

Dear parents and caregivers

We are looking forward to welcoming our staff and students back to the school next Monday.

Making connections and sustaining relationships is a natural part of being human and it's certainly something we have all missed in recent weeks.

We had anticipated the shift to level 2 and have begun to put plans in action. I know that some of you and indeed your children will still be feeling anxious about the move back to school. I know some staff are feeling that way too.

The emphasis for us will be on health and wellbeing. We want everyone who is part of our school to feel safe, supported and connected both on our site and from home. Some students will transition easily, some may struggle and some may have anxieties.

There is a strong temptation to return to normal - get the timetable back up and running – but it's more important at this point to restore relationships and reconnect.

During level 3 we have introduced good practices and our students adopted these quickly. These hygiene and physical distancing conditions will be in place for the next couple of weeks:

- **Hand sanitiser** is available outside and inside every classroom and all students are expected to use this frequently.
- **Classroom surfaces** are cleaned often during the day.
- Students are **seated with space** between them. This will be the hardest requirement to meet next week but we are spreading our tables and desks out, providing more room to work apart in shared learning areas and using free spaces like our hall, outside courtyard and library more frequently. Students will not sit together on the floor to work or listen to a story yet.
- **Devices are not shared during the day.** If a student has their own device now is the time to bring it to school. Keyboards will be cleaned at the end of each day.
- **There will be physical activity** during the day. At break and lunchtimes all students will be encouraged to be active but games involving large groups and physical contact will not be permitted.
- **The drinking fountains will not be available.** Every student must bring their own water bottle. There will be a clean and accessible place to refill these.
- **School uniform is compulsory but no PE gear is needed yet.** The changing in and out of PE gear poses some problems at level 2. We will re-introduce this as restrictions on large groups ease.
- We have changed our hand towels to paper over the past few weeks in preparation for the return to school. However, we encourage all our students to bring their own hand towel to use after the bathroom. **Good handwashing practices** will continue to be a priority for us all.
- **Students should bring their own lunch** to school. We will look to reintroduce lunch orders online in a couple of weeks. There will be a canteen on Fridays but only one class at a time.
- **The school bus service** will be available and Mr Jones from the college and I will be responsible for these as per normal. The bus company has asked for a passenger list on each service but I feel this will be difficult to sustain. I am also concerned that there could be very full buses and both college and intermediate students will be in close contact. I recommend that your child walks to school or is dropped off at the gate by a caregiver. However, if this is not possible for your family, please email Kaye Good (office@newlandsint.school.nz) at our

school office to let her know your child's name and the bus route they will be using each day. We will make this available to the bus company as required.

- Class rolls and information about who is on site are very important to sustain a **contact tracing system**.
- **Please notify us if your child is unwell immediately** and keep them away from school. If a possible or probable case should occur in our school or community, it is vital we can identify who each person has been in contact with while at school. This applies to our staff too of course.
- **If your mobile number or any other personal details have changed** in recent weeks, please let us know straight away. Being able to contact our parents and caregivers is vitally important now. All students who become unwell must leave the school site quickly.

School will start on time next Monday morning at 8.45. Please do not send your child early. Classrooms will be open from 8.30. All students should go straight to their classrooms using external doors. There will be no entry to the learning areas through the front office.

Although we know our students will be looking forward to seeing each other and catching up with their friends, we will discourage groups gathering together in any of our spaces and attempt to restrain them from hugging and embracing each other! I am attempting to put the same restrictions on our staff!

I feel that I have already given you too much to digest but I hope this is at least a start to your preparations for a return to school.

Good news – I will send you more information as it comes to hand from the ministry over the next few days.

Kind Regards