



West Park School

Te Kura O Papa Hauāuru

Every student matters, every moment counts.

Broderick Road, Johnsonville, Wellington 6037, Phone (04) 478 7074, Fax (04) 478 7593

21 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

We hope that Term 2 and our distance learning programme has been a success for you so far. We know there will have been any number of challenges for you to deal with, but we have been getting some great feedback about the learning that is happening and thank you for all your support.

Yesterday shortly after 4 pm the Government announced that *“New Zealand will move to Alert Level 3 at 11.59 pm on Monday 27 April.”* In addition, it was stated that schools would be holding a *Teacher/ Staff only day on the first day of being at Alert Level 3 which would be Tuesday the 28th of April.* That means that West Park School will be open to receive students from Wednesday the 29th of April. We will start to prepare our site today.

The key message for you is that if you can, you should keep your child at home. You should only physically send your child to school if you need to. If your child has a health condition that means they are at a greater risk of a severe illness you must keep them at home. If your child is sick please also ensure you keep them at home.

In order to ensure the safety of those children and our staff who do come to school, we will be operating with strict enforcement of health and safety measures.

I want to assure you that we will continue to support your child’s learning at home.

Staff will be contacting you later today to find out whether you can keep your child learning from home, or need your child to attend in person. If you have more than one child at West Park School, you can expect to be contacted by each of your children’s teachers regarding your intentions for each child. This will also act as an opportunity to clarify their learning programme and or identify any additional needs that each child may have that requires consideration or some type of extra support.

The Ministry of Education has advised that they are working closely with health to develop clear guidance that will support schools to safely re-open their premises to students and staff. This will help us work through the public health requirements that we all need to meet. As you will be doing, we want to be sure that what we do will keep our community as safe as possible.

An additional point unique to our school that we would like you to be aware of relates to our Rooms 3-6 building project. You may recall that approximately one to two weeks prior to the lockdown being announced the school sent out a communication explaining that asbestos had been found under Rooms 3-6. Although contained to the space under the classrooms, by the time the lockdown was announced building works reached a point that required the removal of all the asbestos before any further work could be done on our much needed four teaching spaces. Initially, our project manager had planned for the removal to take place during the term 1 holidays,



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it being a time with minimal people around, making containment and isolation easily achievable. However, with the lockdown in place none of the planned removal took place. Without these four teaching spaces we will very soon face enormous challenges, including overcrowding as we are required to open new roll growth classrooms, having to close all access to library resources, being unable to provide staff with a suitable staffroom space, having no hall facility, and further ongoing disruptions.

If the onsite student numbers during the coming few weeks can be kept down to an absolute minimum, that would allow us to both provide a safe Alert level 3 environment, whilst allowing for the safe isolation and removal of the onsite asbestos. Its removal would then allow building works to continue, minimizing the logistical challenges ahead during the rest of term 2 when school does return to normal functioning at Alert Level 2.

For now, we will continue to support your child's learning by distance while we progress our planning for what Alert Level 3 will mean for you and for our school. We will be in touch again soon with more information. As you have been doing, please keep connecting with your teachers with any questions you might have.

Luis Echegaray
Principal
West Park School

Natalie Henry
Board Chair
West Park School