

Returning to School on Monday 22 November 2021



18 November 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

You will all be aware that we had a positive Covid-19 case in our school bubble. This affected a small number of our school community so we are still expecting to open on Monday 22 November following our Health and Safety guidelines as sent home previously. Being at school is still regarded as having low risk for children.

We understand you may now be more hesitant for your child to return, therefore, **later today we will send another survey so we can update your preference** so we can arrange appropriate cover. Next week, we would like to get our older **Year 4-8 children back first on Monday 22nd** to get them settled back into school before our **Aroha Y0-3 children start on Thursday 25th** November. Our decision to stagger this start date is determined by the number of Y0-3 staff that were classified as close contacts and are unable to return until the 25th. If you have a family returning and want your Y0-3 child to come back to school earlier on the 22nd, or need to go to work with no adult at home to look after them, we will cater for that.

Procedures for returning to school remain as before:

At school, children will stay in their rōpu/teams with designated adults and, wherever possible, not mix with other teams or adults. Rōpu/teams will be allocated different and more break times so that children have plenty of opportunities outside to play safely.

We ask that during Covid Level 3.2 parents/adults do not enter our school grounds unless absolutely necessary. Someone will be at the gates to greet your children in the morning. We understand some children may be a little anxious; we will endeavour to make the transition back to school a comfortable one for everyone.

What does Level 3.2 look like for us at St Joseph's School:

- **Masks: Masks are required while inside for Year 4-8** students and the adults working with them. Year 0-3, or adults working with them, are not required to wear masks. **Masks will not be provided by the school.** Students in Years 4 to 8 must enter the school grounds wearing their mask, so we can check they do have a mask for the day. Masks will need to be changed or washed daily.
- **Uniforms:** We would like our children to be in their summer uniform, however, if you have not been able to arrange this, they can continue to wear their winter uniform until the end of the year. They will need their summer bottle green hat.
- **Devices: Children must bring borrowed school devices back to school when they return on Monday 22.** Please return the signed contract in your child's case. If you are not returning to school and have a school device, these will need to be returned to school no later than Monday December 6th.

- We discourage parents from entering the school grounds. If you do so, you need to wear a mask and we need you to sign our tracking and tracing log kept at the front door. **No parents/visitors are to enter the school buildings.**
- At school, children should try to stay 1 metre apart (this may not always be practicable).
- The drinking fountains will be reopened but we encourage children to bring their own filled water bottles.
- We will ensure our classrooms are well ventilated.
- Hand washing and/or sanitizing, and cough etiquette into elbows will continue to be encouraged.
- There will be no full school assemblies during Alert Level 3.2.
- Our changing sheds will remain closed.
- Until clarified, the school swimming pool will remain closed.

On Arrival to school

The gates on both streets will be opened at 8:30 am and children can enter the school through either the main gates or the small gate off Dublin Street. A teacher will be at each gate to record any adults that need to enter the school grounds (tracking and tracing). **At Alert Level 3.2, our preference is that parents do not come onto the school grounds** but if they feel that they want to walk their child to their classroom on the first day, they must stay outside the classrooms or not walk onto any decks, or stop to talk with others. Please remember to scan our QR code. Teachers will be at the classrooms by 8:30 am to receive the children each morning when they arrive.

To accommodate all students returning we need to stagger arrivals and departures from school as well as break times during the day to limit contact across bubbles. The school gates will not be opened until 8:30 am - **do not send your children to school earlier than this time.** To avoid congestion, children can then go straight to their learning spaces, which will be supervised by their teachers, or wait outside them. **We would like our younger Aroha Y0-3 children to arrive at 9:00 am so that our entrances are not congested.** We are happy for them to come earlier with older siblings if needed.

If children arrive late to school, they are to go directly to their classrooms - they are not to come into the office area for pink slips. This is to limit the number of contacts that they are exposed to. Parents who need to pick up a child early or for an appointment, need to notify the school office that you are coming, and we will bring the child out to you ph 092387745.

We would like to offer parents a 1:00 pm pick-up if you would prefer your child to have a shorter day and to help ease the congestion at the gates at the end of the day. Please advise your child's teacher if you would prefer this option. If you do not intend to send your child back to school everyday, please let us know.

After school

In the afternoon, in order to reduce congestion at the gate, **we ask that Aroha Y0-3 be collected at 2:30 pm, Ako Y4-6 to be collected at 2:40 pm, and Arahi at 2:50 pm.** This might mean you have to wait a little longer but rōpu/teams will not mix. Teachers will walk children to the gates and they will be passed on to you. Parents waiting outside the gates are asked to keep

their 2 metre distance from people not in your household bubble. Siblings can wait for each other in the court area if necessary.

Children are to stay at home if they are sick, and we will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms.

Please be aware this scenario may change due to circumstances beyond our control.

Distance Learning: Our distance learning programme will not be able to be provided as it has been to date. As we have all staff returning each day to supervise their kaitiaki, teachers cannot be expected to do both. Rōpu/teams will let you know how this will work for your child if they are not returning to school.

Lastly, thank you for supporting your child's learning over these past 11 school weeks. You all have been amazing and we appreciate your ongoing support. With less than 4 weeks left of our school year, our return to school won't be the same but we are very excited to connect with our students again. Our focus will be on your child's safe return, reconnecting and alleviating anxieties to make being at school with others comfortable again.

If you have any concerns, please contact me: principal@stjosephs.co.nz .
We look forward to coming together again to end our school year.

Keep well and God bless,

Ursula Hall
Principal