



Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Kia ora koutou whanau/aiga

**RE: School returns for ALL students and staff at 8.30am Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March – see you then!**

Like me, I am sure you have followed with interest the announcements made by the Prime Minister just an hour ago. It has been great to see several days with no new community cases, however, as Dr Bloomfield has clearly stated, new cases are still possible and we need to continue to act with caution and do the right thing to keep our community safe and minimise the impacts of COVID-19.

Being at Alert Level 3 for the last week was harder than previous lockdowns I felt, so I trust you and your household and wider whānau have managed to get through it without too many bumps! With the majority of children not at school during level 3 the incredible disruption to our start of year relationship building and timetable has continued. However, as we did last time, and may well have to again, we understood the need to have been so. We therefore thank you for your ongoing support of us and for the myriad of positive feedback and encouragement of us via the various social media outlets.

An hour ago, the Prime Minister advised that all of Auckland would go down to Alert Level 2 at 6am this Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> March. Therefore, schools are safe environments for children, young people and staff to return to school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. This **IS** good news! We are already preparing our school for the return and are really looking forward to seeing all our children in and around our amazing school by 8.20am, ready for an 8.30am start! It is vital they all return! Please do not have the attitude “*Oh well what’s a few more days if we wait a bit longer, so we will wait until half way through the week*” – every day counts and none of us have time to waste! All need to be back on Monday please.

The key public health approach to Level 2 is to minimise the risk that someone is infected in the first place, and second to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in our school is infected. If you have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact me.

As we have done in Alert Level 3, you can be assured that in Alert Level 2 we will know who is at school, who our staff and students have been in close contact with and take appropriate measures to keep everyone safe. With new variants and changed requirements for contacts of cases, New Zealand’s COVID response seems to be more complex and sometimes it is not clear what “the right thing” actually is, **HOWEVER please note the basics still work!** We have a large amount of control over how we can prevent the spread of COVID-19. Even with the new variants of the virus, the most important things we can do remain the same:

For our school we will:

- display QR code poster for the NZ COVID Tracer app at the front reception door
- keep our visitor register, attendance register and timetables up to date with contact tracing if needed
- be monitoring for illness and asking anyone who is unwell to remain at home, or to go home
- encourage people with relevant symptoms to go home, and to seek medical advice through Healthline (0800 358 5453) or their GP and get tested for COVID if recommended to do so
- reinforce the importance of good hand washing and drying
- reinforce good cough and sneeze etiquette
- clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces regularly
- teachers will also be distributing hand sanitiser as students enter the classrooms, after various breaks.

It is also good to remember, as described by Dr Payinda in his [NZ Herald article](#), “*Covid is not measles or chickenpox, it doesn’t hang in the air for hours waiting to infect passers-by. It travels on invisible drops of spit. You don’t have to cross the street to avoid anyone. Just avoid getting in their ‘moist breath’ zone*”. We all just need to remember to have some breathing space at Alert Level 2!

It is important however, that not just at school but at home, that you continue to follow the good practises, as they are essential to minimise the risk of contracting Covid-19. So a reminder:

- check in using the NZ COVID Tracer app everywhere you go (the sooner you get notified that you were at a location of interest, the easier it will be to keep yourself and your whānau safe)
- switch on the Bluetooth function on the app (go to the dashboard in the app to do this)
- always stay home if you are unwell and seek advice from Healthline (0800 358 5453) or your GP
- get tested if recommended to do so. Testing is free to everyone in New Zealand!
- wash and dry hands thoroughly and frequently
- practise good cough and sneeze etiquette
- regularly clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in your home
- wear face coverings on public transport
- for those of you who think you might have been at a [location of interest](#) at the specified time, follow the instructions on the [Ministry of Health website](#) or if you are unsure what to do, contact Healthline (0800 358 5453) for advice about getting tested

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the covid19.govt.nz website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

Page 3 has easy to follow additional information about this, should you need to know more.

We also pass on our thoughts and good wishes to any whānau who have had friends or wider whānau impacted by today's Tsunami alerts around the coast of NZ! Aaraia te kino and protect yourself, your whānau and your whakapapa.

Ngā mihi

Iain Taylor  
Principal

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION!

Below are guidelines regarding what in-school health measures we will be taking.

What will Manurewa Intermediate School look like at Alert Level 2?

As of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021, we are planning for the following:

1. The cleaning regime will continue as per our Level 3 plan.
2. The reception counter will be open but with enforced safe physical distancing.
3. **Students and staff** will follow the safe physical distancing guide from the Ministry of Health by staying outside of each other's moist breath zone. All **visitors** on site will follow safe physical distancing of 2 metres.
4. Hand sanitiser will be available in each classroom space.
5. Devices will be sanitised at the beginning and at the end of each day. Devices will be used by the same student.
6. Any child that appears sick at school will be sent home immediately. Parents/Caregivers will be rung, and you will collect immediately, with your child being isolated until you arrive. The definition for 'appearing sick; includes: coughing, runny nose, chesty coughs, exposed skin lesions, headaches. If your child displays these before coming to school please don't send them! This will create more issues for you as we will call you to collect immediately.

What will be the difference between learning at home vs learning at school during level 2?

There is no distance learning at home in Alert Level 2. All students and staff are expected to be at school unless they are sick.

What happens when I see people I know and haven't seen for ages?

At Manurewa Intermediate the blanket rule is there is to be no physical touch whatsoever outside of sports practice. So that means no high fives, handshakes, hugging, kissing, foot tapping, elbow touches or fist bumps.

What if my child is sick?

As per normal routines and expectations you will contact the school office (266 8268 xtn 1) to advise us your child is sick and upon returning bring a medical certificate. Please note it is important if your child is sick that you go to the doctors and return to school with a medical certificate. Because Level 2 is school as usual on site, no distance learning will be provided for absent or sick students.

Will all staff be back at school?

All staff will be back on site from the onset of Alert Level 2.

Will the school office be open?

The office staff will be available as per usual but with appropriate physical distancing required by all students and visitors.

Will Before and After school programmes/clubs etc operate?

Yes but these will be re-started on a case by case basis. You will be directly advised via the teacher in charge of the various activities.

## So what does this mean we can do?

**Assemblies** - can go ahead however, you should maintain sufficient distance between students so they aren't touching or breathing directly on each other. There are no restrictions on the number of students attending assemblies.

**Sports (on school grounds)** – physical activities including using shared equipment can go ahead. Physical distancing is not possible in some sporting activities. In these situations extra emphasis on handwashing and drying (or cleansing with hand sanitiser) before and after activities and regular cleaning of equipment is very important.

**Cultural activities** - practices and rehearsals will be able to go ahead (note the physical distancing recommendation of 1 metre distance where practicable, for singing and wind instruments). Performances where visitors are attending, including parents and caregivers, will need to align with public health requirements for gatherings.

**Inter-school events** – these can go ahead although there will be limitations due to the public health measures required and will need specific contact tracing ability of those playing for and against teams. Where people from outside the school may be attending or if you are hiring out your hall or allowing community groups to use school facilities, the rules for gatherings will apply.