



Hello Everyone,

Firstly, the good (great) news that school resumes on Monday. We are all looking forward to seeing the children and the return to school.

Secondly, a big thank you from us at school for your support of us and of our school and for your efforts in helping the children in their '*Kaeo School at Home*' activities over recent weeks. It looks like both the children and you had lots of fun and learning. If there is any positive thing to come from this it is that we have all had the time to spend with our children and loved ones and it was great to see so many of you taking this opportunity with both hands!

The messages around the return to school have changed greatly over the term of the lock down and the excellent progress that we all made by staying in our bubbles and breaking the Covid 19 virus chain has meant that schools will largely be operating as normal from Monday. We should be both happy and proud that Northland has no current cases of Covid 19 and in particular that the larger Whangaroa area has not been affected at all and these efforts are what now allow us to plan for some sort of normal life in the coming weeks and months.

However, there are some things that will be different at least until we reach Covid 19 alert Level 1.

- Children will be asked to use hand sanitiser when they enter the bus in the morning (this will be provided and managed by the bus drivers) and before they enter the bus to go home (we will manage that).
- Children will also be asked to use hand sanitiser when they enter school in the morning (we will supply and manage this) and before and after playtime and lunch time breaks.
- Additional cleaning of the school will take place each day including daily sanitising of desks and tables in classrooms, toilet areas, and high contact areas including door handles and the like.
- For the first few weeks we are actively restricting the number of people on the school site and making the recording of anyone that comes to school more robust. If possible, it would be best if parents and caregivers do not come to school and that you contact us if you need to by phone or through Facebook messenger. Everyone who does visit school must come through the office and complete contact tracing registration. This includes if you bring your child to school or pick them up from school and leave your car, so please stay in your vehicle at all times in the car park. It is absolutely ok for you to stay in your car and phone us if you are dropping off or collecting your children - we will happily collect or deliver them safely from/to you. Please do not be offended if you are required to sign in and give your details - this is for the safety of everyone.
- People who come to school to work with children including our Bible Ladies, Sport Northland, Constable Rob Drummond, and Anna Valentine will return in term 3 or when we feel that it is appropriate and safe for them to do so.

- For families that plan to enrol their newly turned five year olds we ask that you hold off from doing this on Monday and instead that you contact me at school to discuss how we can work together to manage this effectively.
- If a child is sick, in any way, then they should not be sent to school. This applies at all times but is even more important now. Any child showing signs of illness will have to go home immediately and the need to pick up a sick child from school affects our attempts to restrict the number of people entering the school grounds. At least in the next few weeks please err on the side of caution regarding this.
- Our Pre-school programme will also not operate immediately upon our return to school.
- As noted above we have no cases of Covid 19 in our community and we want to keep it that way. The major risk to our community now is through people coming to or leaving and returning to the district. With the lift in travel restrictions we know that it is tempting for families to head off to other parts of the country. It would be appreciated and wise if families could hold off travelling out of the district for the next few weeks. No one wants to be the person that brought Covid to Whangaroa and one of the best ways of minimising the chance of this happening is staying put in '*Covid Free Whangaroa*' for the next few weeks.

Otherwise school will operate as normal except our first goal is to again work towards ensuring that the children build the relationships with their teacher and with each other that are at the core of quality learning. We do not expect that this will take long in our school and that we will soon be able to focus again on more traditional learning areas but please be patient because children will have experienced the Covid 19 lockdown in many ways and though most will be chomping at the bit to get back to school and to learning others may need a little more time and support.

All this said, I understand that some parents and caregivers may still have concerns about children returning to school. There may be individual reasons that make you want to be a little more cautious right now. If you feel this way please get in touch with me to discuss your situation and how we can work to get everyone back to school as soon and as safely as we can. We can, together, work our way through any concerns.

We will keep working to refine and improve this plan but I am confident that children can return safely to school on Monday – we look forward to welcoming them back.

Kind regards,

Paul Barker,
Principal.