



# TE RAPA PRIMARY SCHOOL

A caring community School

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear School Community

## Courtesy Update from the Principal

We are constantly being reminded that Alert Level 3 is the most crucial stage of our fight against COVID-19, and we must not treat life as normal ... yet !

Keeping our “eye on the ball” is important ..... and that requires us all staying at home whenever possible during Alert Level 3.

- We have 24 x children registered to return to Te Rapa Primary School under Alert Level 3 criteria.
  - Note - They only attend if they “**need**” to be at school.
  - All other students : Are to continue working from home.

It is a high risk phase, but we will be OK if everyone behaves as they should.

We have set up 4 x learning bubbles working at 4 x learning stations here at school. Staff assigned to a learning bubble, join that bubble.

Only a skeleton staff are at school, and they are covering the key areas. We have 75% of the staff rostered to *work from home*.

The Alert Level 3 protocols could go on for a number of weeks, so we are trying to plan accordingly if this is the case.

I am hopeful however that if we stick to the guidelines for a little longer we can all move to Alert Level 2 so we can enjoy more time with our extended families beyond our current bubbles.

We are all missing our own children, grandchildren, siblings, parents, grandparents, friends .... and some of these family members are elderly and live alone. They will be desperate to see us too.

We do however need to remain patient.

A special note of thanks to the “wonderful” essential service workers (Level 4) who have worked through, and also a special thanks to those who have had to return to work more recently (Level 3).

I would like to personally thank all of those staff in our NZ schools who have returned to work under Alert Level 3 too.

All Level 3 – 4 workers would rather be at home, but many have made the **commitment to serve others** and we should all be grateful to those people in our communities who have done that. **THANK YOU .... you are all appreciated.**

## Distance Learning at Home

**School made** learning packs for Te Rapa students were made available just prior to lockdown starting.

The content of these packs were for ‘school days’ only, and students were encouraged to do weekend things on the weekend, and holiday things over the 2 x week holiday period.

Te Rapa teachers commenced Term 2 email communication with their students on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April. I asked that they focus on the well-being of their students and their household bubbles first, whilst also looking to re-connect with students.

Over those first 3 x days teachers were also encouraged to re-establish positive reciprocal relationships with their students and their families. This included sharing a little about their own experience(s) in their own lockdown bubble, and then invite their students to share their experiences in return.

Teachers also started to set up 'distance learning' programmes, making best use of our **school made** learning packs for students. Unpacking the contents of these packs was a good starting point, and allowing students to share what they had completed. How things were progressing was also encouraged.

At all times parents / carers were encouraged to not put pressure on themselves (as the tutor) or their child(ren).

Keeping things relaxed and fun at home continues to be a priority, and so is doing less, rather than more (school related tasks).

This period through Alert Level 4, and now through Alert Level 3, is all about eliminating any frustration / stress in the household.

Teachers have continued to liaise with their students as part of the distance learning programme they are implementing, and if students are doing a couple of hours before lunch, and maybe (if all is going well) an hour or so after lunch .... then that is great.

Screen time is necessary as part of any distance learning programme ... but so is reading a book, playing cards / board game or getting outside to ride the bike / scooter and playing with the others in your household bubble on the front / back lawn. A walk around the block works well too, as does some drawing, building, gardening, letter writing or similar. Use the 'educational' channels on TV too

We have asked for **MOE made** learning packs to be distributed from Wellington to the 'lockdown' location of our Te Rapa students.

There have been delays in getting these out, but we are being patient. We know that high school students involved with NCEA have been a priority. We also know there have also been problems with distribution too with some packs going to the wrong address, some students receiving multiple packs and some not getting a pack at all.

Te Rapa Primary students are logged into the system, and we hope that these will arrive at your location shortly. The content of these packs is unknown, but we are told they are designed to add value to what teachers are already doing remotely with their students.

### **School is Closed to Other Students**

For those that live locally .... please keep your children well away from the school at all times during Alert Level 3. If your child is NOT part of our current Alert Level 3 school bubble ..... **they must keep away.**

FYI – Ashurst Park playground is closed during COVID-19 too, and so is Ashurst Park due to turf maintenance.

### **Thank You Parents / Carers**

***I am extremely grateful to our entire Te Rapa community for your patience and understanding as we have worked our way through all of this. We have made the journey together, and although we are certainly not there yet ..... we do seem to have things under control.***

### **Thank You Students and Staff**

***Thanks to those of you who have shared positive words of encouragement with me and / or others in our school family. Being kind in this way is appreciated by us all, and certainly gives each of us a 'lift up' .... just when we might need it.***

Thanks to everyone for the assistance and / or support (small or large) so far. Any encouragement received to-date has made our job(s) a little easier, and this positive support helps immensely when you are operating under pressure .... it does not go unnoticed either.

**THANK YOU ....**

Stay safe and stay healthy my friends.

Kind Regards  
Vaughan Franklin  
Principal

