

14 April 2020

Dear Parents,

Covid-19 Lockdown – Welcome to Term Two 2020

Term Start Date:

As communicated with you last week, Term 2 begins tomorrow, Wednesday 15th April, and as such we commence our Home Learning Programme for our students. We are confident that our platform for supporting our students and families with their learning tasks is both practical and purposeful.

In developing these learning tasks we have tried to be respectful, thoughtful and to understand that every family's circumstances and capacity to support learning is different. The true priority in this current situation is the health and wellbeing of our students and for you as parents.

Our Teaching teams are very excited to reconnect with the students in their classes again tomorrow but are no doubt feeling a little anxious as we set out on this new journey together. Our experience as teachers has previously been focused on educating children in a face to face capacity and not through distance learning, so please bear with us all as we navigate the days or weeks ahead. I think that it is fair to say that we are learners in this context too, but we're in this together and I can assure you that we will be doing everything we can to support our students.

The Ministry of Education is providing significant support to students and schools to ensure that learning can continue even through these challenging times. They are not prescribing how this school-led learning from home must be done and are instead recognising that every school and its community is different and that we have done our best to honour this trust and to develop a programme to suit our community's needs. Therefore, no school's distance learning will look the same from one school to another.

Provision for Home Learning:

We are not going to be replicating the normal school day programme and expecting parents to take on the role of the teacher. We would like to use this opportunity instead to help families nurture productive and supportive relationships within the home. We have set learning challenges that are both fun and engaging and involve parents in order to facilitate building cooperation and quality relationships.

Please note this is an OPTIONAL programme containing ideas set for the week that your child can complete. The Learning Tasks cover a range of curriculum areas and will be predominately able to be completed without a digital device. The weekly learning programme will be emailed to you on the first day of the school week at approx. 9am. (Please note your child's classroom teacher will be sending the first weeks learning tasks email to you tomorrow, Wednesday 15th April by 9am as this is the first day of this shortened school week). We are also going to put the home learning programme up on our website for you and your child to refer to. This will be up at 9am on the first day of each school week. The website address is: www.owairoa.school.nz/curriculum/home-learning

Email Communication Platform:

We have set up a classroom email address specific to your child's class, which the classroom teachers will use to send out your child's home learning. You will be able to email your child's teacher back asking further information about their task requirements or for sharing learning outcomes including photos or small videos depending on what the task requires. Teachers will respond back to emails between 9am-3pm weekdays.



Your child's classroom teacher will be sending the first week's home learning programme out to the main email address we already use to communicate with you. If this is not the email you wish to use for the home learning programme during Alert Level 4, please reply back to the initial email from your child's classroom teacher, giving the updated email address you would like to use temporarily during this Alert Level 4 time.

Further Information:

If you require further information and have any questions/queries with regards to the Home Learning programme, you can email:

Principal: Alan McIntyre – principal@owairoa.school.nz

Assistant Principal (Years 0-2 Programmes) : Kirsty Rice – kirsty.rice@owairoa.school.nz

Assistant Principal (Years 3-6 Programmes) : Anita Randhawa – anita.randhawa@owairoa.school.nz

Attendance Registers

The Ministry of Education have instructed schools to be formally open for instruction in respect to the period that students are undertaking 'school-led learning from home'. The school is required to still mark the Attendance Register each day, as we do on a normal school day. This requirement is not that practical in terms of administration, but one way to achieve this goal is for parents to email the class teacher each morning, before 10am, stating that your child is participating in a school-led offsite course on that particular day.

Ministry Resources

The Ministry of Education is currently busy setting up resources that you can access at home.

Websites:

Learning From Home www.learningfromhome.govt.nz is a website containing resources, guidance and information for parents, whānau, teachers and leaders from early learning to senior secondary. (Ki te Ao Marama www.kauwhatareo.govt.nz is available for Maori learners and their whanau)

Television Channels:

The Ministry have developed a dedicated TV learning channel which is available to support students who do not have access to the internet or devices and to supplement our specific Home Learning Programmes. Two channels (English and Maori) will begin broadcasting as from tomorrow Wednesday 15th April. The broadcasts will run for six and a half hours during the day and includes specialised content for Early learners, support for parents to help their children's education, a broad curriculum that includes movement, music, physical education, wellbeing, numeracy, literacy and science through an integrated approach to curriculum, an hour of Te Reo Māori, and Pacific and other communities

Ministry of Education Survey:

The Ministry of Education has asked us to collect data on the digital access our school families have. We have already sent you an email asking a couple of questions about your access to technology. We are still awaiting 191 survey replies and would appreciate these responses ASAP, so we can send this information on to the Ministry of Education.

Returning to School:

At this time there is no guaranteed timeframe on when we will be able to return to Owairoa Primary School. The Prime Minister is due to make an announcement on Monday 20th April regarding the end of, or continuation of the four week lockdown scheduled to finish on Wednesday 22nd April.



Principal: Mr Alan McIntyre J.P.,B.Ed., G.D.I.T.E., Dip.Tchg., Cert Sch Mking (CMS),A.N.Z.E.I.

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Please be assured we have a clear and robust educational plan if Level 4 lockdown continues after the 22nd April and you will be fully informed about this in due course.

However, if we do move from Level 4 on the 22nd April, this will not mean that our school will open straight away. The Minister of Education Chris Hipkins has stated that *"it would be wrong to assume that all schools and early learning services will necessarily reopen at Level 3"*.

Home Learning Programme Feedback:

I welcome you to provide feedback on our Home Learning programme. You may wish to provide feedback e.g. on the choice of email and website platforms, the Learning Task content, the ability to interact between student and teacher, the balance between devices and environmental/home resource tasks, the balance between student independence and Parental assistance required etc.

This feedback can be emailed to me at principal@owairoa.school.nz

With Appreciation:

I would like to thank our staff who have been busy over the past two weeks getting our home learning programme prepared and we are eagerly awaiting the learning tasks going live tomorrow morning.

We appreciate parental support, suggestions and involvement as we try hard to keep our educational partnership with you as parents alive and well balanced.

With kind regards,

Alan McIntyre
PRINCIPAL