

MENPS News

Te Whare Akoranga o Maungawhau, 11 May, 2020

From The Principal - Level 2

Kia ora koutou

As you will be aware, the government has now determined that we will move to Level 2 on Thursday, 14 May, and I am pleased to confirm that MENPS reopens to all students next week!

This marks a significant shift in the course of recent events, with all schools formally re-opening on **Monday, 18 May**. This will no doubt come as a welcome relief, although there may also be some anxieties about returning to school after the lockdown period.

The important thing to consider here is the basis on which the decision has been made. The best available evidence from the Ministry of Health points to low to zero community transmission. This means that while it may not be over quite yet, we can take this step based on the expert determination that - while household and cluster transmission may continue - with appropriate precautions in place, it is safe for schools to operate.

We all share the same goal. At the forefront is continuing to keep our children happy, safe and learning. The simple message for us all is that we can achieve this at school with 3 key strategies:

1. Stay home if you are unwell - even slightly. Don't take any chances
2. Frequent, thorough hygiene and hand-washing
3. Ability to limit the scale and nature of interactions to those that are necessary and maintain capacity to contact trace quickly and effectively in the event of new cases arising

While we can't enforce social distancing in the school setting as such, we will be taking reasonable steps to manage movements and ensure children have reasonable personal space and etiquette, as I have previously outlined. In addition, enhanced cleaning, supervision of hand-washing and sickbay protocols will continue to be our focus. We also ask you to assist us at Level 2 in reducing classroom traffic by staying out of school buildings for the time being, unless by prior arrangement with the school

I am aware that there will undoubtedly be some who may prefer to continue to keep their children at home for a little longer, and we understand this.

To be clear, attendance at school at Alert Level 2, however, will essentially be back to 'normal'. While we will be empathetic and take a reasonable position on any absence in the circumstances, Alert Level 2 means all students are now encouraged to return to school. The reality is that, at some point, we need to trust the scientific evidence in order to reclaim some normality, and Level 2 means it is now considered a safe and appropriate time to do so.

Accordingly, please be advised that we will *not be in a position to offer an alternative distance learning 'option' from Monday next week*, as I'm sure you will understand. School will be fully open for instruction, and all of our teaching staff will be back to teaching full time. The exception to this will, of course, be those students who are identified as having serious underlying health conditions that preclude them from attending, who we will contact individually.

It has been a hard road getting here, but everyone has done an amazing job. As a result, we are fortunate to be able to make this move with relative confidence due to the collective sacrifices made to date. As ever, we will be doing everything we possibly can here at MENPS, in partnership with parents, to maintain a safe and happy environment for our tamariki. We ask for your patience while we get many of our school life and routines back on track, and please let your child(ren) know that we are very excited to welcome them back as we embark on something of a 'reset' of Term 2 here at MENPS!

Please note that for Thursday 14th and Friday 15th this week, we will be in preparation mode. As a result, on these days we will be closed for instruction. Teachers won't be posting videos or running online conferences on these days. Our existing whanau 'bubbles' will also have their last day on Wednesday this week, so all children will need to be at home (or with friends and family, as is permitted at Level 2) until the 18th. SKiDs before and after school care will also resume on our first day back, following school protocols. We will give more detailed guidance on other aspects (such as clubs and activities) once school is underway again.

Once again, thank you all for the remarkable effort. It has made the difference, and been the key to getting us to this major turning point for our school, community and for the country as a whole.

Finally, please see below for a summary of the key points we would encourage you to discuss with your child as we prepare to re-open next week. As ever, please do let us know if you have any questions at any stage, and we will update you with further information you may need to be aware of.

Ka kite anō au i a koutou

Alan Jackson
Principal



As we look forward to re-opening, we encourage you to set aside some time to talk to your child about;

- What they have missed and are most looking forward to about returning to school
- What they know about taking responsibility for our own wellbeing at home and at school
- Any questions or concerns they might have
- Who they can talk to if they are worried about anything
- What they have learned from their time in lockdown with the family
- How excited the teachers, staff and their friends will be to see them again!

Contact Us

 **Staff | Mt Eden Normal Primary ...**

www.mteden.school.nz

Meet the MENPS team



Keep in touch

 Facebook

Check back on our website, or join the official Mt Eden Normal Facebook page to keep up to date!

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