

ST MARK'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Seek and you shall find



Wednesday 26 January 2022

Kia ora St Mark's Catholic School whānau

A very warm welcome back to the new school year. I hope you have had a restful break and enjoyed family time over the Christmas and New Year period. I was certainly thankful for the stunning weather that saw me enjoy daily walks and regular swims in the local neighbourhood. East Auckland is blessed with so many parks, pools, beaches, walking tracks, cafes, restaurants and shopping malls. It is easy to take such things for granted!

As you are aware we find ourselves on the COVID roller-coaster once again with the new Omicron strain making its rounds. We are now officially using the 'traffic light' system and find ourselves in RED level to start the new school year. Having taken time to digest the guidance from the Ministry of Education, we are confident we can open school for all children from Wednesday 2nd February by adopting an 'ALL OF US' approach in following our school's reopening plan.

OUR SCHOOL'S REOPENING PLAN

Our plan is broadly based around a '**no mix and no mingle**' strategy that will see the integrity of classroom 'bubbles' being maintained as far as practicable and in keeping with MOE guidelines.

Whilst we are required to keep a vaccination register for staff (mandate), we are not required to seek COVID vaccination information from families at this time.

We will continue to ensure community wellness is at the centre of our decision making and we are committed to taking reasonable and practical measures to ensure on-site safety by adhering to public health guidelines around:

- ventilating classrooms
- restricting access to the school site
- practical distancing of different groups of students on site (classroom bubbles)
- spending time outdoors in classroom groupings
- regular sanitising and cleaning of any shared spaces
- good personal hygiene

- staff vaccinations (100% fully vaccinated staff)
- staying home if sick
- mask wearing Year 4-6 (indoors): no cloth masks please/ surgical masks required

RE-OPENING PLAN (please read carefully)

1. From Wednesday 2nd February, we look forward to welcoming **ALL** staff and students back to school each day (Monday-Friday). School hours are 8.30am - 2.50pm.
2. Drop off and pick up will be staggered and families **MUST** adhere to strict timing as this assists our safety management plan.
SURNAMES A-M: drop off between 8.30 - 8.40am/ Pick up from 2.30 - 2.40pm
SURNAMES N-Z: drop off between 8.40 - 8.50am/ Pick up from 2.40 - 2.50pm
*No parents/caregivers on-site please. If you do need to come into the school, you **MUST** go through the school office and sign in. Children are expected to walk into school independently (we appreciate this might be hard for littlies but Mrs Hodgson and myself will be actively meeting and greeting!) and we will be adhering to 2m distancing at all times when outdoors.*
3. Play-time will be carefully scheduled into individual classroom programmes (*classes will not mix and mingle*) and will be restricted to classroom groupings to be actively supervised by individual teachers.
4. Sit-down eating will be staggered, 2m socially distanced and actively supervised under the canopy (*children must bring healthy food items that can be opened independently*).
5. Labelled water-bottles and sun hats are compulsory. Our water fountains will remain closed but bottles can be refilled from the adjoining taps.
6. **ALL** children are encouraged to bring their own devices (chromebook, tablet or ipad) and headphones to school.
7. There will be no gatherings or school-wide events whilst we remain at RED level.
8. Students in Years 4-6 **MUST** wear surgical quality masks indoors as per the mask mandate (no cloth masks please).

As a relatively small school, with plenty of outdoor space and a traditional single-cell classroom model, we are confident that we can adhere to public health guidelines and take reasonable measures in mitigating risk. We kindly request that you continue to monitor locations of interest and advise the school immediately if you have been asked to isolate and/or have been in close

contact with a positive Covid case. If your child is sick, they must stay home. If anyone in the household is displaying Covid symptoms, get tested!

Remember, it really does take a village to raise a child and it is our collective responsibility to care for the wellbeing of our school's staff, students and wider community.

We are genuinely excited to reconnect face2face with our school children and wonderful parents (from a safe distance at RED level).

As school is open full-time for all children we are unable to provide distance learning. If you are experiencing anxiety about sending your child back to school, please complete this short survey as soon as possible so we can find a way to assist your family re-engage in formal learning:

<https://forms.gle/KXNbz3BxUaD7SqPd8>

Please do take time to become familiar with our reopening plan and feel free to contact me if you require any clarity or further information: tkopua@stmarks.school.nz

Your friend in Christ

Tracey Kopua
PRINCIPAL

Schools and kura are **OPEN** for on site learning for all students.



Face coverings are required:

- **for all ākonga Years 4 and up** when indoors or in close contact with others
 - **for staff** working to provide or support the provisions of education for Years 4 and up
 - **on school transport** for all ākonga aged 12 and up.
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Curriculum related activities – Large activities with students should not go ahead unless held outdoors.



Non-curriculum related events should be limited and may only go ahead if a vaccination certificate is required.



No external students on site for non-curriculum related inter-school activities.



Essential support services and agencies such as **learning support service may be on site**. Minimise attendance on site for non-essential services as much as possible.



No non-essential visitors on site.



Children with complex medical needs, can seek advice from their health professional about whether it is appropriate to come to school. Parents, caregivers and students will need to work with the school to develop a plan to support attendance on site.



Support for off site learning will be provided for those who are advised to remain at home.