

24 March, 2020

## **Covid-19 Stage 4 Planning Update**

Dear parents, Whānau and friends of the school,  
Kia ora koutou

With yesterday's announcement by Government, we are implementing with urgency our plan to support your child's learning from home. We appreciate this is a sudden and significant change, and will be heavily disruptive to many people in our community.

We had 7 children of essential workers attend school today.

Staff are currently preparing to support your child's learning from your home in the following ways:

- through online learning.
- provision of a learning pack for families who can't access the internet or access a device.

Families who can't access the internet or a device can come into school and pick up a physical pack for their child from 10.00am to 12.00 noon tomorrow Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March.

Families accessing the internet will receive their distance learning information tomorrow morning Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March.

Your child will be looking to you for guidance about the Government's decision. Parents, caregivers, whānau and teachers will have a particularly important part to play in reassuring children at this time.

If you haven't already done so, you may wish to read the information put together by the Ministry of Education to support your conversations with your children –

### [Talking to children about COVID-19](#)

As noted by the Prime Minister these restrictions are our best chance to slow the virus in New Zealand and to save lives. We all have a clear role here to slow the spread of COVID-19.

### **We would like to share some thoughts with you.**

When you receive our learning support package tomorrow, you might be inclined to create a minute-by-minute timetable for your children. You may have high hopes of hours of learning, including online activities, science experiments, and book reports. You will plan to limit technology until everything is done!

But these are the things we want you to consider...

Our children are just as scared as we adults are right now. Our children not only hear everything going on around them, but they feel our constant tension and anxiety. They have never

experienced anything like this before. Although the idea of being off school for weeks on end sounds exciting for some, they are probably picturing a fun time like the summer holidays, not the reality of being trapped at home and not seeing their friends.

Over the coming weeks, you may see an increase in behaviour issues with your children. Whether it's anxiety, or anger, or protests that they can't do normal things - it will happen.

You will potentially see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour. This is normal and expected under these circumstances.

**What children need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it is all going to be okay.**

That might mean that you need to tear up your perfect timetable and focus on giving them lots of love and attention.

I know this may be hard if you have the added pressure of trying to work at home with the children there. Please try to play outside and go on walks. Bake biscuits and paint pictures. Play board games and watch movies. Do a science experiment together or find virtual field trips of the zoo. Create a fitness circuit in your garden. Start a book and read together as a family. Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing.

Don't worry about them regressing in school. Every single child is in this boat and they all will be okay.

When we are back in the classroom, we will focus on their learning and meet their educational needs. Teachers are experts at this!

Don't pick fights with your children because they don't want to do any activities.

Don't scream at your children for not following the timetable.

Don't insist on 2 hours of learning time if they are resisting it. See if you can make learning fun through their play.

If we can leave you with one thing, it is this: at the end of all of this, their mental health will be far more important than their academic skills. How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during these weeks is gone.

So keep that in mind, every single day we are in lock down.

Warm regards

Ngā manaakitanga

Henk Popping

PRINCIPAL