

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update Monday 13.04.20



Kia ora koutou

I hope everyone is well and safe as we cross the halfway mark of our COVID-19 Level 4 lockdown. This is a moment in time that we will never forget.

Over the weekend there has been a lot of talk and speculation about when schools will reopen across the country. Prime Minister Jacinda Ahern has said that no decision about moving out of Level 4 will be made until Cabinet meets to discuss the impact of the lockdown on Monday 20th April. Following this we expect to receive a clear message about when we can expect to reopen. The Ministry of Education has commented that there are plans for a number of scenarios, depending on the outcome of the lockdown and spread of COVID-19.

Term 2 begins (from your homes) this Wednesday 15th April. In these extraordinary times, this will provide opportunities and challenges for us all, but the key to being successful will rely on us being able to communicate with each other in whatever way works best for you. This will be different from home to home.

Learning for the next two weeks, at least, is going to be different. The school doesn't expect parents to become teachers or for there to be a programme running at home that reflects the normal school day. It is important to remember that learning can come in many shapes and forms and learning from home provides an opportunity for children to apply what they already know to everyday settings and situations.

Likewise teaching over the next two weeks is going to be very different for all of the staff of Koraunui School. Our teachers cannot provide their normal classroom programme remotely. We are working hard to provide alternate learning experiences that children can engage in at home. In this new and different world that we currently live in, this is an unusual challenge for us and one that we have never experienced before.

We aim to utilize all the learning options on offer (these are outlined below) so we can reach as many children as possible. To do this we need to be able to communicate with parents, so we need parents to answer their phones, respond to emails, respond to text messages, use our website, use Facebook to communicate with us. We understand that parents use many different methods of communication and we will work with whatever works for you. If you have no access to technology or data at the moment, please talk (from at least 2 metres away) to your family, a neighbour or someone from the school who lives nearby and ask if they can contact the school for you so we can work out the best way to communicate with you.

Focus for this week

From Wednesday this week the classroom teachers will be making contact with families of children in their class to check in and see how things are going, find out how the hard material packs we sent out have been used and if you need any support to work with your children over the coming weeks. Our immediate focus is on the well-being of our school community.

We have also been working on a plan "WHAT DO WE DO DURING LOCKDOWN? HOME LEARNING MADE EASY 😊" that teachers will finalize and get to you and the children as a part of the work the children will be able to do at home.

We are grateful to Barbara Hay and her team of helpers who are doing such an awesome job of organizing and delivering the craft and baking packs to families around Stokes Valley. These add to the whole picture of what we can provide the children while they are required to work from home. It has been fantastic to see so many happy children with their creations on our Facebook page.

Teachers have been conducting Zoom video chats for their classes over the past 2 weeks and we plan to continue these for those students and parents who can access Zoom through their devices. This is an important way for teachers and children to remain connected.

StudyLadder – all children have a StudyLadder login and this can be accessed on any device. StudyLadder has a wide range of activities the children can engage in from home. Login details were attached to the hard packs that were sent home from school before the lockdown began.

Ministry of Education Support

Hard material packs – these are being sent out around the country from this Wednesday 15 April. These may not arrive to your home until next week, but they will arrive. Please be patient, this is a massive undertaking to get material to every child in the country.

Online learning – material will be available online for those who can access the internet. Information will be provided about how to access this. We have not been informed of when this will be up on the Ministry of Education website but we will inform you when we receive this information.

Devices – thank you to everyone who replied about having access to devices in their homes. About 50% of our families indicated they didn't have a suitable device for online learning. The information we gathered has been shared with the Ministry of Education and they are beginning the process of getting devices into homes for children to use as a part of their learning. **WE CANNOT RELY ON GETTING DEVICES SOON, OR AT ALL, AS THE FOCUS IS ON SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS FIRST.** The government estimates there are 80,000 households without devices or internet to access online learning.

TV Learning Channel – this will be operating from this Wednesday 15 April. It will run between 9.00am and 3.00pm, Monday to Friday, on TVNZ 2 +1, Maori TV, SKY Channel 502 and some content will be on TVNZ OnDemand.

As well as what is mentioned above, there are an endless number of things you can do with or for your children that involves learning. The key is to make the learning as much fun as possible.

Do things with your children that help to build positive relationships. This is the most important thing you can do. The well-being of yourself and your children must come first.

- Encourage lots of reading. Reading to self, parents reading to children, children reading to children. Re-read books. There are lots of on-line books available for free, you can google different books. Everyone with a Hutt City Library card can issue e-books and audiobooks online.
- Write about what you have been doing. Keep a journal, write online to a friend.
- Learn and practice maths timetables. These will always be useful at school and in life.
- Take part in craft activities being provided by Ms Hay
- When it's sunny, get outside. Play, be active (within your bubble)
- Play lots of games. Card games, dice games, board games, Lego, do jigsaws, build with blocks etc.
- Learn a new skill. Someone in your bubble might have a skill they can share. YouTube can teach you lots of new skills.
- Bake with your kids. Get them to help prepare meals.

If the learning becomes stressful for anyone, STOP

Do what you can do. Do not feel stressed or pressured to provide hours of learning for your children each day.

All messages about the COVID-19 from me can be found at <https://koraunui.school.nz/this-is-us/corona-virus-update-covid-19/>. If you have any questions or require any help with anything please contact us at office@koraunui.school.nz and we will do what we can to help.

Remember to stay home and stay safe.

Ngā mihi nui

Dave Lamont
Principal, Koraunui School