



Whāia te mātauranga hei oranga mō koutou
Learning for Life and Making it Count

Welcome Back...we've done it!

Kia ora e te whānau, nau mai, haere mai.
Ngā mihi mahana ki a tātou, ngā toka tū moana!

Warm greetings to you all. You have weathered the storm and stayed strong, like a “*toka tū moana*” – a rock standing against the battering of the waves. It has been tough at times, and lovely at times. At the beginning of this rāhui/lockdown, I wrote to you:

Look after yourselves, folks. Have awesome family times...create some great memories.

I hope that has been the case.

We are looking forward to opening our school not quite, but nearly as normal on Monday 18th May. Thank you for helping us to prepare for this, by talking with your children, by answering the survey, by returning devices, and by helping us tidy up. Below I have summarised the key health and safety steps we are taking, and some tips for parents.

The key message for parents is to avoid coming on to the school grounds if you can avoid it. This minimises the risk of spreading any sickness, not just the Covid-19 bug. We cannot afford to have our teachers sick, as we are limited in the number of relief teachers available, and we are conscious of the winter and ‘flu season approaching. Likewise, it is essential that anyone even slightly sick stays away from school. So please help us keep everyone well.

Noho ora mai,

Ka kite ano,
Mark and the team at Ouruhia

2020 Term Dates:

Term 2: Tues 28th Apr – Fri 3rd July
NO Teacher Only Day:
Queen's Birthday Monday 1st June

Term 3: Mon 20th July – Fri 25th Sept

Term 4: Mon 12th Oct – Thur 17th Dec
Labour Day Monday 26th October
Canterbury Show Day Friday 13th November

Ouruhia School Health & Safety Plan:

Classrooms:

- Hand sanitising on entry & re-entry into classrooms
- Hand sanitiser pumps in each room, soap and water and paper towels in all toilets
- Regular handwashing reminders and opportunities,
- Daily cleaning of all high touch surfaces (including desks, door handles);
- Desks spaced/ facing one way where possible
- Reminders for distancing/keeping out of moist breathing zone
- More regular breaks during day to ease back to school

Playing:

- Handwashing before and after play
- Normal play, use of PE and sports gear.
- Access to playground resumes.
- Children bring own drink bottle

Entry & Exit from school:

- Parents asked to not come onto school grounds - however if you really need to (for essential meetings or if children are very young) then you will need to sign in at the gate. There are two ways to do this:

1. Use your **smart-phone to sign in at the gate**, see tracing.co.nz. We have a QR code to scan with your phone, or enter our site code manually. The first time you do this you enter your name and contact details, but that can be saved for future times.

How do I scan the QR codes?

For iPhone: QR codes are super easy to scan - you simply open your camera and point it at the code - it will pop up a banner on the camera that, when you tap, will take you to the app with your location details already filled in.

For Android: some Android phones allow you to scan using the camera like the iPhone. Others will need to have a QR code reader app installed. There are plenty of free options available - a few popular options include: i-nigma, Kaspersky's QR Scanner, and QR Droid.



or if you prefer,

2. Sign the **paper register**, (names, date, time in and out, where they visited). No need to enter phone and email address as we have those details already. This information is important for the process of contact tracing, should it be required
- Please try and stay 2m from other adults. If you wish to chat to other parents, please do so outside the gate for the time being.

Meetings, appointments:

- Please email your child's teacher or Raewyn to set up a meeting if required
- Office access will be restricted– you will be familiar with the systems dairies and supermarkets have used (one in and one out, marking 2 metre spacing on the ground).

Sick kids:

- students and staff who are even just a little bit sick have to stay at home.



Public Health Statement for the Education Sector

We have carefully looked at the evidence around COVID-19 and educational settings, and at the experience of other countries in responding to COVID-19 in these settings to inform the public health advice to the education sector in planning for a move to Level 2.

Our experience in New Zealand and overseas with COVID-19 over the last four months shows that it does not infect or affect children and teens in the same way it does adults.

So children and teens have low infection rates, they don't become that unwell if they do get infected, and they don't tend to pass the virus on to adults.

Quality education is a public health intervention in itself, so I am very aware of the benefits of children and young people attending school and early learning, and the need to support children and young people to do this as quickly as we can.

The two key public health principles that support our approach at Alert Level 2 are first to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and second to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school or early learning centre is infected.

Any children, young people and staff should stay at home if they are sick, or should be sent home immediately if they show any symptoms.

Physical distancing is a good precaution to prevent the spread of disease. In an Alert level 2 school environment, this means children, young people, and staff maintaining a physical distance so that they are not breathing on or touching each other, coupled with good hygiene practices (coughing into your elbow, handwashing and drying) and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

There are situations where physical distancing is not possible, such as some sporting activities. In these situations extra emphasis on handwashing and drying (or cleansing with hand sanitiser) before and after activities and regular cleaning of equipment is recommended.

In an early learning environment, it is not really possible to have a physical distance between children and staff. Young children require a lot of physical support and it is not possible to explain or maintain a physical distance between young children given the age of the children and set up of centres.

This means good hygiene practices (coughing into your elbow, regular handwashing, and drying) are even more important.

Schools and early learning services will also maintain registers so that children, young people and staff can immediately be contacted by public health services if there is a probable or confirmed case.

And it is important that parents fully support this approach by doing their bit - keeping children home if they are unwell and seeking medical advice about whether a child may need to be tested; and ensuring great hygiene practices at all times.

*Dr Caroline McElnay
Director, Public Health, Ministry of Health*

Wellbeing Messages:

3 questions for greater calm

We might be back to Level 2, but that doesn't mean that everything is back to normal... in our physical lives or mentally. You might find the next few weeks have their own challenges. Here are three questions you can ask yourself if things feel a bit tough:

Am I present?

Focus on what is directly around you right now. Do some deep breathing. If you have lots of worries, make a mental list of them and schedule a time to do that worrying. E.g. for 15 minutes after lunch, that is your time to do all your worrying about what is on your worry list. Tell yourself that you're not allowed to worry at any other time in the day. This trick often helps people to worry less.

Am I open?

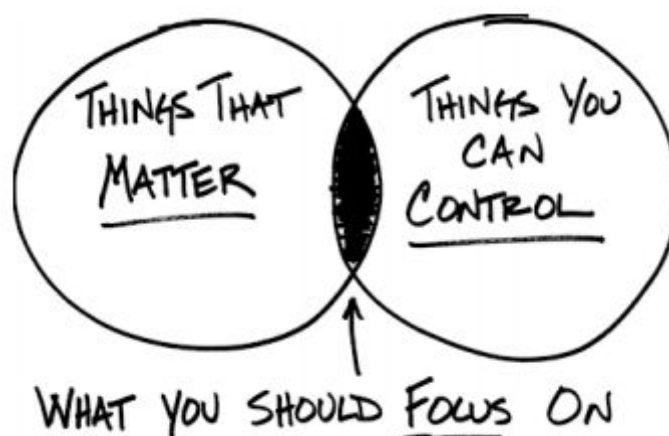
Ask yourself whether you are open-minded (accepting of new ideas and experiences) and open with the world (open about your values, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings). Letting others know how you feel helps a lot.

Am I doing what matters?

Ask yourself "What's important now?". The trick is to find things that are important **and** that you can control/influence. Focus on those things.

"Be where your feet are"

Gilbert Enoka, All Blacks Mental Skills Guru





Getting Kids Ready for School after Lockdown

Lockdown has been a strange time for everyone and returning to a 'more normal existence' will be a huge relief for many. However there will be some children and adults who may feel anxious about leaving their 'bubble' or struggle to get back into a routine. These tips may help to reduce anxiety and ease the return to the classroom.

CALM AND CERTAINTY IS THE WAY. Our (adult) behaviour and response to uncertain situations is very important. Children are looking to us for a sense that things are OK. If we look and act as though we are doing OK, and alongside them come up with a plan going forward, then this will aid them. If you are stressed or worried about what is going on then you would do well to follow these guidelines as well as your kids.

The ideas below may require a little adjustment depending on age or temperament of your child. You know them best. Talk with your child about each of these and try to **give them some control** over how each might look. Negotiate, but have your bottom line.

Don't try to change too many things, too much, too quickly. Tackle one or two of the changes below and alter them a bit at a time in the lead up to a return to school. E.g. If they are waking at 10am now then slowly return to their old school wake time over several days.

Stress and anxiety is all about uncertainty and not knowing ("what if..."). **THE ANTIDOTE TO UNCERTAINTY IS... CERTAINTY.** As such, in preparation for a return to school (which is likely a source of uncertainty to your child) focus on **maximising routine and structure** in your child's life. This is about getting them back into the old routines that previously worked, plus maybe adding some new ones that might further reduce their stress/anxiety.

Core aspects of structure and routine to work on:



SLEEP Get back into a set sleep routine everyday e.g. teeth, book, bed. The main thing is ensuring the **wake up time is the same every day** (this anchors the sleep/wake cycle). Also, **no** devices in bedroom from an hour prior bedtime, and no naps during the day.

MEALS Having consistent meal times is helpful. Start to return to original school day meal times for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Eat as a family at the table.



EXERCISE AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITY. Exercise is brilliant at reducing stress and anxiety, especially in green spaces. Try to get them (and you) outdoors for more than 30min every day. It will reduce stress and improve sleep as well.

FAMILY TIME / SOCIAL TIME Try to go back to, or start some new social routines e.g. regular game nights, walks, baking together, eating dinner at the table together, 'daddy-daughter time', 'mum-son time', and so on.



SCREENS (!) Negotiate clear limits and times (e.g. none in bedroom after dinner) and agree on rules to monitor what your child is doing (e.g. agree to occasionally look at browsing history or texts) .

ROUTINE 'TO DO' LISTS Create a morning routine list, or things to check off when home from school or tidying their room. Use other privileges as incentives, e.g.



"When you have done your morning to do list, you can have your phone/TV time".

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REINFORCE HOUSE RULES Now is a great time to re-negotiate and discuss the general house rules in a family meeting (e.g. chores, no hitting, devices out in living room by a set time), which have immediate pre-discussed natural incentives and consequences (e.g. if device not out by set time, then lose device use for one day).

Strategies to reduce Worry and Anxiety around returning to school:

- **Reduce uncertainty.** Find out from school exactly what things will look like (Arrival times? Class bubbles? Break times? Social distancing and cleaning rules?) Talk your child through this, from getting up through to coming home. The more they know, the easier it will be.
- **Normalise anxious feelings.** Ask how they are feeling about going back. What are their concerns? Find out and answer these with clear, short, and simple information. Empathise with them (“I understand that you are worried”) and normalise the situation (“I would imagine that everyone will be a bit nervous about going back.”)
- **Ask questions that lead them to reflect on past success in coping.** “How nervous were you when you first started school?” “How did you cope with that?”. The key message is “This is the same, but a little different”.
- **Practice/prepare your response for a difficult situation on the first day back.** Remain calm, provide brief empathy (“I can see you are feeling worried”), give a gentle push “You have a plan, you will be fine,” and then use distraction and remind them of rewards (see below).
- **Remind them that there are a number of things they can do to control the situation and protect themselves.** E.g. keep social distancing, wash hands, cough/sneeze into their elbow.
- **Distraction can remove anxiety’s traction.** Have their first day set up with a plan that keeps their minds busy. Perhaps a mix of things to do (e.g. get up, eat, uniform) with some fun things once each step is done e.g. TV, or on the way to school distract with singing, or quiz.
- **Motivation.** Children very often require a push/nudge when feeling anxious. Set up some rewards for getting through the first day’s plan, e.g. special snacks for school, special desert or movie night if stick to plan.

Other strategies to help manage Worry and Anxiety (long term):

- **Encourage self-coping skills.** Get your child to do more things for themselves, e.g. making toast/meals, walking to school, catching a bus. The path of least resistance of doing it for them may be easier, but in the long run does not lead to resilience. Encourage activities that increase their independence and confidence away from home e.g. sports, jobs, etc.
- **Problem solving.** There are many excellent websites that illustrate this simple but very helpful strategy that greatly aids kids to cope with new and unexpected situations. Learn it together as a family and model it for them in everyday situations.
- **Model and practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques,** e.g. breathing (through nose), grounding/calming techniques, and coping statements. Many good internet sites explain these such as: <https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>
- **Increase face to face socialisation.** Get them off their devices and encourage face-to-face contact with friends, playing sports, or doing things together as a family e.g. game nights.
- **Exercise, exercise, exercise!** As mentioned before, exercise outdoors in the sun and green spaces is one of the most well-researched antidotes for stress.