

## **Return to School Update #2**

16 November 2021

Kia ora koutou Reremoana Families

On Friday we shared initial information with you about our planning to keep everyone on site as safe as possible as we return to part time school. While we knew school would return some time close to November 15, we did not receive details of Health and Safety Guidance from the Ministry of Education until last Thursday evening. This has meant that a significant amount of work has had to happen over the weekend and yesterday, and will continue tomorrow as we add more detail to our procedures to ensure the government guidelines are met.

We will continue to update and adjust our planning once we are back with children on site as situations arise.

It is important to note that every school is different and there can be no 'one size fits all' plan for a return to school this week. Each school has had to work through the factors and plan to manage their own unique situation. This is why schools are taking a range of different approaches.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) provided schools with a Health and Safety Checklist which focuses on 'mitigating risks' - reducing the known risk factors as much as we can. We have used this to create a substantial plan for our place and our people.

It contains everything from how children arrive at school to who uses what play area and when. While its not useful to share this level of detail with you as whānau, we will share a lot of information in this update.

We expect to be reviewing and updating and modifying our procedures continually. We will communicate any changes which will impact your whānau.

### **Red School/Blue School Allocation**

Thank you for your patience as we extracted and organised all of the data from our Return to School survey and compiled our Red and Blue Schools. We start this week with Thursday as a Blue School day, and Friday is a Red School day. From there days are alternated, as shown over the page.

If you have advised us that your child is returning to school, today you will receive notification via email from teachers advising which 'school' (Red or Blue) your child /family is in. If we have made a mistake and NOT put your family together in the same colour, please email [maramac@reremoana.school.nz](mailto:maramac@reremoana.school.nz) immediately and she will fix it up.

*We will not be making changes from one "school" to another, so please refrain from making a request to do so. While we would love to accommodate your requests, our first priority, and our time and energy, must be focused on safety. While a 'quick swap' might seem easy, there are flow on implications which we just cannot work through at the moment.*

If your child comes to school on a day we are not expecting them, we will not be able to have them on site and will need to make arrangements for them to return home.

If those families who indicated they were undecided about their children's return do decide to return their children to part time school, please email me [lynnf@reremoana.school.nz](mailto:lynnf@reremoana.school.nz) and we can allocate them a 'school'.

We need at least a day's notice for this. Students who have not already been allocated to a 'school' will not be allowed to simply come on site (i.e no "walk ins").

				Thursday 18	Friday 19
Nov	Monday 22	Tuesday 23	Wednesday 24	Thursday 25	Friday 26
Nov/Dec	Monday 29	Tuesday 30	Wednesday 1	Thursday 2	Friday 3
Dec	Monday 6	Tuesday 7	Wednesday 8	Thursday 9	Friday 10
Dec	Monday 13	TBC			

### **Arriving and Leaving School**

One of the ways we can keep our staff and students safe is by keeping all others off our site and reducing the locations where any 'gathering' could occur. It's important to remember that we are still in Level 3, so it's not like it was in Level 2 where we could have a small number of whānau on site.

Adults continue to provide the greater risk for transmission of COVID-19, and therefore at Alert Level 3 congregating by parents and caregivers on the school site should be avoided wherever possible.

We know that when we returned to school previously, we managed to have almost all of our students comfortable with saying goodbye at the 'gate' and coming into school on their own and that we saw impressive amounts of independence and resilience, from even our youngest children.

We ask that only one adult per whānau drops children at their gate. All adults must follow safety procedures - maintain distancing and wear masks. If you want to catch up with a friend, please move well away from school to do this.

***You will receive a second email today or tomorrow with your child/family's allocated gate for arrival at school. This is to avoid congestion. At this stage we have not given specific staggered arrival times. If we find there is a need to do this will will modify our system and let you know.***

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**The drop zone will be permanently closed to all but staff and delivery traffic for the rest of the year. This is essential to avoid congregation and congestion.**

We have 5 points of pedestrian entry to school:

With the Scotsmoor gate out of action due to the building project, we have moved that 'gate' to the drop zone gate beside the hall - **Hall Gate**

We also have made an entry gate by the staff carpark (**Carpark Gate**) to avoid the use of the Main Gate by students. All these gates will be clearly marked with a sign.

**Turnberry Gate** - student entry only

**Belfry Gate** - student entry only

**Hall Gate** (small gate by the hall) - student entry only

**Carpark Gate** (by the staff carpark) - student entry only

Gates will open at 8:30 a.m. NO ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL BEFORE THIS TIME PLEASE.

Students must be at school by 8:55 am - gates will close at this time

Please note that this is a very small window of time for children to enter the school by their assigned gate. Please help us to support your child by arriving at this time.

When students arrive they are to go straight to their hub and stay there.

**Main Gate** - this is the only point of entry for adults who absolutely must come on site.

### **Parents and Caregivers on Site**

We acknowledge that for our brand new entrant students, an adult may want to accompany them to class on their first day. We are prepared to make an allowance for this. Goodbyes will need to be said at the classroom door; parents will not be allowed entry to hubs. If a sibling can walk them to their class, their teacher will be there to meet them.

If you do intend to accompany your new entrant on their first day, or you feel you need to come in for any other reason, please email [office@reremoana.school.nz](mailto:office@reremoana.school.nz) so we know to expect you, and so safety procedures can be explained. You must both scan and sign in. Ministry guidelines state that there is no requirement for visiting parents declare their vaccination status unless they are here as a volunteer or to do a job.

Restricting access to our hubs to only staff and students means we know that the only adults interacting with children once they get to their hubs all meet the **Public Health Order:**

- All staff have presented a negative Covid test before returning to site for the first time
- All staff onsite have at least 1 vaccination as of 15/11/21

Vaccination status, whether presented as cumulative or not, is private unless permission has been granted to share. After consulting individually with staff, I am today able to share with our community that in addition to meeting the PHO above, all of our staff are fully vaccinated.

## **Contact Details**

It has never been more important to ensure that we have your current contact details. Despite all our health and safety measures, there is always the possibility that we may have a COVID case within our school or community, so this will be critical.

You can log in to the Parent Portal to ensure that your details are correct.

Tomorrow at 10am we will send both a text message and email to the number/address we have on file.

If you don't receive the text or email, or need help accessing the Parent Portal please [contact our office](#) asap.

## **Unwell Children and Staff**

We cannot stress enough how important it is that any staff or children who are unwell stay away from school and seek medical advice. This is a very important factor in reducing the risk of COVID in our school.

Our procedures tell staff to actively look for any signs of illness. We have step by step procedures if a child (or staff member) is unwell at school and we will be asking whānau to collect their child immediately.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 are like those found with illnesses such as a cold or flu.

You may have one or more of the following:

- new or worsening cough
- sneezing and runny nose
- fever
- temporary loss of smell or altered sense of taste
- sore throat
- shortness of breath

Less common symptoms of COVID-19 may include diarrhoea, headache, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, malaise, chest pain, abdominal pain, joint pain, or confusion/irritability. These almost always occur with one or more of the common symptoms.

## **Mask Wearing**

We know that wearing masks is yet another factor which can help keep us all safe.

- Overseas experience shows that even young children are able to wear a mask when the culture of 'masking' in a school is strong, and we want to create such a culture at Reremoana
- All children are welcome to wear masks - and masks need to be worn by children in Year 4 upwards.

- There are a small number of children who may struggle to wear a mask. We will work with the child and whānau to support. *Please let me know if your child does struggle so we can put supports in place from the get go - [lynnf@reremoana.school.nz](mailto:lynnf@reremoana.school.nz)*
- We ask that children please wear a mask from home, and that the mask is named.
- Correct mask wearing will be something that teachers will go over with students.
- Children will be given “mask breaks” outdoors.
- Although the guidelines provided say “Face coverings are not required to be worn in schools by staff or students, for Years 1 to 3” our Y1-3 teachers are strongly encouraged to wear them.
- Parents are to wear masks to drop offs and pick ups

### **Physical Distancing**

To minimise risk our Ministry guidelines state:

- No more than 30 students in any one group so that children and staff can physically distance, wherever practicable, by 1 metre when inside.  
*At Reremoana we are lucky to have our large hubs to spread out in*
- There is no specific physical distancing requirement inside or outside when at school, but a one-metre distance is recommended wherever practicable, particularly between adults.  
*Our furniture will be spaced and students will sit in designated places  
Break times and spaces for each hub will be rostered to minimise mingling between hubs.*
- Visitors, including parents and caregivers, should maintain a two-metre distance from those who are not part of their household bubble.  
*This includes waiting outside the school*

### **Ventilation**

To minimise risk our Ministry guidelines state:

- It is recommended to keep classroom temperatures to 18 degrees. 18-20 degrees is a comfortable temperature, below that there is increased risk – from a cold household, workplace or school
- At any level, indoor spaces should be well-ventilated for example by opening windows, doors and any vents. Good practice would include fully opening all windows during breaks and after school for as long as possible. At Alert Level 3, outdoor learning is encouraged wherever possible.
- Getting as much fresh air in the classroom as you can has been endorsed as the best way to ventilate New Zealand schools by the Ministry of Health and NIWA, and generally as the best approach for schools by the World Health Organization, Centre for Disease Control

- The easiest way to reduce transmission risks and achieve good ventilation is by opening windows, doors and vents.

*When staff arrive at school all that can be opened up, will be.*

*Our site is notorious for wind, so it is recommended that students bring their sweatshirts even though it is verging on summer.*

*Of course being outside provides the most ventilation of all, and teachers will be maximizing opportunities to teach outdoors, Auckland weather permitting!*

*Hats are essential (if you can't find your school hat, any hat will be fine) and whilst we will have sunscreen on site, we recommend applying sunscreen before leaving home.*

### **Physical and cultural activities/ playgrounds**

Our Ministry guidelines advise the following:

- Exercising and singing must be held outdoors.
- Physical education classes and break time activities can include access to sports equipment including playgrounds, but hygiene practice should be observed before and after playing with equipment.
- Playgrounds can open
- Physical distance 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.

*At Reremoana our break times and spaces will be rostered and allocated according to hub.*

*Break times will not occur as they normally would, as we have less staff to monitor students.*

### **What to Bring**

- A named mask - compulsory for Y4-8, encouraged for others
- A refillable drink bottle
- A sun hat - it does not have to be a school hat if you can't find yours
- A school sweatshirt as it can get quite cold indoors

### **Please Also be Aware:**

- There is no before and after school care
- We cannot offer lunch orders and the Kereruy Kafe is not open
- No one is to arrive before 8:30am, and arrival is through designated gates
- The drop zone is closed to traffic (except for staff cars and deliveries) for the rest of the year
- The crossing will not be manned by road patrol

## **Teaching and Learning on Return to School**

As teachers first and foremost, we understand that some children and their families may be wondering what learning will look like for those returning to school part-time and those who are not returning this year. In this section of the newsletter we aim to clarify what learning opportunities will be provided, for both on-site and alternating learning-from-home days.

### On-site Learning at School

- Our major focus as a school is around integrating children back into a school environment by providing engaging learning opportunities and re-establishing routines.
- When attending their on-site blue/red school day, children will be engaged in rich Reading, Writing and Math lessons as well as our usual range of minor curriculum areas. In most cases, children will not be resuming small group instruction and no readers will be sent home at this time.
- We understand that children have had varied experiences of home learning during lockdown and will cater for individual needs as always. We are committed to providing children with as much structure and routine as possible right up until the end of the term.
- We encourage Year 4-8 children who have them to bring their Chromebooks to school should they be needed for teaching and learning. We have as a school, however, decided to prioritise hands-on, collaborative learning to maximise safe peer interaction when children return to school. This is likely to mean less time on devices during their days on-site.
- As is recommended by the Ministry of Education, teachers will be providing lots of opportunities for children to learn and play outdoors. Hubs have designated outdoor spaces and large sports areas will be booked by one hub at a time. As outlined in the health and safety plan, it is essential that children come prepared with a hat, shoes and a full drink bottle.

### Distance Learning from Home

- Teachers who are not working on-site on any given day will continue to provide online learning opportunities for children in their team.
- Children who are learning from home (either children who are not on their scheduled blue/red school on-site day or children who are not returning to school) are encouraged to work through some of the distance learning provided by teams. As always, distance learning is optional and we encourage families to work with their child/ren to come up with a plan for the day.
- The hardcopy packs that have been available from the office, including the Ministry of Education pack, were designed to last for a few weeks. We will reassess the need for new hard copy packs to be made up over the coming weeks.
- Teams will continue to issue distance learning lessons and activities as they have been up until now via Google Classroom, email or team Facebook pages.

- On their learning from home days, children will still have to opportunity to connect with their peers and teachers from their team according to the following schedule:

<b>Google Meet Times (Monday-Friday)</b>		
Kiwi	11am	
Piwakawaka	9.30am	1.30pm
Pukeko	10.30am	2.00pm
Tui	10.00am	1.00pm
Kereru	9am -12pm - Flexible group meetings scheduled via Google Classrooms	

I know that this is a lot of information to take in. It may need a couple of reads for it all to make sense! Please do feel free to email me with any questions which have not been covered in this or Friday's letter. The volume of emails I'm currently receiving is huge, so if I don't get back to you immediately, I apologise.

Ngā mihi

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