



Rangitikei College

20 Bredins Line, Marton 4710, NZ

Towards Higher Things

**Unite
against
COVID-19**

PRINCIPAL'S SCHOOL LOCKDOWN NEWSLETTER

Number Four; 21 April 2020

Kia ora parents/caregivers and whānau,

We hope that Term 2 and distance learning programme has been a success for your children so far. We know there will have been any number of challenges for you to deal with but we have been getting some great feedback about the learning that is happening and thank you for all your support.

This is an earlier newsletter than usual as a result of yesterday's announcement.

Rangitikei College at Alert Level 3

Yesterday the Government decided that we will move into Alert Level 3 on Tuesday 28 April. This is a positive sign, and one more step to further easing later on.

We will start to prepare our site from tomorrow. *From Wednesday 29 April we will be providing supervision of distance learning for Year 9-10 students only who require that supervision.*

A very clear message from the Prime Minister and Director General of Health is **that if you can, you should keep your child at home.**

In other words, you should only physically send your child to school if you have to.

This is a solution of last resort to enable more parents/caregivers to get back to work.

I would like to stress that students who require this supervision at school will be doing *exactly the same work as those learning from home*, but under very tight health requirements.

Normal school rules, including uniform, will apply. The canteen will not be open.

At this stage, I am unsure if buses will be operating. I am waiting to hear back from the Ministry on that.

What will happen at school for those who have to come in?

In order to ensure the safety of those children and our staff who do come to school, we will be operating with very strict enforcement of health and safety measures as recommended by government.

These will include, but not be limited, to the following:

1. Students will be placed in 'bubbles' of 9 students and one teacher, in a single classroom.
2. They will be required to be in those bubbles *all day*, including at break and lunch times. There will be no mixing of bubbles.
3. The same staff member will be with the students all day and will supervise – not teach – students doing work set online by their regular teachers. There will be no opportunity to interact with other teachers except online.
4. Bubbles, during class and break times, will be limited to set areas.
5. There will be very limited opportunity for physical activity. No practical lessons can be run.
6. Students will not be able to leave the school site during the school day except in special circumstances. Because of the high degree of organisation, students arriving late will not be permitted entry on site.

7. Any student showing any signs of being unwell (temperature, sore throat etc) will not be able to come onsite.
8. Hand sanitiser will be required to be used on entry and exit from the designated room.
9. No visitors are permitted onsite, including family members.

We have no room to move on these conditions.

Please also be aware that the school now has virtually no Chromebooks available for student use onsite. These have been lent out to those who do not have a device to access at home. Therefore, any student wishing to come to school should try and bring a device with them so they can undertake any digital work.

We will contact you later this week to find out whether you can keep your child learning from home, or need your child to attend in person. We have to know the likely attendance before Wednesday next week.

What about Year 11-13 students?

Under the conditions of Alert Level 3, Year 11-13 students, are not allowed at school for any reason. As for Year 9-10 students, their prime means of learning remains by distance, predominantly online.

I understand some students do want to come in for a short time to undertake practical assessments and so on. We have been given very strict instructions not to allow this. These assessments will have to be done when we move into Alert Level 2.

Online learning

Many teachers are operating *online classes* during the week. There should be no clashes with these as online classes only occur in the regularly timetable slot.

I have also had some feedback that students are feeling overwhelmed with the *amount of work* they have received. I have checked with teachers about this and I do not think excess work is being set.

However, be aware that sometimes it is more practical and meaningful to give a large section of a unit at one time that would normally be learnt over several lessons or more. Therefore, the idea is to break this up into manageable chunks – just because it has been set one day does not necessarily mean it has to be completed that same day.

As many of you have been doing, please feel free to connect with your child's teachers or ACM with any questions you might have.

Distribution of devices

Now that we are in Alert Level 3, we have been given dispensation to deliver devices ourselves to students who do not have access to them at home. We are working on this now and we expect this delivery to be completed within 48 hours.

Finally...

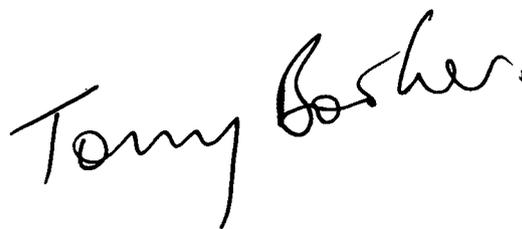
I know these are still tough times.

There is no such thing as an easy pandemic.

But while it is too early to say the end is in sight, I do hope we are at the end of the beginning.

I really appreciate the support you give your child to continue to engage with their learning throughout the term.

*Kia mau, kia ū, otirā kia haumarū
Hold fast, stay strong, furthermore be safe*



Tony Booker
PRINCIPAL

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