

PANDEMIC NEWSLETTER - MAY 15th

Waimate Centennial School

Nga Mihi Nui Waimate Centennial School

Today is the last day of Home Learning for most of the children of Waimate Centennial. All staff members have been very busy at school working to make sure that we are ready for the children when they return this coming Monday, May 18th.

As I am sure you will be aware, there will be a number of changes to our usual school and classroom environments. Classrooms for example may look slightly different, but remember teachers will be ready to help if children are not sure about anything. At the same time do feel free to phone if you have any questions or queries. As always, we are here to help.

This week's newsletter focusses on relevant information regarding Waimate Centennial School during Level 2.

Please read through the information very carefully and if you are unsure about anything, feel free to contact us.

Waimate Centennial School Under Alert level 2

Level 2 is all about being safe and sensible and that is the approach coming through public health and the guidelines provided for schools. This plan is based on the criteria in Alert level 2 that "schools are open with distance learning available for those unable to attend school e.g. self-isolation".

The government has informed us that it is safe for students and staff to return to school in Alert level 2. Schools are safe because appropriate hygiene habits will be emphasised. Our planning is guided by the MOE document: [Managing health and safety in schools at Alert Level 2](#).

The overriding principles for Alert Level 2 are:

- *to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place*
- *to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school or early learning centre is infected*
- *understand that Level 2 is not business as usual*

Note: there is **no bubble concept** at level 2 so there are no restrictions on groups of students mixing with others on site. Physical distancing in schools means all students and staff are maintaining a physical distance so they are not breathing on or touching each other. We will be striving to ensure this takes place as best as we can.

The timeframe for schools opening.

We will be opening on Monday, 18 May.

All families have been contacted and asked to inform us if their child/children will be attending school during Level 2. ***If you have yet to inform the classroom teacher of your plans, please contact them now.***

Hygiene routines will be taught and prioritised.

Students will receive classroom sessions on health and safety behaviours required under level 2.

Teachers will prepare material for students that transition them back to school. This will include opportunities to share their experiences and concerns, well-being and mental health.

Areas of importance will include:

- hand sanitise on entry to and exit from the classes
- wash hands with soap and dry hands before leaving toilets or before eating food
- contactless greetings
- sneeze and cough into elbow
- maintain as much physical distance as is practical
- water fountains not to be used (***The children are to bring a named bottle***)
- no sharing of bottles or other touch items
- Toilet doors, handles, surfaces and tap fittings for example, will be spray cleaned during the day.

General areas and teaching spaces.

- ***No person with any symptoms of any contagious illness can enter the school.***
- ***Signs have been posted on the main entrance points to our school grounds detailing relevant information.***

- ***Children arrive at school no earlier than 8:30 am*** and move directly to class where they will wash their hands before entering. They may then enter the playground or court areas.
- The children are to enter through the main classroom door only. Side doors, such as the one beside Pukeko will not be able to be used.
- ***Visitors, which includes all parents and caregivers, will need to sign in and out and complete a contact register found outside classrooms or the office area. If you enter the school grounds you must sign and complete the register.***
- ***Students in school uniform as usual***
- Whole school assemblies will not be held until further notice
- No drinking fountains will be available (***The children must bring a named bottle***)
- ***External hire of school facilities will be suspended until further notice***
- During the first few days' extra staff will be on duty to remind students about appropriate behaviours and distancing

Please note the small gate by the netball court is to be used by bus children only at the end of each day. All other children and adults must use a main entrance/exit point.

School Office

- ***Visits by appointment if at all possible.***
- Sign-in book for visitors in office includes provision of contact information, with hand sanitizer.
- ***Hours 8.30am to 3.15pm only.***

Buses

- ***All buses will be running as usual***
- Bus roles taken each afternoon
- No students sitting in seats around driver
- Hand sanitiser on entry and exit
- ***No-one will be allowed on buses who is not on bus list***

Drop offs and Pickups

We understand that some students will be more settled and will transition more easily if parents can come into the school to drop off and pick up students. If this is the case, parents can bring their child into school and see them settled and ready. *All people who enter the school will need to fill in a register with their names, and contact details and indicating which classes they entered.* There will be registers in each class and the office area.

For those students who are having no difficulty with coming back to school we ask that parents consider dropping and collecting them at the gate only.

We are confident that when we have managed the school successfully for several weeks, we will be able to relax these arrangements

Response in the case of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19

The school will close for 72 hours, to allow contact tracing, and then potentially for a further 14 days. We will be advised by the medical officer of health or the guidelines of Ministries of Health and Education.

School Hours

The children are to arrive at school no earlier than 8:30 am.

At this stage the children will be released at different times at the end of the day.

- Seniors released at 2:45pm.*
- Middle released at 2:50pm.*
- Juniors released at 3pm.*

Children with brothers or sisters at school will be instructed to meet on our netball court once released from class before heading home.

Parents are asked to gather students and avoid congestion at the school gates please.

Unwell Children

If your child has any symptoms of illness, raised temperature, runny nose or cough or regular sneezing, keep them at home.

Parents/care givers of any child displaying such symptoms, will be contacted to collect their child immediately.

Devices - Chromebooks etc

If children have a chrome book or a similar device at home, it would be great if they could bring them to school to use. This would not only be beneficial for hygiene reasons but will help maintain the huge steps we have all made in digital learning. Headphones would also be extremely useful if available to bring.

Please note this does not include cell phones.

School devices will be available for use and strict cleaning protocols will be in place.

All school chromebooks that were on loan to some families need to be returned to school urgently on Monday please.

Pie Warmer

Until further notice this will not be operating during Term 2.

South Canterbury Primary School Sport Update = Term 2 Events

South Canterbury Primary School Sport have postponed the cross country which was due to be held on June 9th. They hope that later in the year they will be able to find an appropriate time to hold both the cross country and swimming sports which was postponed in Term One.

Waimate Centennial will not be holding our school cross country during Term 2, but will also looking at possibly holding it later in the year.

Advice for parents and whanau about preparing for Alert Level 2

The Ministry of Education have provided updated information on their website for parents and whanau to help them prepare for Alert Level 2. This includes:

- *Videos parents may want to watch with their children*
- *A 'checklist' for preparing for the return to on-site learning*

<https://parents.education.govt.nz/essential-information/news-stories/covid-19-preparing-for-alert-level-2/>