



Rangitikei College

20 Bredins Line, Marton 4710, NZ

Towards Higher Things

**Unite
against
COVID-19**

PRINCIPAL'S SCHOOL LOCKDOWN NEWSLETTER

Number Two; 14 April 2020

Kia ora parents/caregivers and whānau,

I hope this finds you well, as the wheels continue to turn in these most extraordinary of times. As the new term begins tomorrow, I thought I would update you on a few matters.

Government provision of devices and resources

Thank you very much for your responses to our questions about the availability of devices and internet connectivity so we could maintain remote teaching and learning.

The Ministry of Education has asked us to release our Chromebooks for distribution to our community as they are required. This we are happy to do. Because of the lockdown constraints, the distribution of these is not straightforward. They will be disinfected and packaged up at school this week, and then the Ministry will courier them direct to households who need them. They will remain the property of the school and need to be returned once school resumes again.

For those without internet at home, hardcopy materials will be distributed by the Ministry direct to their address. Our teachers have not seen these resources, but I hope they will prove suitable to enable ongoing learning.

For those with internet access, they will receive direction on learning from their individual teachers who are all now fully back at work, and able to be contacted.

I really want to acknowledge the enormous amount of work our staff have put in to respond to this emergency situation. Quite exceptional.

TV education channels launching on April 15

'Home Learning|Papa Kāinga TV' will start education broadcasting for early learners and students (Years 1–10) from 9am on Wednesday April 15. Māori Television will launch a series of te reo educational programmes (for ages 0 to 18) on the same day.

This will be free to air, on **TVNZ channel 2+1** and on **TVNZ on Demand**, as well as on **Sky Channel 502**.

It will run from 9am to 3pm on schooldays with programming for children and young people aged 0 to 15, as well as for parents. Home Learning TV will be on air for one month – with provision to extend beyond that depending on the lockdown situation.

Programming will be grouped for early learners, primary and secondary students. All programmes will feature highly experienced teachers and presenters, along with a range of wellbeing and movement experts.

Content will include play, literacy mathematics, science, te reo Māori, physical education and wellbeing. There will also be Pacific language content.

Māori Television te reo content will focus on learning at home for tamariki, rangatahi and whānau, aged from 0 to 18. It will also be tailored to specific age groups during the day, with learning content tamariki can do on their own, with siblings or as a whānau.

'Home Learning|Papa Kāinga TV' and MāoriTV education programming is not intended to replace teachers.

The programmes are aimed at children and students who, for whatever reason, find it tricky to learn online, or who don't have hard pack learning resources.

Helping students stay safer online from home

Network for Learning (N4L) provides internet and digital resources and security for schools. It is government funded. The following is an offer regarding online safety from them:

When children learn from home, it's important to help them stay safe online. N4L helps to keep your child safe at school. So while your child is learning from home, we have a simple, FREE way to block the worst of the web.

We've set up a safety filter that parents can set up on their child's learning devices from home.

The free N4L safety filter (by global cyber-security leader, Akamai) blocks websites containing known cyber threats like phishing scams, malicious content and viruses, while also protecting children from content deemed the worst of the web (like adult sites).

To Switch on Safety, you need to change the 'DNS' settings on your child's device.

We've outlined simple instructions for the different devices at www.switchonsafety.co.nz, as well as answered FAQs.

Coming out of Alert Level 4

This is the question we would all like answers to. No one is sure what Level 3 will look like, or even Level 2 for that matter. If we come out of Level 4 next week, do not assume school will go back to normal – we just don't know yet.

But there are some things we do know based on what the Ministry has already told us:

- *Monday 20 April* – government announces whether country will move from Alert Level 4 (lockdown) on Wednesday 22 April as planned.

If we do go to Alert Level 3 from midnight Wednesday 22nd, the following timeline will most likely apply:

- *Thursday 21, Friday 22 April* – staff permitted to re-access school site. No students at school.

- *Monday 27 April* – ANZAC Day public holiday
- *Tuesday 28 April* – Staff-only day. No students at school.
- *Wednesday 29 April* – first day students can return to school. This *may* not be the whole school at once – we cannot assume this.

Therefore, what we are anticipating, is that **the very earliest any student will be back at school is Wednesday 29 April**.

Please be aware that, regardless of what the different alert levels will involve, the rest of this year will look quite different to what we had planned. A number of events and changes will have to rescheduled, and, in some cases, abandoned, this year. On the other hand, we will have learnt much through this, and we may be able to do new things that we would not otherwise have attempted. Nothing is wasted.

Do be aware though, as we go back to the drawing board in terms of our plans for the rest of this year, that the learning needs of each student will be paramount, that they will be safe, and that we will do all we can to ensure that this event does not have a negative impact on their schooling progress. No limits.

Like I have said before, to make this work, we need all members of our school community to fully demonstrate our school values of **Respect, Endeavour, Aroha** and **Perseverance**. Thank you again for your support – we can only do this together. And we are.

Kia kaha



Tony Booker
PRINCIPAL

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