

Kia ora Postgate School.

Geez, what a week, so many different emotions.

Thank you for your continuing support of the measures taken in response to the situation with COVID-19/Coronavirus. We are regularly receiving and responding to information from the Ministries of Health and Education and are following the guidelines and advice we are provided with. Our general school operations and specific events are being evaluated on a daily basis and changes to routines, postponements or cancellations are being made as necessary.

While we have requested that students who are unwell do not attend school until they have recovered from their illness, **we remain open** and the expectation (and legal requirement) is that if students are well, they are attending school. All children, unless unwell, should be attending school. Please note that any 'stand-down' period applies only to those who have recently returned from overseas. Please call Healthline on 0800 358 5453 for further information if you are unsure of the appropriate action for your child/ren, yourself or another whānau member.

Those families who are keeping their child/ren away from school because their child might catch a virus are creating a rod for their own back. I not sure how long this virus will be here for, it looks like it may be a while. Medical Officers of Health have the authority to close a school. They would only do so if there was a medical reason for this, **or**, after a confirmed case in the school they need to close it for a short period of time while they determine if there is any risk to others. At this time, there is no risk at Postgate School.

I wonder if the people who are keeping their children away from school are also avoiding using their motor vehicles. 353 people died on New Zealand roads last year, with approximately 9,000 injury crashes. There are risks we take every day; however, we do not stop living. We think carefully about our health and safety, make the necessary precautions, and continue to live our life.

Just like road users, there are people in our society who put the health, well being and lives of others at risk. This is a small minority of people. We have to continue to follow the advice given.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/120429929/coronavirus-closing-all-schools-could-increase-risk-to-elderly-pm-says>

We need to change our thinking. Instead of thinking how do we not catch this virus, let's start thinking we have the virus. If we do this small change in the way of thinking, it will help stop the spread. Physical distancing is the key. I have attached a pictogram below to show how physical distancing can successfully stop the spread of this virus. With this in mind, there are a number of changes to our school programme next week:

Ole Football - postponed

Year 2/3 Zoo Trip - postponed

Flag Football - Cancelled

School Assembly- postponed until next term

Family Merit Assembly - End of Term 1- Cancelled. I have attached a copy of today's new look assembly; small changes, but life continues. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z39CqMPhF4vGM4eTuOGwV0ITgsjSXhgK/view?ts=5e72e785>

As well as the above, we are also asking families to ensure all children have a drink bottle at school next week. We are looking at turning off our drinking fountains. Children will be able to refill their bottles from the staffroom. We are also asking for all payments to be online. This will help keep Lesleigh and Jacqui safe.

A useful tip we received from our Health Nurse, Leah; ***"when cleaning surfaces spray the cloth, not the surface when wiping, this prevents bugs being sprayed into the air if they are already on surfaces"***.

We acknowledge the anxiety that the current situation is causing for many in our community. Our staff is also part of this community and many are also parents and grandparents and consequently share the same concerns as you. The health and wellbeing of all in our community continue to be foremost in our decision making. Our children's physical and mental wellbeing, and that of their whānau, can be supported by decisions and discussions based on fact rather than some of the misinformation that is easily found on social media and other newsfeeds. Facebook is not a reliable source of information.

Should someone in our school community be diagnosed with COVID-19/Coronavirus the Ministry of Health will initiate contact tracing – identifying and testing the infected person's close contacts. To assist with this, should it be necessary, can you please ensure that the school office is aware of any changes in your contact details (jacquid@postgate.school.nz or 235 9358). We are not aware of any suspected or diagnosed infections in our community, this is simply a measure to aid our preparedness. However, all of us should be ensuring that our GP and employers have up-to-date contact information should we need to be contacted urgently.

CURRENT MINISTRY OF HEALTH ADVICE

Ministry of Health advice to reduce the risk of infection remains unchanged and includes:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid sharing anything that has come in contact with saliva
- Stay home if you are ill and seek medical attention
- Ensure sneezes, coughs etc are covered
- Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system
- Practice physical distancing – keep 1.5m distance between yourself and other people.

Thank you to the many people who check in on us and are asking if they can help in any way. There is something you can do for us this weekend. Please check in on people. Maybe send a text or call someone close to you that you haven't heard from. Just check-in and ask if they are all good and if they need anything, especially our kaumatua and kuia; the elderly around us.

Keep connected to each other, keep focused on holding to official advice, keep batting away the rumours and gossip, and remember to look after yourself. *Waiho i te toipoto, kua i te toiroa. Let us keep close together, not far apart.*

As always, if there is anything we can do, please let us know. We are here for you.
And, what a great day it would have been for a Food Fair!

--

"Ma te mahi ngatahi, ka tu pakari te matauranga"

"Together, We Learn and Achieve"

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi Engari, he toa takitini;

Success is not the work of one, but the work of many

Nga mihi

Adam Campbell