

14 August 2020

Kia ora koutou katoa

I hope that the last two days at home have gone well. I've enjoyed seeing the students and parents coming into school to collect their books and other equipment (and PE gear to wash!), and I hope that everyone is managing to dig out their lockdown mark #1 mojo, remembering that we all found ways to enjoy ourselves, even in complete lockdown.

I also know, though, that the next few weeks are going to be difficult for all of us, so I'll again remind everyone that we are here to support you in any way we can, so please get in touch if we can help.

As you know, the Prime Minister has this evening announced that, in Auckland, we will be at Level 3 for the next 12 days, until 11.59 pm on Wednesday 26th August. There is one identified cluster so far, and this seems like a sensible response. What this means at Pinehurst is:

1. School will be closed for everyone except for the children of essential workers.
2. Nearly all staff at Pinehurst will work from home, but there will be a handful of us at school between 8 am and 4 pm.
3. The school will run the full Pinehurst Online Programme every day next week for all students.
4. We will run a Primary bubble and a College bubble for children of essential workers every day next week. The College students will be working on their online programme and will be supervised. The Primary students will do some work online and will do some other play-based activities.
5. All sports, music and other activities are cancelled up to and including Wednesday 26th August. This means that, amongst other events, Kidzplay tomorrow and next Saturday is cancelled, the New Parents Evening on Tuesday is postponed, and the Senior College Market Day is postponed. We will try to reschedule if we can. Sadly, we are also cancelling the Year 8 Ski Camp, due to start on August 24th. We will be in touch next week about refunds.

In other words, we are carrying on as we are currently working until Wednesday 26th August. Students in school are this time being supervised as they do their online lessons, and do not have a special teaching programme.

Please let me know by email if you are an essential worker and need to send your child to school.

I know that many of you will have some concerns at the moment, so I thought I'd address a few of them this evening. Firstly, there have been two cases on the North Shore announced over the last 24 hours, and there are, of course, potential connections between both and our school. This is to be expected, as our Pinehurst community is very active, and we do lots of things with lots of people from other schools! I can, though, reassure you about a couple of aspects of these cases. Firstly, the Glamorgan Primary child who has the virus does not play netball, and so would **not** have been representing Glamorgan at Kidzplay. And we have contacted Snow Planet about the case there. They have confirmed that they have no reason to believe that the person had any contact with our students.

There may well be additional cases over the next few days. That is also to be expected. As we are at Level 3, we just need to do everything we are being asked to do, staying at home as much as we can, and going for a test if we have any symptoms. With a bit of luck, we will be able to get back to a more normal way of living pretty quickly: the signs from the Prime Minister this evening were reasonably promising, and I'm pretty hopeful.

I also realise that some students will be concerned about big school events that are coming up soon. These include the Mock Exams, the School Ball, the School Production and, for those of us who are a little more mature, the Quiz Night and Ladies Lunch. At the moment, these events are still scheduled and we will not cancel or postpone them until we are sure that they cannot go ahead. We will let you know as soon as we make any decisions about these and other events.

I hope we are continuing to be both clear and detailed in our information. Please ask me if you have any questions at all, and ask your teachers directly if you have questions about your learning.

And stay positive, stay kind and look after each other. We are a wonderful community and I know we will be looking out for each other. We are committed to maintaining our structured, supportive online programme for all students, and we know that our children will continue to make good progress, even though it's not the same as being at school. And we hope that this supports our parents as well.

Keep in touch and I'll write again before Monday.

Nga mihi,

Alex

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