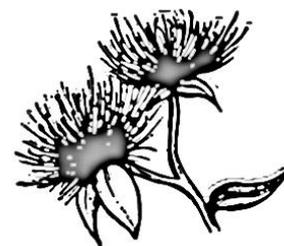


Hororata Primary School



PRINCIPAL'S BULLETIN

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DATE: Tuesday 7 September 2021

Executive Summary

- Overview
- Schools at Alert Level 2
- Back-to-School
- COVID-19 Q & A

Overview

Kia ora koutou katoa,

You will have heard the Government's decision yesterday that New Zealand, beyond the northern and southern boundaries of Auckland, will be moving to Alert Level 2, from 11:59pm Tuesday 7 September 2021. This means that schools will open for all children from **Thursday 9 September 2021**.

As the Prime Minister points out - while this is a very important milestone, the job is not done. We need to continue to **reduce the risk** of someone getting infected and ensure that we can **retrace our steps** if required.

While many people will be delighted to return to school, we understand that some students and whanau will be apprehensive about returning. It is important at this time to remember that the Government makes its decisions with a health-first lens and it makes its decisions very cautiously. Schools and early learning services are **safe environments for children, young people and staff**, as they have safe and sensible practices designed to minimise the spread of the COVID virus.

Hei āpōpō,

Marty Gameson

Schools at Alert Level 2

Under Alert Level 2, it will be safe for schools to reopen and all students will be able to return.

Alert Level 2 principles:

- 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

Specific public health measures to be taken in schools:

- Keeping our kids safe is a shared responsibility. Parents are asked to keep any children who are unwell or displaying COVID symptoms at home.
- Children, young people and staff should be far enough away from each other so that they are not breathing on or touching each other, coupled with good hygiene practices and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces. There does not need to be a specific measurement but where practicable people should remain a safe distance away from people they do not know.
- Hand sanitiser will be available in all classrooms and in shared spaces. Soap, water and the ability to dry hands is provided in all bathrooms.

- Children and young people will be encouraged to regularly wash and dry hands, cough and sneeze into their elbows, and try to avoid touching their face.
- All common contact surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Contact tracing information will be maintained to identify which children and adults are on site, in each teaching space, including recording if there is a different composition of children and adults during the day. This includes recording visitors to the site, including parents.

All visitors to the school site must report to the school office on arrival.

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is not required or recommended as necessary, but may be worn, by children and adults to where if they wish. **Children need to be able to wear masks safely and be able to put the mask on and take it off independently.**

Back to School

- Parents have the choice of whether their child(ren) attend school during Alert Level 2. The Work@Home Programme will continue for all those children who do not return to school immediately.
- Children will go into their normal classes when they return and will be excited to know that the playground, sandpit and fields will be open for play.
- There are no restrictions on groups of children and students mixing with others on site. Where practicable where groups/classes do mix – attendance should be recorded as it should if the composition of groups and classes change during the day. Teachers/staff are not restricted to one group.
- Physical education classes and break time activities can include access to sports equipment including playgrounds but hygiene practice should be observed after playing with equipment.
- Physical distancing remains important, particularly when people are interacting with people they don't know and who couldn't be easily traced. However, the risks are relatively lower at Alert Level 2, and it's now safe for individuals to be physically close to their good friends and family.

Physical distancing in schools, means children and staff maintaining a physical distance so that they are not breathing on or touching each other... you literally get some breathing space.

- School buses and the school timetable will return to normal at Alert Level 2. The ongoing safety of drivers and students on school buses is a priority and will be managed in the following ways:
 - Schools must ensure their transport providers have reliable, up-to-date bus lists at all times to ensure everyone knows who is being transported each day, to enable contact tracing.
 - Hand sanitisers will be available for each student to use as they board the vehicle.
 - Vehicles and surfaces will be sanitised after each journey by the transport company.
 - Seats in close proximity to the driver will be left empty.
- There are no restrictions on numbers of people indoors or outside at schools other than what other public health or health and safety measures require.
- **Teachers will contact all school families this week to find out whether your child(ren) will be attending school under Alert Level 2. If you haven't heard from your classroom teacher by lunch time Wednesday, please reach out to them to confirm whether your child(ren) will be attending school on Thursday.**

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COVID-19 Q & A

1. Can children go to school under Alert Level 2?

- Yes, all children can attend school at Alert Level 2.

2. Can children with existing health conditions go to school under Alert Level 2?

- Yes, if a child has an existing health issue that puts them at risk, e.g. diabetes, lung conditions, severe asthma etc, they can attend school.

3. Is it safe for my child to return to school under Alert Level 2?

- Yes, schools and early learning services are safe controlled environments for children, young people and staff to attend.
- We have excellent health & safety procedures in place here at school and encourage good hygiene practices to keep everyone safe. Our aim is to minimise the risk of someone getting infected in the first place and to ensure that we can identify and trace anyone who becomes infected.

4. What is my role in keeping kids safe at school?

- Keeping our children safe is a shared responsibility between home and school. If your child is sick, please keep them at home.
- Practice washing hands, coughing etiquette and keeping out of other people's breathing space.

5. Will my child be able to catch the school bus to school?

- Yes, school transport services will return to normal on **Thursday 9 September 2021**. Please be patient though, as times will be affected by the number of passengers who choose to use the bus service.

6. Has the school timetable changed?

- No, the school timetable remains unchanged with the school gates opening at 8:05am; school starting at 8:45am and ending at 2:45pm.

7. Whose class will my child be in?

- Children will go into their normal classes when they return to school with all staff returning under Alert Level 2.

8. Will my child be able to be ACTIVE at school?

- Yes, the playground, sandpit and fields will be open for play.
- Physical education and sports will resume in school, coupled with good hygiene practices.

9. Will children be able to buy their lunches at school?

- No, the PTA canteen is closed until further notice. Children can take their lunches to the school office to be heated.
- Children are encouraged to **bring their own drink bottles (water) to school**. We are trying to use the drink fountains as little as possible during Alert Level 2.

10. Can my child attend school part-time during Alert Level 2?

- Yes, children can attend school part-time or full time during Alert Level 2. Please advise the school if you intend for your child to return to school part-time.

11. Do I have a choice of sending my child to school under Alert Level 2?

- Yes, parents have the choice of whether their child(ren) attend school during Alert Level 2.

12. If I chose to keep my child to stay at home, will they still be able to do Distance Learning?

- Yes, distance learning will be provided by teachers for all children who do not return to school.