

Morena Postgate School Community

We trust you and your family are well, enjoying each other's company and maintaining healthy habits.

Postgate School is well prepared for the Government's announcement today and on Monday, whichever way it may go. The purpose of today's email is to give you guidance about if we are to move the Alert Level 2. If, **I repeat IF**, we were to move at Alert Level 2, we need your help with our Health and Safety plan. Again, we feel it is better to give early notice of our intentions, rather than letting you know on Monday.

We want to stress that if schools are to reopen, that they will be a very safe and hygienic place to be. The rate of transmission of COVID-19 in the greater Wellington region is very low; with 9 current cases for the greater Wellington Region; with the last case being 16 days ago in Wellington City and Porirua. If we had the slightest worry about your child's health and safety, we would be very clear in expressing this to you.

From what we know, the biggest worry for Postgate School is around the physical distancing of students in the classroom. This is near impossible based on our interactions at school over the last week or so. Most children love the social aspects of life and especially at school. They love to share, explore, and talk with other students/staff. To expect a teacher to monitor physical distancing while teaching a group, while others do their independent work while ensuring all children stay in an isolated area is not only cruel but, and I'm calling it, impossible. Think about if you made your child sit in an area at home for 4 and a half hours a day? And then, throw in another 20, or 30 kids. So, we must get the simple but extremely important points right at school.

We need your help and support with the following 3 points:

Number 1, and for a reason, is that whanau, parents, caregiver do the right thing; we remain COVID-19 free at home. If your extended family remains healthy, then we will be ka pai! (Good) As a school we need to ensure we are aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and that if we or our child show any of these symptoms, we stay home, we seek medical support; we do the right thing! Stay home, keep your child at home.

In addition to staying home, we are asking that if one of your children is sick, please keep all your children home. If your child falls sick at school, we will be sending all your children home.

Number 2, if we maintain high hygiene levels at school, we will be nearly there. We ask that whanau do the following to help us at school:

- Teach/remind your child about coughing/sneezing into their elbow.
- If possible, send your child with a small bottle of hand sanitizer attached to their bag or person. This bottle does not have to be filled. **We will have plenty at school** and are happy to fill/refill bottles at school. If your child has their own 'sano' it will help with building great habits moving forward. The biggest fear we need to have now is that of our own hands! The virus can only enter our bodies through our eyes, nose, or mouth.
- We would like all children to return to school with their own cleaning rag/cloth. It will save considerable time if students were to wipe down their own desks/equipment throughout the day. Staff will spray each child's cloth regularly throughout the day and children will wipe down their area and equipment. We have brought a high-quality spay which claims to keep surfaces 'germ' free for three days.
- Children will need to bring their own drink bottle to school. The drinking fountains are potentially a minefield for transmitting any illnesses. Children will be allowed to fill their bottles at school. Please remember, we are a water-only school.

Finally, Number 3 and this goes against all Postgate is about. We ask that parents/adults/family members do not enter the school grounds or buildings. We are asking that you drop your child to their school gate (see below) and watch them from there. We understand some parents may have to enter the grounds (parents of new Year 1 pupil, or parents of children with any needs). Any person entering the school buildings will need to sign the register in the office.

To help monitor and keep physical distancing we ask that children enter the school grounds using the following entry points:

- Year 1's – Through the locked gates (which will be unlocked). This is the gate the Music Bus drives through
- Year 2/3's – The top car park gate. Year 2/3 children will walk pass the hall in order to get to their classrooms.
- Year 4-6 – Through the main school gates that lead to the Stone Wall.
- Year 7/8 – Along the fence line on Postgate Park. A panel along this fence line will be removed and a pathway will be down for them to follow their classrooms

Children, at the end of the day, will walk out these gates as well. Teachers will walk with them and ensure they head off in the right direction. Brothers, sisters, cousins etc who walk home together can all meet by the new Basketball hoops and then walk home together.

We know this may add a few extra minutes to their walk home.

We also know that parents will not be able to use the top car to drive into to drop off children or pick them up after school. A cone will be placed over the driveway at 8:30am each morning, so it becomes a safe zone for children to walk through.

We are also aware that there will be an increased traffic flow before and after school. Please go slow. No short cuts or U turns outside the school. You'll need to add a few minutes onto your day and drive up Staithes Drive North and turn into Woolwich Close; Safety Sam!

We understand that some or all of the above measures may seem a bit full on or over the top, however, we want to reassure you that we are taking yours, your child's, and our staffs health and safety very seriously. We have many other measures in place and we're sure after today, we may have more to work in.

Let's keep doing the great work in our community by looking out for others and keeping our community COVID-19 free.

Keep smiling, keep being awesome, and we hope, we see our children back to school very soon.

"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

Ngā mihi

Adam Campbell

Principal