



# Newsletter

## COVID-19

9 May 2020

[www.stheliers.school.nz](http://www.stheliers.school.nz)

Dear Parents

### **School Opening Alert Level 2**

Before I begin this newsletter, I want to wish all our wonderful school mothers a very happy Mothers' Day tomorrow.

I am sure we all followed with interest the address by the Prime Minister last Thursday when the rules and guidelines about Covid-19 Alert Level 2 were announced. As a country, it is reassuring to hear how well we have done at minimising the impacts of COVID-19 to date which has allowed us to be in this position.

During the Prime Minister's address she advised that, in Alert Level 2, schools are safe environments for children and staff and that additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing.

The good news is that when we are able to, we will be ready to welcome all students and staff back to our school site.

The Prime Minister has said that Cabinet will make the decision on Monday 11 May whether the country will then move to Alert Level 2. The Prime Minister also stated that schools would open on the following Monday. Therefore, Monday 18 May is the earliest possible opening of schools under Alert Level 2.

The key Public Health approach is to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, that we have good hygiene practices and that we have contact tracing procedures.

As we have done in Alert Level 3, you can be assured that in Alert Level 2 we will know who is at school, who our staff and students have been in close contact with and take appropriate measures to keep everyone safe.

Physical distancing is one of the precautions to prevent the spread of disease. We do however know it is challenging in schools. The guidelines that the Ministry of Health has issued to schools, are for children and staff to maintain a physical distance so that they are not breathing on or touching each other, coupled with the good hygiene and cleaning practices that we are all well and truly used to by now.

Under Alert Level 2, it is vital that parents do not send children to school if they are sick or you suspect they are becoming sick. Symptoms to monitor for especially are any respiratory symptoms such as a cold, a head cold, blocked ears, cough, sneezing, chills or a fever. This is crucial in looking after the health of not only your own child but the health of the staff and other children. We will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms.

## **Week 5 Term 2 11–15 May**

The comments and details below are based on the premise that the Prime Minister will announce on Monday that the country will move to Alert Level 2, with 48 hours' notice given to the country. Please remember though and repeating from above, the Prime Minister has said that schools would open on the following Monday.

If the move to Alert Level 2 was delayed, the dates would be pushed back correspondingly.

### **Onsite children and staff**

- Monday 11 to Wednesday 13 May, no change at school under Alert Level 3.
- Thursday 14 and Friday 15 May under Alert Level 2, support and supervision for the children who have been at school during Alert Level 3 remains the same; however, non-classroom teachers will do this.

### **Offsite children and staff**

- Monday 11 to Wednesday 13 May, distance learning at home remains the same with classroom teachers interacting with children as they have done so during the previous weeks.
- Thursday 14 and Friday 15 May, distance learning will continue for children at home, however teachers will not be available to conference, meet or provide feedback to children. Teachers will provide learning activities for Thursday and Friday during the week.
- Thursday 14 and Friday 15 May all staff return to site to prepare for school reopening to all children on Monday 18 May.

Distance learning ceases Friday 15 May. Distance learning will only continue for any child with a known underlying medical condition who is unable to return to school at Alert Level 2 on the advice of a doctor. This would need to be supported by a medical certificate.

Face-to face teaching and learning commences Monday 18 May.

Well-being of students and staff will be a particular focus when we return to school. I do not think for a moment that it will be 'school as we know it' as soon as we return and for some time after that. We have all reacted differently to Covid-19; to the health implications, to the lockdown, to how it has affected our families and to our general well-being.

As we near a return to school please let us know if you are concerned that your child might need some extra support to get them through this next period.

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the [covid19.govt.nz](https://covid19.govt.nz/) website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

I will be in touch again soon to update you on our plans.

Kind regards



**Principal**