



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

28 February 2021

Dear Parents/ Caregivers

There have been additional confirmed cases of COVID-19 in **Auckland**.

As a result, the Government announced last night that the whole of Auckland will from 6am this morning, move from Alert Level 1 to Alert Level 3 for seven days.

The rest of New Zealand, also for seven days, is being moved from Alert level 1 to Alert Level **2. Subsequently West Park School will be operating under Alert Level 2 for at least the whole of next week.**

Please note that as has previously been the case, at Alert Level 2 schools are considered 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.

West Park School will be open to all students on Monday the 1st of March.

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.

You can be assured that in Alert Level 2 we will, as we have done previously, 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. As described by Dr Payinda in his [NZ Herald article](#), "Covid's not measles or chickenpox, it doesn't hang in the air for hours waiting to infect passers-by. It travels on invisible



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drops of spit. You don't have to cross the street to avoid anyone. Just avoid getting in their 'moist breath' zone". We all just need to remember to have some breathing space at Alert Level 2!

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/>

If you have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact your child's team leader.

Team Kahikatea – Howard Young – howardy@westpark.school.nz

Team Rimu – Nicola Douthett – nicolad@westpark.school.nz

Team Miro – Emily Osborn – emilyo@westpark.school.nz

Team Totara – Alisha Mullen – alisham@westpark.school.nz

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR THE WEEK AHEAD:

- Team Kahikatea's planned Monday trip to the ASB centre has been rescheduled to Monday the 29th of March.
- We will be in touch again soon if we are required to make any further changes.
- ***All adults or non-West Park School students entering the school grounds between 8am and 3.30pm will be required to sign in and out. This is a sensible and precautionary requirement, please support the school community by registering, and not challenging staff at the gate. If challenged, it only creates an awkward situation for staff and those nearby.***
- Please utilise the COVID-19 Check-in function on the school's App.

Kind regards

Luis Echegaray
Principal

Natalie Henry
Board Chairperson



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Additional important Ministry guidelines for all families to be aware of:

Education information at Alert Level 2

At Alert Level 2, early learning centres, schools and tertiary education facilities are open for all age groups.

If an educational facility is connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, it legally must close temporarily, if advised by the public health unit, to allow for contact tracing.

Children or young people legally must stay home if they:

- are unwell
- have COVID-19 symptoms
- are self-isolating
- are waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test.

Distance learning will be available for any students not able to attend school.

Children, young people and teachers do not need to wear face coverings at school. This is because the risk of infection within the school environment is low.

Early learning services and schools

All early learning centres and schools are physically open including for years 11 to 13. Distance learning will be available for those who cannot attend school, for example where people are self-isolating.

Early learning centres and schools are safe environments for children, young people and staff. Additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing.

Tertiary education

Tertiary education facilities are open.

Tertiary education is a safe environment for students and staff to return to at Alert Level 2. Tertiary education facilities will implement public health requirements and physical distancing and will provide a safe environment where students can continue their learning. They will maintain distance learning capability for staff and students who need it.

1. Schools are open to everyone, and all children must attend.

At Alert Level 2 the disease is contained but there is still risk of community transmission. It is safe for children and staff to attend school and for school hostels to be operating as there will be appropriate measures in place, including for children and staff vulnerable to severe illness.

2. Learning will be onsite with distance learning offered in some circumstances.

Distance learning should be provided for those required to self-isolate, those individuals who health authorities have asked to stay away while waiting for a test result, or those choosing to remain at home because they are vulnerable to illness.



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3. Schools are not classified as gatherings and a range of events and activities can go ahead.

For most day to day activities at schools, the rules for gatherings do not apply. Under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Order, schools are exempted from physical distancing requirements when people are there to receive, provide, or support education services.

However as soon as your event or activity brings people onsite who are not there for education purposes, including students, parents and caregivers, then the rules for gatherings do apply. This would include performances such as school plays, cultural events and sporting activities.

4. Schools will close for cleaning and contact tracing if there is a confirmed case who was infectious when at school.

Your Director of Education will work closely with you and health authorities should this occur. Please contact your Ministry regional office if you hear of a confirmed case in your school community but haven't been advised about it by health officials.

5. Face coverings are not required at school or on any school transport.

This includes charter buses hired by the school to transport students and staff. Anyone who chooses to wear a face covering in any setting should be supported to do so.

6. Sick people must stay at home.

They should seek medical advice if they have COVID-like symptoms and get tested if advised to do so. If that person displays relevant symptoms of COVID-19, tests positive for COVID-19, or has been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate.

7. You must have a contact tracing system in place.

This includes displaying QR code posters at your entrances, your timetable, attendance register and visitor register.

8. Fundamental public health measures continue to apply at every alert level:

- Physical distancing (not touching and not breathing on each other at Alert Level 2)
- Hand hygiene
- Cough and sneeze etiquette
- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces.

9. Think and plan carefully before you go ahead with any activity that brings a large number of students together and/or spectators are involved.

Some events may need to be cancelled or postponed when we are at Alert Level 2. Inter-regional travel is possible but only where you are confident the appropriate measures will be in place at the host venue, including requirements for gatherings.

10. Your Ministry regional office team is available to provide support.

For more detailed information for Alert Level 2, please refer to our [health and safety guidance](#).