hope everyone has rested and recovered from the winter bugs which affected so many at the end of last term.

Recently the media have focused on student absences from school, saying that 10 percent of absences are due to overseas holidays and that student progress and achievement can be affected. Meaningful learning and valuable family experiences can take place in these special holidays so it is a personal decision and we ask you to email principal@cocklebay.school.nz to inform us of your plans in advance. As required by the Ministry, these absences must be marked as unjustified.

We are required by the Ministry to be informed by parents of reasons for student absences, which are then coded as follows:

J - Justified absence - an approved absence, e.g. a bereavement, national representation in a sporting or cultural event

E - Explained but Unjustified - the absence has been explained but does not fit within the school's policy as a justifiable reason eg staying home to look after a sick sibling

G - Holiday during term time - e.g. when a student is on a New Zealand or overseas holiday during term time.

All schools are required to monitor attendance rates. At CBS, the expectation is that students have an attendance rate of at least 90 percent.

Term 3 typically has lots of "bugs" around and we don't want these to spread. It is important that CBS and its community are able to balance student attendance with the risk of spreading viruses to others in the school. With the winter season upon us it is certain to bring a range of common health problems. Below are some practical ways you can minimise your son's/ daughter's risks of catching such illnesses along with some

guidelines to help you determine if and how long one should stay away from school.

- Keep warm - this can prevent coughs, colds and flu.

- Wash and dry your hands often - while most infections are generally carried in the air and spread after someone sneezes/coughs, they can also be transmitted by physical contact and enter the body when infected hands are in contact with exposed body parts like our eyes, mouths and noses. Frequent washing and drying hands will drastically lessen the risk of developing an illness.

TO ATTEND OR NOT TO ATTEND SCHOOL

If your son/ daughter complains of feeling unwell but otherwise has no specific symptoms, they can attend school. The office will call you if something more develops. Please make an appointment with a doctor if the complaints persist or other more definite sick symptoms occur.

Sometimes staying home is the only way to benefit our children, ourselves and our communities.

Please remember to email absences@cocklebay.school.nz or telephone PH: 534 8333 x 1 if you wish to report an absence.

Dorothy Bigwood