



Community Update- 8 May 2020

Kia ora

Welcome to this update communication which shares with you the long-awaited news about staff and students returning to school under Alert Level 2.

The Prime Minister informed us all in her recent announcement about de-escalating to Alert Level 2, that the decision to do this will be based on the very latest public health advice. This means, in Alert Level 2, schools are safe environments for students and staff and that additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing. The [Public Health Requirements for Early Learning Services and Schools at Alert Level 2](#) is particularly useful in this regard and if you haven't already accessed it, the link is provided if you would like to view it.

It has been very reassuring to hear how well our country has done at minimising the impacts of COVID-19. Alert Levels 4 and 3 have not been easy, therefore it is vitally important that we ensure that gains from Alert Level 4 and 3 are not lost. We are still in Alert Level 3 and must maintain the integrity of our bubbles until they are no longer required. It is essential we do this so that when we move back into school we are doing so from the safest position possible and I thank you for your ongoing support of this.

When the Prime Minister announces a move to Alert Level 2, it will signal that schools are **safe and open for students and staff**. The advice we have received includes the following:

Alert Level 2 for schools

Under Alert Level 2, it is safe for all schools to open. Safe and sensible practices for hygiene and contact tracing will be the norm, and all students will be able to return, so long as they remain well.

Under Alert Level 2, there are still likely to be new cases which may be the result of household transmission or associated with cluster outbreaks that are contained. The disease remains in New Zealand, so we need to remain vigilant and take appropriate steps to avoid transmission.

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The key principles for [Alert Level 2](#) (follow the link if you would like greater detail) are to:

- reduce the risk of someone getting infected in the first place
- ensure we can identify and contact anyone who becomes infected
- understand that Level 2 is not business as usual.

The key public health approach is to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and second to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person if someone in a school is infected.

This school will continue to support and focus on:

- **enabling good hygiene practices** – regular washing and drying of hands and good cough and sneeze etiquette remain fundamental to preventing the spread of illnesses such as colds, flu and COVID-19
- **ensuring people with COVID-19 symptoms stay away** from school
- **maintaining physical distancing where practicable** - in schools at Alert Level 2 this means students and staff maintaining a physical distance so that they are not breathing on or touching each other (there is no minimum distance requirement for schools at Alert Level 2)
- **keeping track of people that enter the school** – through our attendance register, timetable and visitor register.

Under Alert Level 2, we advise any students and staff to stay at home if they are sick, and we will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms.

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the COVID-19 website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

The Government has stated that;

“We also agreed that when we make the decision to move levels, schools won’t open midweek – whenever the decision is made – they will open at the beginning of the following week. So if we make a decision to shift to Alert Level 2 next week, schools and early learning centres will have ten days from now to prepare.”

“If a school has a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, they must close on an individual or group basis for 72 hours, to allow contact tracing, and then potentially for a further 14 days.” “Distance learning is available for those unable to attend school, for example, who are self-isolating.”

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Students Returning to Papanui High School

We are looking forward to and will be ready to welcome all students and staff back to our school site once we have been given the go-ahead.

Teachers and staff have done their very best to support learning over the time students have been learning at home. As can be expected under these unprecedented circumstances there may be some variability in the level of teaching and learning that has occurred over the last seven weeks. During the coming week, careful consideration will be given to planning for this return. It will include focusing on welcoming our students, staff and our community and three key components; the wellbeing of students and staff, assessing readiness for learning/teaching/working, and application of teaching/working and learning programmes.

We will all be busy developing creative and responsive approaches to ensure students' wellbeing is at the forefront as we navigate appropriate next steps. It is also important that students have an opportunity to reconnect with staff and their peers and provide an opportunity for teachers to observe individual readiness for learning. Teachers will then be able to work to develop appropriate teaching and learning programmes for our students. Further correspondence will follow next week as we update you on our plans.

Next week remains a continuation of our Alert Level 3 distance learning programme and those registered Year 9 and 10 students of essential workers will continue to come into school. The google meets, face to face timetable for next week can be found [here](#).

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding.

He waka eke noa - we are all in this together.

Ngā mihi

Jeff Smith

Principal

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