

Sunday 22 March 2020

Kia Ora Koutou Whānau, Parents, and Caregivers

Today the Trinity Principals, Andrew Osmond (Hadlow), Kiri Gill (SMCS) Annabel Wyeth (Hadlow PreSchool), Rob Blackett (CEO TSTB), and I met to discuss our COVID-19 plans and readiness following the PM's announcements yesterday.

Here are the updates about which we would like you to be aware:

1. The call to close a school as a result of the pandemic sits completely with the Ministry and not the schools; we continue to be guided by those directives.
2. Parents may decide to keep their children at home and in those instances, we ask that you inform the school, and the boarding heads if your child is a boarder- this information will be communicated to the affected staff so as to ensure your child's learning can continue.
3. If your child is health-compromised or is simply feeling unwell the schools' preferences are that you err on the side of caution and keep them home. Do as in number 2 and keep the school informed. It is timely to check that school has up to date information about your child's health issues.
4. If your child is at home during this time the schools are ready for remote learning and this will be the method by which learning, and teaching will take place.
 - a) It is important that your daughter/son always has their device charged and has their charger with them at all times.
 - b) We do advise that you check your internet capability and home caps in light of the current situation.
 - c) Information regarding student connections and app availability for Microsoft teams' access will be checked tomorrow by the schools. Anyone absent should follow the directions and contact the school should they experience any difficulties.
5. Remote learning and what it could look like, will be sent to you in more detail. The schools are currently considering the scenarios that will work best for the different contexts each family will have.
6. What better time for the library to become a destination for your child to collect those volumes they have been hoping to read should time create that possibility.
7. The EXEAT planned for the Boarding houses at Rathkeale and St Matthew's is now cancelled. Boarding staff will now be on deck and we thank them for changing plans to accommodate this decision. The decision does not preclude Boarders from going home this weekend, but it does allow non-essential travel to be taken off the immediate itinerary if preferred by parents.
8. We would like to reiterate that the guidelines around non-essential travel are being taken seriously by the schools. We are looking to postpone or have already cancelled meetings and fixtures which take staff and students out of the region. If the event has not got obvious educational outcomes, we have seen it as appropriate to defer, delay, or desist.
9. Some school teaching and support staff are already preparing to work from home as they fall into the At-Risk category. The schools have put systems and covers in place so that the learning can still occur in classes, and services can still operate.

10. Transport runs are also changing as some of the population in the At-Risk category are our bus drivers. These will be communicated as they are brought to our attention. We ask that you keep your phone handy for the school app alerts.

We do ask that you all think about some of the social events' invitations your children may wish to accept.

11. There is an importance in the value of continuing to be social, but we are ever mindful of avoiding occasions which could increase transmission of illness.

The guidelines tell us that gatherings and events can be a very good environment for infectious diseases like COVID-19 to spread because people often behave in ways that facilitate transmission. This includes sharing food or drinks, sitting or standing very close together for long periods of time and coughing on each other.

Helping people avoid close contact with others, like you would with the seasonal flu, is an effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These measures will help protect you, your family/whānau and all of New Zealand.

The Criteria for cancelling events to slow the spread of COVID-19: gatherings of 500 people or more in close proximity outdoors, or 100 people or more indoors, will be cancelled. These measures will be regularly reviewed.

This applies to both public events such as concerts and private events such as weddings.

Organisers of gatherings of any size need to assess the risk to attendees and the community. See Weddings, funerals/tangi, birthday parties and other gatherings for more information.

If your child has attended an event and you have any concerns you should seek guidance from Healthline. Our advice is to seriously consider saying No to these events.

12. Remember the mantra for Prevention – how to protect yourself and others
- a) Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues.
 - b) Put used tissues in the bin or a bag immediately.
 - c) Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds) and dry them well.
 - d) Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
 - e) Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
 - f) Avoid personal contact, such as kissing, sharing cups or food with sick people.
 - g) Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs.
 - h) Stay home if you feel unwell.
 - i) Call Healthline on 0800 358 5453 if you have any symptoms and have been recently been overseas or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19

The situation and Ministry updates are being followed by the Principals and schools, and we are working quickly to adapt to those expectations as they come to light. We are also meeting regularly to ensure we are being responsive in this space. Our role is to keep routines and normality, ever mindful we are living a new normal.

Please know that the wellbeing of students, staff and community is paramount to us and that we are working our best to ensure we are doing the best we can.

Continue to seek advice and facts from the Ministry of Health websites <https://www.health.govt.nz/>, and the Wairarapa DHB website <http://www.wairarapa.dhb.org.nz/>.

Stay safe, Stay calm, and know we can each make a huge difference in stopping the spread.

Nga Mihi

Martin O'Grady JP
Principal



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