



Thursday 7 May

TERM 2 – UPDATE 5

Kia Ora Koutou

Like me, I am sure you have followed with interest the announcements made by the Prime Minister. It is reassuring to hear how well our country has done at minimising the impacts of COVID-19. Alert Levels 4 and 3 have not been easy and I thank you for your ongoing support for the work we are doing.

Today, the Prime Minister advised that in Alert Level 2 schools are safe environments for children, young people and staff and that additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing. The good news is that when we are able to, we will be ready to welcome students and staff back to our school site.

The key Public Health approach is to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and second to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school is infected. As we have done in Alert Level 3, you can be assured that in Alert Level 2 we will know who is at school, who our staff and students have been in close contact with and take appropriate measures to keep everyone safe.

Physical distancing is a good precaution to prevent the spread of disease. We do however know it is challenging in schools, so good hygiene practices and regular cleaning are even more important here. This includes staff and students coughing into their elbows, handwashing and drying and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Under Alert Level 2, we advise any students and staff to stay at home if they are sick, and we will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms.

Our school has safe and sensible practices to maintain the health and safety of everyone on the school site. It's important however that not just at school but at home, safe hygiene habits are practised by everyone, as this is essential to minimise the risk that someone gets infected with Covid-19. For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the covid19.govt.nz website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

We are underway with unpacking information and planning for how everything will work when we are back at school. I will continue to keep you updated but in the meantime I'd appreciate if you could complete the attached form. This is to confirm your child/ren will be returning to school when we move to Alert Level 2 (date yet to be confirmed). There will be some personal or health & safety circumstances where parents decide to delay this return. Your information will help us to plan for a smooth return to school for your child and to ensure we can support all of our children on their journey back to face to face learning at Merrilands.

If you have any questions about our health and safety plan, or have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact me.

Ngā manākitanga
Michelle Cronin
Principal