

Inspiring a love of learning through an education that values the development of the whole child

21 April 2020

Issue 9, Week 2, Term 2

Kia ora koutou

We welcome a new student to Otari: Jed Banayad in Totara class.

Yesterday the Prime Minister announced that New Zealand will move to alert level 3 at 11:59pm on Monday 27 April. She also said the following:

“Schools and early learning centres can be accessed this week for cleaning, maintenance and any other preparations. The current plan is for schools to be able to re-open for a Teacher Only Day on Tuesday 28 April as part of their preparation and we expect those who need to attend, to be able to from Wednesday 29 April. It may take a bit longer for some schools and early learning centres to be ready.”

She provided a very important message in relation to this:

“Work and learn from home if you can. We still want the vast majority of people working from home and children and young people learning from home. At-risk students and staff should also stay at home and they will be supported to do so.”

We are expecting that due to the move to level 3, there will be some children returning, but that most will still be learning from home. Our survey has confirmed this is likely to be the case. Thank you everyone who has completed this.

There are some families we have not heard from. It is most important we know if your child is returning to school or staying at home so that we can plan in accordance with the ministry rules and guidelines. If you haven't already done so, please respond to the link below:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSci6XfADm0X9ZRpNNy4ZS1YAu2cwyJBXpqsySHndXKaKMSLEw/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1>

If you are able to keep your child/children home you are supporting those who cannot, enabling the space for their children to be effectively looked after in level 3. We want to be well planned for these families and their tamariki.

Preparing for Wednesday 29 April

Yesterday the Board Covid-19 sub committee and senior management team met to discuss organisation and planning for the students who will be returning. There are strict guidelines around this. The children will be in strand bubbles, but within these bubbles will need to socially distance. Each child will be allocated a device and specific equipment to use. Children will not be able to share

There will be staggered breaks, the adventure playground will be out of bounds and movement will be supervised to ensure that outside, the 1 metre rule is observed. Surfaces will be regularly wiped down.

I know parents of children returning will want to know how we are going to manage all of the rules and guidelines. We have plans that will ensure the children are kept safe and they are also happy and engaged in school activity. Prior to the 29th, these plans with more detailed information, will be communicated to each family with children returning. Implementing all of this is going to be challenging, but with careful planning, not insurmountable.

Children must be on a special register to attend school during Level 3. You cannot arrive at school without having notified Clifford or Jillian before 5pm the day before. It is important that we can induct all families on the specific procedures relating to Level 3 and ensure we have appropriate levels of staffing onsite. The register will be created prior to the 29th, based on the survey responses and any other written notification. It will be added to if necessary when we are contacted via email or phone call before 5pm.

Teacher Only Day

Some teachers will be back at school on 28 April for a teacher only day to prepare for the next phase of learning from home and accommodating children at school, under level 3.

Finally, I want to thank all of you, parents and children, on behalf of the board and staff for all the work you have been doing keeping the learning happening, while managing life in your own bubbles. Your support, feedback and communication has been most appreciated. We look forward to the day we can all return to our lovely kura. I also want to express my appreciation for all the "at home teaching" the teachers have been doing and the valuable support of the board throughout this lockdown.

Ngā mihi
Clifford