

Kia ora Aidanfield whanau

My apologies for the delay in information to you. For some reason my remote access did something very odd (and unprecedented!) and the first set of information posted was the early draft not the beautifully crafted and complete version. Here is attempt number two.

With today's announcement by Government, we are implementing with urgency our plan to support your child's learning from home. We appreciate this is a sudden and significant change, and will be heavily disruptive to many people in our community.

The Prime Minister has today announced the country is moving to Level 3 for the next 48 hours and then from Thursday 26 March we move to Level 4 in the [COVID-19 Alert Level](#) structure for a further period of 4 weeks where people are instructed to stay at home.

What does this mean?

Schools are now closed to all children apart from children of essential workers.

Schools will be open on Tuesday and Wednesday this week for children of essential workers who need time to arrange alternative arrangements. These children do not need to come to school if you wish to keep them at home. We will have a skeleton staff at school to supervise pupils for the days they are there. A list of essential businesses can be found here - <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-system/> and includes: doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and police.

We continue to ask that children who are not well do not attend school.

For children of essential workers, we look forward to seeing your child here at school tomorrow morning at 9.00am should you wish. **All children who need to be at school should go to the hall at the start of the start the day.** We won't be staying in the hall long and will ensure they are 2m apart as they gather.

School holidays brought forward

School holidays are being brought forward so that they are completed within the 4 week period. Holidays will now begin from Monday 30 March to Tuesday 14 April inclusive (a reminder that the Tuesday after Easter Monday is always a closed day for schools). At the end of the school holidays, schools will be open for distance learning but not physically open for staff to work at the schools.

Please note the instruction to stay home (Alert Level 4) will continue beyond the new school holiday period but schools will be technically open for distance instruction. Teachers will be working offsite.

So, what does this mean for Aidanfield Christian School?

We are all but closed

We are now closed for at least four weeks. At this point it would be reasonable to prepare for perhaps six weeks but this will be determined as time goes on. There is not a confirmed start date when we can again open our doors at school at this time.

The school will have a skeleton staff on Tuesday and Wednesday for families who are involved in 'essential' services if they need a couple of days to sort arrangements around child care during the day. Only these pupils will be able to be at school. This is under instruction of the Ministry of Education. We are totally closed from Thursday to everyone.

Holidays changed – initiating our distance learning programmes

The 'holidays' are now starting on March 30 and will run for two weeks (refer to the MoE website). This is from the start of next week. At the end of the holidays the school is not open again, we will still be closed but we will be providing work on-line for pupils should you as a family want to make use of this work.

The school will now implement what I outlined late last week. The coming week (this week), you will not hear from our teaching staff. They have time to get their own family situations organised and to make the mental shift that is needed to totally change the way we teach. Then they have 'holidays'. From April 14 we will begin to package some work for pupils through their Microsoft365 Teams accounts or See Saw for our junior pupils. There is a good chance everyone will be very ready to have work to do then! We will send work out every two days and is simply an invitation to each family to engage with the learning journey as they are able. Remember, Teams can be accessed from any device, any platform. We will tell you how soon. We will send information home in the next few days to help you work out how to log on and support your child with the distance learning platforms.

Getting things from lockers

If you need to get things from your child's locker you may come to school with your child to get what is needed on Tuesday or Wednesday only. Please make sure that the locker bay has no more than 6 people in it at any time and that you maintain a distance of 2 meters from anyone else there. You may need to wait outside for someone to leave before going in. There will be no access to lockers from Wednesday at 5pm until school opens again. It would be excellent to ensure that PE gear, shoes, food are all removed...I will leave the rest to your imagination!

Help provide us some information

In the next day or two, you will get a survey from us to help us understand what support we can give your family as school. It would help if you respond quickly to this survey.

Finally

These are unusual times. History says that such things have happened in the past and there is a tomorrow. This situation will settle down and a new normal will be found as we all build back towards new things but it will take some time and there is some real disruption to walk through first. Our learning journey through 2020 will continue on as the year passes and we will achieve what needs to be achieved for our pupils over the coming year. The one advantage that we share is that our God promises and has demonstrated so often that he chooses to stand in the middle of dark times with us. He often does not remove the hard

bits but he certainly never leaves us, never forsakes us, never lets us go. He is there when we chose to lean into him and allow his Holy Spirit to speak into our lives. Can I encourage you to continue leaning into him and find him during this time of challenge.

Rest assured, the school staff are here with you and your family. We will stay connected and in touch. We will give you ideas and activities to continue learning in the home environment and we will be here to receive your children back again once we can all come together again.

Grace and peace.

Mark Richardson
Principal – remotely!