

15 February 2021

Kia ora tatou

Just a quick email from me this afternoon as the rain hammers down and my trousers slowly lose the unpleasant “wet wool” smell of sodden sheep.

Lessons should have just started for students: we have had staff in and out all morning, getting ready for classes, collecting resources and meeting together (masked and socially distanced!) to pool ideas and plan the week ahead. These few hours have been important for staff, and I know that they will have enabled them to hit the ground running this afternoon. We also have a handful of students in school: a reminder that children of essential workers are welcome: primary students are in After School Care in one bubble; College students are in the Library, working separately and also in their own bubble. All students in school are learning online.

I won't repeat the same information I gave you yesterday, and you will also have received Seesaw messages (in Primary) and emails from other staff giving you more information this morning. As I said yesterday, our arrangements are all available to view at <https://www.pinehurst.school.nz/life-at-pinehurst/covid-19-qa/>

The key thing to remember, though, is that we follow the existing school timetable, and keep things as similar as possible to the school environment. There are obvious differences, and our teachers do a great job adapting to the online world, but the idea is to keep it as familiar as possible. Our teachers are also supporting each other online, meeting regularly and checking in to share ideas. They will also be doing this with students online, and there will be chances for homerooms and PODs to meet as well.

Other support services remain available: Debbie Stanaway, our School Counsellor, is available to meet online, and our Deans are also continuing to fulfil their pastoral role. All of our senior leaders are keen to answer any questions you may have too. Please contact us and ask anything or comment about anything we're doing. We're always keen to think through the decisions we're taking, and your ideas do make a difference. And if we can support you in any way, please also contact us.

We are, though, going to cancel or postpone a few events:

Year 7 Camp has already been cancelled. We will see if we can do something similar later in the year.

The Year 4-6 Parent Information Evening tomorrow evening is postponed. We will run this again as soon as we are able to.

Year 4 and 5 swimming lessons are cancelled for the whole week. We will see if we can run these lessons later in the year.

The New Entrants Open Day on Wednesday is postponed. We will reschedule this as soon as possible.

We are delaying a decision about the Year 3 Camp, the Year 1/2 “Conscious Kids” event on Thursday, and the upcoming Duke of Edinburgh tramps until Tuesday.

Finally: we are not expecting to hear whether the lockdown will be ended early, or extended, this afternoon. The Prime Minister has indicated that it is unlikely that there will be any decisions today. If there are no changes, I won't write again this evening, and will instead write tomorrow. So stay home if you can; don't feel the need to stock up on toilet paper; and observe all the recommended social distancing and contact tracing measures.

Nga mihi. Take care of yourselves,

Alex Reed
Executive Principal
Pinehurst School