
Coronavirus Update

14 May 2020

Coronavirus Update

NZ GOVERNMENT COVID-19 OFFICIAL WEBSITE

Coronavirus Update - Level 1, 09/06/2020

I am sure you were as pleased as I was to hear the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday about moving to Alert Level 1. At Marsden, there will be no major changes to what we are currently doing and our school continues to be safe to attend, including for any staff and children who are considered more vulnerable to COVID-19. We have a good cleaning routine in place, people who are sick are staying at home and we continue to encourage good hygiene practices.

There are still key public health measures for everyone in New Zealand to follow.

What that means for us at Marsden is that:

- Students and staff will continue to be encouraged to regularly wash and dry hands, sneeze and cough into elbows.
- We will regularly disinfect shared surfaces.
- If students or staff are sick, they should stay home (phone Healthline or their GP and get tested if they have cold or flu symptoms).
- We will continue to support contact tracing efforts by displaying QR Code posters for the NZ COVID Tracer App posters at our entrances – so if you haven't already downloaded the NZ COVID Tracer app the Ministry of Health's [NZ-COVID Tracer app page](#) has information to help you do that. All school entrances are now available to parents.
- Stringent self-isolation will be required for those who display symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, or have been overseas in the last 14 days – [Ministry of Health information for self-isolation](#).

What **is** changing is that we can now look forward to assemblies, inter-school and community sport, cultural events and performances, and to welcoming all of our school community and other visitors on site for these activities. We are also now able to plan to reintroduce field trips and other excursions, although we are mindful in our planning of the need to preserve academic time and keep costs down for parents at this time. We have almost completed the process of re-working the school calendar for the remainder of the year and will let you know new key dates by the end of this week. Included will be optional workshops for our NCEA students in weeks 2 and 3 of the coming term break.

Along with the Marsden Parents' Association, we are planning to host a social event to provide the opportunity for our parent community to re-connect in the first week of next term. Please keep the evening of Thursday 30 July free. Further details will follow soon.

I look forward to catching up with you at sport over the next few weeks or at our parent social event.

Resumption of Sport Under Alert Level 2 – 27/05/2020

The Government's announcement on Monday afternoon regarding increased liberalisation around gatherings and the planning for Alert Level 1 has allowed College Sport Wellington and other sporting bodies to confirm the start dates for a number of secondary school competitions and events this term.

The planning by College Sport Wellington and its partners, including Wellington Hockey and Netball Wellington, means that the appropriate risk mitigation measures will be in place before these start dates. Ongoing, these plans and measures will be updated as new guidelines are announced by the Government.

I am very glad to confirm that we are now able to prepare to play for all winter codes. We have received the following information about competition start dates:

- **Hockey** – The Wellington Secondary Schools Hockey Competitions will commence on June 6 for Years 7 & 8, 12 June for 1st XI, 17 June for 3rd XI and 18 June for 2nd XI.
- **Underwater Hockey** – The College Sport Wellington Underwater Hockey competition will commence on 16 June.
- **Year 9 – 13 Basketball** – The Dynasty College Sport Wellington Basketball competitions will commence on 16 June for Juniors and 19 June for Seniors.
- **Year 7 - 8 Basketball** - We have no start dates for Years 7 & 8 as yet.
- **Football** – The College Sport Wellington Football Competitions 16 June for Junior A and 17 June for 1st XI.
- **Badminton** – The College Sport Wellington Badminton competitions will commence from 19 June for seniors and 22 June for juniors.
- **Year 9 – 13 Netball** – Netball will commence from 27 June. Some grades may be moved from the ASB to the Hataitai courts for this season.
- **Year 4 – 8 Netball** – We do not yet have a start date for the Wellington West Netball.

Next steps for winter sport at Marsden

1. Confirmation of participation

Our sports office now has to start entering teams into the above competition, but we need to make sure that everyone is still prepared to play sport while we are in COVID-19 Level 2. We understand that some students and families may wish to revisit their decisions around sport this winter due to the COVID-19 situation. We understand this and will respect your decisions.

We have created a form for all students who have registered for a winter sport to fill out with their intentions around playing in the up and coming winter season so we can accurately plan our sports programme moving forward.

Please follow [this link](#) to the sports registration page where you can confirm your participation or de-register for winter sport 2020.

Please take the time to discuss this with your daughter. We ask that all students in Years 7 – 13 complete this form **by the end of this week** to allow for our planning to be completed in a timely manner.

2. Training of coaches and managers in health and safety requirements for sport in Alert Level 2.

This will commence next week.

3. Commencement of training

Most training sessions will re-commence in the week beginning Monday 8 June. Exceptions to this will be Year 7 & 8 Hockey who will commence on Friday 5 June, and Senior B Netball who will commence on Wednesday 3 June. Coaches and managers will be in touch around training times but [here are some of the confirmed time and days](#). Please direct any questions to the Sports Office.

Marsden Sports Awards in 2020

Given the disruption to our sporting calendars on a regional, national and international level this year, we will be reviewing our sports awards criteria for 2020. The review process will involve consultation with our student heads of sports, our 'friends of Marsden sport' parent groups, and the Marsden Sports Advisory Committee. We anticipate being able to confirm any changes at the beginning of Term 3. If you would like to contribute your views on this matter, please email our Director of Sport, [Elliott Brookes](#) by Friday 12 June.

House Swimming

Unfortunately due to the restrictions on gatherings, we are unable to hold our House Swimming Sports (originally scheduled for Friday 12 June) for Year 7-13 students this year. We look forward to this being back on the calendar next year.

It was great to see some of the girls enjoying training for sport this week, even in Monday's inclement weather, and I am looking forward to seeing more activity re-introduced over the next couple of weeks.

Coronavirus Update #31 PRIMARY – 15/05/2020

In our virtual Assembly today, I shared the key messages and 'rules' for our girls on their return to school on Monday 18 May. I have also included at the end of this communication a letter to the girls that I would appreciate you sharing with your daughters before Monday.

Our priority for next week will be to help all girls settle back into school.

Our teachers will:

- be welcoming, responsive and inclusive
- ask how each student is feeling about returning to school
- reconfirm behaviours and expectations specific to their class and our school
- provide a structured and predictable environment with clear expectations and routines
- provide fun and engaging activities which focus on the girls reconnecting with each other.

It would be also helpful if you could share the following key points with your daughter to help prepare them for their return to school.

They are:

- practicing good hygiene - regularly washing and drying hands, using hand sanitiser (provided at school)
- coughing or sneezing into your elbow
- not sharing food
- remembering not to touch other people unless they are in your family bubble - sadly no hugs for a while yet
- if people forget and do touch you, don't panic or get angry, just quietly and kindly remind them that we are not touching at the moment to help keep everyone safe
- be kind
- be patient
- talk to your teacher or another adult if you are worried about anything.

For our junior parents, here is a ['back to school after COVID - social story'](#) that you may like to work through with your children to help prepare them for school on Monday. A simple social story is an easy way to address the emotional needs of your children by getting them prepared for the changes ahead. It also helps you to better gauge in advance what they're expecting or have concerns about.

From Monday, girls are expected to be in winter school uniform. A reminder that the winter uniform is available at NZ Uniforms. If you have not been able to get the winter uniform yet, your daughter can wear the full summer uniform.

Girls are asked to bring in their own stationery supplies (pencil case, pencils/pens and coloured pencils) and will be encouraged not to share.

Water fountains are not in use during Level 2 so the girls need to remember to bring a named water bottle to school every day.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Under Alert Level 2, we will be using just **two** entrances to the Primary School and these will be referred to as the 'Student entrance' and 'Adult entrance'.

Student Entrance

The Student entrance is via the doors near the Year 1 and 2 classrooms. As we wish to encourage a drop-off and

pick up approach to restrict the number of adults on site, parents are asked to drop off their child to the outside door and pick up from there as well. At the end of the day, teachers will bring the girls to this door and handover to you.

Adult Entrance

All parents and visitors will enter through the office door and are required to sign in and out. If you have an appointment or have a question for myself or Jo Sherlock, please come to this entrance.

MASC (Marsden After School Club)

MASC will be operating from Monday 18 May and Elia, our MASC Supervisor is looking forward to welcoming the girls back. Elia has also been working on an exciting new programme of activities for the students. If your child will be using MASC from Monday 18 May, please indicate this to Jo Sherlock jo.sherlock@marsden.school.nz

We look forward to a happy return to Marsden Primary and connecting with you again. Please let your daughter's teacher or myself know if you or your daughter have any concerns or questions about returning to school. And please share the message below with your daughter(s).

Nga mihi nui,

Jennifer Ioannou

Director Marsden Primary

Message for Year 1-6 Girls

Dear Girls,

We are all looking forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday 18 May!

The Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, has told us we can move to Alert Level 2.



You will be able to reunite with your friends, see your teachers without a computer screen frame around them, learn in your classrooms and play on the playgrounds again.

Some things will be different because of the Level 2 rules. This is what you need to know:

1. **HAND WASHING:** You will wash your hands, or put sanitiser on your hands, before and after break times and

at other times too, if your teacher asks you to, or you know you need to.

2. **NO HUGS:** You can smile and wave at your friends but should try to avoid touching them. This means being careful when you are moving about. Save your hugs for Level 1. Some people say “Virtual hug” which is a way of letting someone know you would hug them if we weren’t in Level 2. You might also want to do a high five, but just not connect hands! It could even be fun to try and play non-contact football!

3. **BREATHING AND COUGHING:** Don’t breathe on other people and remember to cough into your elbow (so no, don’t elbow bump).

4. **DON’T PANIC:** If you have accidentally touched someone, do not worry. Just use the sanitiser or soap and water.

5. **ADULTS WILL STILL LOOK AFTER YOU:** If you are hurt or really sad it will be OK to put on a plaster or give you a hug. Then we’ll just wash our hands and won’t need to worry.

6. **NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS:** Your class might have one or two new ways of doing things to help us with the Level 2 rules. Things will be different, but you will still be able to have fun and enjoy school.

7. **SCHOOL ENTRANCES AND EXITS:** All girls will be using the doors by the Year 1 and 2 classrooms to enter and exit school. Your parents will drop you off to those doors and you will walk into your classroom. At the end of the day, your teacher will bring you to the door to meet your parents. It may be a bit busy in the morning and after school, but we will all be patient and not rush.

8. **CHAPEL/ASSEMBLY:** On Monday we will have a Primary School Chapel Assembly so I can talk to all of you, after you have talked to each other and your teachers.

I hope this has helped you to understand what school will be like when you come back. In most ways, it will be the same. The things that are different will not stop you enjoying your friends, engaging in your learning or having fun.

Ngā mihi nui (can’t wait to see you all again!)

Coronavirus Update #31 PRESCHOOL – 15/05/2020

Kia ora koutou

We are looking forward to welcoming you all back to Preschool on Monday 18 May. We are working to ensure Preschool is a safe, happy and healthy environment for you, your tamariki and teachers.

To do this we need your support, teachers will be using the most up to date advice and guidance from the Ministry of Education and following the procedures in our updated HS26 Response to infectious illnesses and HSI policies to ensure our premises and contents are safe and hygienic.

This includes:

Preschool environment

- We will maintain a temperature between 18 - 20 degrees.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers have been refilled - additional bottles to be available for adults.
- Sandpit and outside equipment is available - children are to clean their hands when re-entering the Preschool building.
- Playdough and finger paint can be used under supervision and with appropriate hand washing before and after use.
- Weekly curriculum cooking will be replaced with 'science' curriculum activities.
- We will continue supporting hand washing for children, and cough and sneeze etiquette.

Pick up and Drop off

- One person to come into Preschool during drop off and pick up for contact tracing purposes. Name, time and contact details are to be recorded each time you enter the building.
- Please use the entrance through the playground into the locker room only. This is to minimise people in the Preschool.
- We will keep the door open during drop off and pick up times.
- Adults to maintain a 2 metre social distance rule.
- Drop off and pick-ups must be kept quick.
- Everyone must wash their hands and use hand sanitiser on entry to the service.
- Should your child require support transitioning back into Preschool and you wish to stay longer - please talk to teachers and we will identify a 'safe space' for you.

Health and Wellbeing

- No one is permitted in the centre if they are feeling unwell. Children are to remain at home if anyone in the house is sick as a precaution.
- If your child becomes unwell while at the service they will be isolated immediately, and arrangements made to be collected. If teachers have any concerns we will consult the school nurse Janet Callaghan.

Kai in Preschool

- Children are to bring their lunch and water bottles.
- Teachers will be unable to cut up fruit or handle children's food.
- Children will be distanced during kai times to prevent touching each other's kai.
- We will not be offering a shared fruit platter at the end of the day so you don't need to bring a piece of fruit during Level 2. Please provide a small snack for your child to have in the afternoon.
- Celebrations, birthdays and farewells will not include shared kai or cakes.

Cleaning

- Daily cleaning to take place:
 - High touch areas to be wiped down at the end of each day - lockers, light switches, doors, tables and art shelves.
 - Tables to be wiped before and after kai time.
 - Resources to be given a wipe at the end of the day - puzzles, dramatic play space.

- End of the week - dress ups to be replaced and put in the laundry bag. Preschool to be wiped and disinfected including art area, shelves, doors.

Please complete and return [this Enrolment Addendum](#) before your child commences again at Preschool. The Ministry of Education has asked for early learning services to collect this information, outlining the requirements of Level 2 before children return to each service. You can email me a copy helen.mcconnell@marsden.school.nz or hand us a paper copy on your child's first day back under Alert Level 2.

We will be talking over the new normal with tamariki on Monday and sharing information specifically for them before they return to Preschool via EDUCA. Please talk this through with them.

If you have any questions please contact me.

Finally, I want to thank you all for your support and patience over the last 8 weeks. Your enthusiasm during virtual mat time and persistence bringing children along each day at 10am has been rewarding for both Judith and myself. Seeing and sharing in your learning at home has been wonderful, we thank you for welcoming us into your homes in this way.

Nga mihi nui,

Helen McConnell

Head of Preschool

Coronavirus Update #30 – 14/05/2020

I am writing to provide you with some detail on how we will be operating from next Monday 18 May under Alert Level 2. I apologise in advance that there is a lot to read! Below you will find information on the following topics:

- Changes from Alert Level 3 for schools
- Four key safety controls under Alert Level 2
- Staying home if sick – symptoms to monitor
- Public health measures that will be in place at Marsden
- Procedures for students
- Procedures for parents and other visitors to the school
- Marsden bus transport – spaces available
- Metlink bus transport
- School cafeteria and student kitchen facilities
- Sport and co-curricular activities
- External hire of Marsden facilities
- School calendar for the remainder of 2020

It is important to remember that it is safe for all students and staff to return to school in Alert Level 2. Schools are safe because hygiene habits will be strong and schools will put into place safe and sensible practice. Distance learning is available for those unable to attend school, for example who are self-isolating. The safety and wellbeing of Marsden students, staff and their households, continues to be our priority.

Changes from Alert Level 3

The significant changes for schools and early learning centres are:

- Physical distancing – 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, hand washing and drying) and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.
- Mass gatherings – workplaces, educational facilities, and public and school transport are not considered mass gatherings. This means there are no restrictions on numbers of people indoors or outside at schools and early learning services other than what other public health or health and safety measures require. The exception is where people from *outside the school* may be attending, e.g. for a school production or school ball.
- Sports and playgrounds – school playgrounds, sports equipment use and activities can resume. Contact sports can resume. This relies on being able to contact trace who is on site during school hours and at school team training and competitions. Any inter school events that recommence will need to have a contact tracing register in place to record those playing for and against teams.
- There is no bubble concept at Level 2 so there are no restrictions on groups of children and students mixing with others on site.
- Teachers/staff are not restricted to one group and can move freely between groups of students.
- Staff such as itinerant music teachers and relievers are able to work across different schools.
- Classrooms can be used by different student groups/classes and different groups of students in each class i.e. the usual timetable can be followed.
- School libraries are able to operate as normal if students and staff are undertaking regular hand washing and staying away if sick.
- Shared supplies and equipment are able to be used if students and staff are undertaking regular hand washing and staying away if sick.
- Playgrounds can be used at Alert Level 2 in schools (to align with reopening of public spaces) – students should wash hands before and after use.
- Volunteers can be used at Alert Level 2 in class as long as they are meeting all the public health requirements and are recorded in our timetable and/or visitors

Four key safety controls for schools under Alert Level 2

- ensure people with COVID-19 symptoms or feel generally unwell stay away from school
- maintain physical distancing (in schools this means children, young people, and staff maintaining a physical distance so that they are not breathing on or touching each other)
- enable good hygiene practices
- keep track of people who enter the school

Staying home if sick – symptoms to monitor

Symptoms to monitor for are any respiratory symptoms such as a cold, a head cold, blocked ears, cough, sneezing, chills and a fever. Anyone with those symptoms should stay home and contact Healthline for advice, which may include getting tested for COVID-19 as a precaution. Anyone with these respiratory symptoms should not to enter the Marsden campus.

Public health measures that will be in place at Marsden

In addition to our usual practices when managing health and safety, there are some specific public health requirements for Alert Level 2 that will be adhered to at Marsden:

- Please keep any sick children at home. If a sick child comes to school, parents will be contacted immediately and requested to take them home.
- Children, young people and staff will be far enough away from each other so that they are not breathing on or touching each other, coupled with good hygiene practices and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces. There does not need to be a specific measurement but where practicable 1 metre should be used as a guide, particularly between adults.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at entry to class rooms and in shared spaces. This is in addition to soap, water and the ability to dry hands in all bathrooms.
- Children and young people will be reminded to regularly wash and dry hands, cough and sneeze into their elbow, and try to avoid touching their face.
- We will disinfect and clean all surfaces daily.
- Contact tracing registers will be set up and identify which children and adults are on site, in each teaching space, including recording if there is a different composition of children and adults during the day. This includes recording visitors to the site, including parents.
- PPE is not required or recommended as necessary in any educational facility by the Public Health Service. Some children and young people may choose to wear face masks. It could be part of their cultural practice to do so and to support their hygiene needs. We will encourage respect for individual choices.

Procedures for students

Students will be briefed tomorrow on the 'rules' for Alert Level 2. Information for Primary students will be included in their virtual assembly tomorrow and followed up by their teachers in their Google meets. Students in Years 7 – 13 will be briefed by their form teacher or tutor in their 10.30am meeting tomorrow. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions if there is anything they are unsure about and messages will be reinforced on a regular basis once they are back at school next week.

Procedures for parents and other visitors to the school

Marsden parents usually enjoy a great deal of freedom to move around the school. Unfortunately, this will change temporarily during Alert Level 2 due to the requirements for contact tracing and physical distancing from strangers. **Any parents or visitors to the school are required to enter the school via either the Main Reception area or the office entrance in the Primary school only.** You will be signed in on entry and asked to sanitise your hands. These two entrances will be for parents and visitors only, all other entrances will be reserved for staff and students.

Jennifer Ioannou and Helen McConnell will be in touch with Preschool and Primary parents tomorrow regarding procedures for drop off and pick up of younger children.

Marsden bus transport – spaces available

Marsden shuttles and the [Marsden private bus](#) which services Seatoun, Strathmore Park, Miramar, Kilbirnie, Hataitai, Roseneath, Oriental Pde, Railway Station and Northland will be running from Monday 18 May. Note that there are spaces available on the Marsden private bus. This may be a good option to consider for parents who are concerned about using the Metlink buses during Alert Level 2 or who will have difficulty putting a plan 'B' in

place. Whilst we usually ask parents to commit to the bus service for a term at a time, we would be happy to make this available on a weekly basis during Alert Level 2. Please contact [Jo Sherlock](#) for bookings and information about weekly pricing.

Metlink bus transport

Metlink has advised us that they are working closely with all their bus operators so that they can continue to operate a full school bus service during Alert Level 2.

What Metlink is doing:

- Supplying hand sanitiser on board school buses.
- Cleaning buses in accordance with Ministry of Health guidelines.
- Operating all school bus services.

What Marsden will do:

- Maintain a register of students on each school bus for contact tracing purposes.
- Ensure the school community understands the physical distancing requirements, hygiene requirements **before** boarding the bus, and their plan 'B'.
- School staff will manage the after-school boarding of buses from school. This will help ensure that physical distancing can be maintained, and should any students not be able to board the bus, school staff can help the student to make alternative arrangements to get home.

What parents/caregivers need to do:

- Need to have a plan 'B' to get students to get to and from school in case the bus is already full.
- Ensure that their child understands the physical distancing requirements, hygiene requirements **before** boarding the bus, and their plan 'B'.

General points:

On public services used by students:

- If students are travelling on **public** bus services they need to adhere to the physical distancing requirements on board that service (window seats only, no standing, and maintaining 2m distance at bus stops).
- If students are travelling on public services please keep a record of travel.

On school services:

- **The front door will be used for entrance and exit during Alert Level 2, as 'normal'**. Even though fares are currently free, we ask all students to tag on and off with their Snapper card.

On both school and public services:

- It is not the bus driver's responsibility to maintain or supervise physical distancing on board the bus. Please respect the driver's physical distance when entering and exiting the bus.
- Capacity on bus services will be greatly reduced as no standing is permitted.
- The specific measures Metlink is taking in relation to our public transport network can be found on the [Metlink Website](#).

Please note, the information above applies to Metlink bus services only. Please refer to the Ministry of Education for information on contracted school trips.

School cafeteria and student kitchen facilities

The cafeteria will not be open next week so students will need to bring their own lunch, drinks and snacks. We anticipate that we will be able to offer a cafeteria service again from 25 May.

All student kitchen facilities will be unavailable throughout Alert Level 2.

Sport and co-curricular activities

Co-curricular activities including sports practices and rehearsals will be gradually reintroduced from 25 May, once any appropriate Alert Level 2 safety plans are agreed and in place. It is likely that groups managed by staff will be reintroduced before groups managed by students due to the Alert Level 2 health and safety requirements.

College Sport Wellington are anticipating that dates for resumption of sport will be confirmed after the 25 May Government announcement as sport is impacted by the current restrictions on gatherings. Schools are currently updating their safety plans for each sport to address:

- Contact Tracing – for both our own community and those teams/individuals visiting your school.
- Cleaning and Hygiene.
- Gatherings.
- Physical Distancing.

Schools and students will be allowed sufficient time to prepare for any competitions so there is no need to immediately rush back to training.

Apart from any individual fitness training programmes that have been in place during lockdown, no Marsden teams will be training until at least 25 May. The sports department will be in touch with teams and parents as plans for resumption of training for each sport are agreed.

External hire of Marsden facilities

As an additional precautionary measure for our community, there will be no external hire of Marsden indoor facilities during Alert Level 2. The only exception to this will be if the space can be made available for the sole use of the hirer throughout Alert Level 2 i.e. there is no crossover between school and external use.

School calendar for the remainder of 2020

As you would appreciate, there is significant work to be done on our school calendar to take into account the changes to external events, exams etc. Please understand that the calendar is 'under development' at the moment, and it will take us some weeks to finalise dates as we need to wait to hear about changes to rules on gatherings etc.

Coronavirus Update #29 – 13/052020

This afternoon we have been informed by the New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) of some operational changes to NCEA which are designed to provide support for schools and students as we recommence teaching, learning and assessment in the classroom next week.

Today the Minister of Education announced the following changes:

- external NCEA examinations and New Zealand Scholarship examinations will be delayed so they start on 16 November instead of 6 November, allowing further time for teaching, learning and internal assessment in Term Four. Examinations will now end on 9 December instead of 2 December, and an updated examination timetable is available on the [NZQA website](#);
- the requirement for NZQA verification of Level 1 and 2 Visual Arts portfolios will be waived, giving students more time to complete their portfolios and teachers more time for marking; and
- the submission date for subjects which require students to submit a portfolio, such as Design and Visual Communication, is being extended from 28 October to 12 November 2020, giving students more time to prepare.

NZQA is also consulting with Universities New Zealand on whether adjustments are needed to University Entrance, to recognise the disruption that has occurred.

At Marsden we welcome these changes for the benefits they will provide to our students, and are also confident that we will be able to work our important end-of-year celebrations around the new exam timetable with minimal impact to the events that the girls look forward to so much.

Coronavirus Update #28 – 13/05/2020

I would like to thank you for your participation in our remote learning survey undertaken between 27 April and 3 May. In the last couple of days we have received the report from MMG Education that summarises the findings. Given that this has coincided with the news of our impending move into Alert Level 2 and a return to face-to-face learning at school, we are currently focusing on feedback that will inform our re-opening plans.

We are aware from parent feedback through the survey that there are some students for whom the return to school may be challenging for various reasons. Our plans for a safe return to school need to encompass providing a safe environment for our students physically, but also socially and emotionally. If you have any concerns at all about your child in this regard, please make contact with their [Dean \(Year 7 – 13\)](#) or [class teacher \(Preschool and Primary\)](#) as soon as possible so that we can work on putting appropriate plans in place.

You would be aware from the information provided by the Ministry of Health that adults and children at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled) are encouraged to take additional precautions when leaving home. If you have any concerns about your child in this regard, please make contact with our school nurse, Janet Callaghan on 476 8707 or email janet.callaghan@marsden.school.nz as soon as possible regarding developing a plan to manage a safe return to school.

There is also a great deal of rich information in the survey report that we can use to improve future remote learning programmes and we will begin to work through this once we have our face-to-face programmes up and running again next week. It is important to do this as there is the possibility during the coming months that Marsden could be connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19. If this was the case we would be required to close for 72 hours to allow contact tracing and cleaning, and may then be closed for a further 14 days (but open for remote learning). While we very much hope that this does not eventuate, we would like to be in a position to take the key learnings from the last few weeks into any future periods of remote learning.

And finally for today, following feedback from staff and our student leaders, we have agreed that all students will

continue with their Remote Learning programme through to the end of this week, and return to campus next Monday, 18 May. We are very much looking forward to seeing them all.

Coronavirus Update #27 – 11/05/2020

Just a short note to let you know how pleased we are that we will be able to welcome all of our students back to Marsden next Monday 18 May.

We are currently consulting with staff and working through our Alert Level 2 safety plans to ensure that we will comply with all of the COVID-19 Alert Level 2 public health requirements for early learning services and schools prior to staff and students returning.

We are very conscious of the need to 'play it safe' as we move into Alert Level 2 and so we will be taking a calm and considered approach to what we do and when we do it. The focus next week will purely be on allowing our students to safely re-establish their social connections at school and transition effectively back to face-to-face learning on campus.

Once the learning routine has been re-established, we will look to re-start our sporting and cultural groups when and if this is appropriate for each activity. We will need to take into account guidelines which are currently being developed, and allow time for consultation with students and parents around the opportunities for participation which may be available to our students.

Please note that even though we will not be open to all students until Monday, our students who have been at school under Alert Level 3 can come to school on Thursday and Friday. We have also been advised by the Ministry of Education that a gradual transition of students back to school can take place over a couple of days, commencing from Thursday 14 May. We will confirm any arrangements for a gradual transition by the end of the day tomorrow.

I anticipate that we will be communicating with you daily this week as we work through getting all the arrangements for next week in place, and thank you in advance for your cooperation in providing any information we will need in order to manage the transition back to school safely.

Meanwhile, remote learning continues for a few more days.

Coronavirus Update #26 - 7/05/2020

Like me, I am sure you have followed with interest the announcements made today by the Prime Minister.

It is reassuring to hear how well our country has done at minimising the impacts of COVID-19. Alert Levels 4 and 3 have not been easy and I thank you for your ongoing support for the work we are doing.

Today, the Prime Minister advised that in Alert Level 2 schools are safe environments for children, young people 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 the

Marsden campus.

The key Public Health approach is 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 is infected.

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 a good precaution to prevent the spread of disease. We do however know it is challenging in schools, so good hygiene practices and regular cleaning are even more important here. This includes staff and students coughing into their elbows, handwashing and drying and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Under Alert Level 2, we advise any students and staff to stay at home if they are sick, and we will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms.

Marsden has safe and sensible practices to maintain the health and safety of everyone on the school campus. As described by Dr Payinda in his [NZ Herald article](#), "Covid's not measles or chickenpox, it doesn't hang in the air for hours waiting to infect passers-by. It travels on invisible drops of spit. You don't have to cross the street to avoid anyone. Just avoid getting in their 'moist breath' zone". We all just need to remember to have some breathing space at Alert Level 2!

It's important however that not just at school but at home, safe hygiene habits are practised by everyone, as this is essential to minimise the risk that someone gets infected with Covid-19.

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the [COVID19.govt.nz website](https://www.covid19.govt.nz).

If you have any questions about our health and safety plan, or have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact me.

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

Coronavirus Update #25 – 28/04/2020

Today we are undertaking our final preparations for welcoming those students who are unable to learn from home during Alert Level 3 back to the campus. From tomorrow we will have small 'bubbles' of students learning in the Primary school, in the iCentre and in Sheppard Wake. These students will be continuing their Remote Learning programme, supported and supervised by Marsden staff.

The Ministry of Education has put together a simple sheet of [guidelines for parents](#).

Detailed requirements for Marsden students attending school during Alert Level 3 will be emailed in a separate 'Remote Learning Update' today.

We have received the following update from School Sport New Zealand:

The government announcement that NZ will remain at Alert Level 3 pending a review on May 11, along with the requirements for sport at Alert Level 2 yet to be determined, the degree of uncertainty and lack of lead in time required for schools and sport to prepare and plan will not enable a resumption to national level school sport at this point.

School Sport NZ recognises the importance of rangatahi returning to normal activities as soon as possible and the crucial role that school sport plays in contributing to the physical, mental and social health of our young people. We also support government guidelines in keeping NZ and our people safe from Covid-19 and we continue to work with national and regional sport bodies on the resumption of school sport that is safe for all participants and aligned with NSO guidelines.

Winter Tournament Week (WTW), scheduled for late August, the culmination of the season and a highlight for schools and students, is unlikely to look like it normally does in 2020. Some WTW event organisers have indicated they will not be in a position to provide some events as currently planned and School Sport NZ is working through the options for 2020 WTW with NSOs, schools and other event partners. We are very conscious of the certainty and lead in times required by all partners and expect to make an announcement regarding WTW and other Term 3 national school sport events in early June when the situation with Alert Levels and permitted activities has become clearer.

Recent updates to the NZSS national calendar that impact Marsden include:

NISS Swimming 30-May SUSPENDED

NISS Underwater Hockey - Central Zone 19-Jun 21-Jun CANCELLED

NZSS Cross Country Championships 20-Jun 21-Jun SUSPENDED

We have received the following update from College Sport Wellington:

Following the announcement that the country will move to Alert Level 3 on April 28, the team at College Sport Wellington are now working through various scenarios for its sporting calendar. While it is naturally still too early to identify specific competition start dates, we will use the Alert Level Framework and expected timing of Government announcements to map out their decision making process in the coming months. We are hopeful that if/when the Government announces a planned movement to Alert Level 2 on May 11, they will also signal its intended length. On that basis College Sport Wellington can then establish a revised calendar of events and competitions, working within the guidelines of the Alert Level Framework. This planning is naturally predicated on no surge in new cases and will follow the below principles:

- *Allow sufficient time for schools, students and volunteers to prepare for the season.*
- *Work with our partner sports organisations and councils to ensure strong communication and alignment of planning.*
- *Work with schools, councils and partner sports organisations to determine what the Alert Levels mean for both intra and inter school sport.*

- Factor Winter Tournament Week considerations into our planning, as updates become available.
- Make full use of the time available in Term 3, including the final weekend.

We have received the following update from Netball Wellington Centre:

We know there will be lots of questions about returning to all things netball as we recover from COVID-19 and transition through the various levels. Netball NZ, Advisory Group and Sport NZ have developed some Community Netball Guidelines, that are subject to change with updates from MoH. We hope that this gives you hope that we will have Netball of some sort in 2020.

We will be working with our clubs and schools around what our season could look like with setting up working groups to discuss options and preferences. We have a number of scenarios drafted up so as soon as we know a date for returning to the court we are ready to go.

Please note Netball is deemed as a contact sport so there will be no game play for our community netball at Level 2. We will be able to start trainings but not as we have known it in the past as we have to observe the 1 metre social distancing and a number of hygiene protocols. Fitness training and ball skills are ok but no contact with other people. There will be no game time at Level 2. Once we get to Level 1 we will need to allow clubs and teams to complete trials and get some practices in before we can start our competition. We will be working around a number of restrictions at Level 1 that will enforce a competition that will be different to our norm. The working groups will work through these to ensure that the health and safety of all our netball whanau is paramount.

I will keep you updated as further information becomes available.

Coronavirus Update #24 - 22/04/2020

I am writing to provide you with some high level information regarding how Marsden will operate during Alert Level 3. We are expecting a significant update from the Ministry of Education tomorrow, which will provide further detail around the health and safety requirements for schools, so I anticipate that I should be in a position to provide more detailed information by the end of the day on Friday.

I can confirm the following at this stage:

- Marsden's remote learning programme **will continue** for all students on **Tuesday 28 April** following the ANZAC long weekend. Note that Marsden **does not** need a teacher only day on Tuesday 28 April to prepare for Alert Level 3.
- Students who need to be at school will be able to attend from Wednesday 29 April, but as the Secretary for Education, Iona Holsted, said yesterday "it will not be school as we know it". We will be operating under strict health and safety guidelines.
- Whether students are learning from home or learning at school under Alert Level 3 they will be undertaking the same programme – our Remote Learning programme.
- Our after school care programme, MASC, is not allowed to run under Alert Level 3.
- Marsden operated buses and shuttles will **not** operate under Alert Level 3 as these are not economically viable with drastically reduced numbers of students attending school. Metlink operated school buses **will be running** from April 29.
- The school cafeteria will **not** be open for purchases or lunch orders under Alert Level 3.

- Our school nurse will be available on site throughout the school day.
- We have been able to accommodate the needs and preferences of our staff with regards to working from home or from school and have sufficient staff available to work on site with students who need to be at school under Alert Level 3.

The detailed health and safety requirements for Alert Level 3 operation are likely to include (at a minimum):

- 'Contactless' pick up and drop off of students, with no parents or other bubble members allowed into the school buildings, and different start and finish times for different student bubbles of up to 10 students. Note that siblings will be allocated to the same school bubble.
- Students remaining in the same bubble, in the same classroom, with the same staff, throughout their Level 3 attendance.
- Different break times for student bubbles to ensure appropriate physical distancing.
- Additional cleaning and sanitising of surfaces throughout the day and regular hand washing for all students and staff.
- School playgrounds remaining closed.
- Minimum use of school resources, particularly those that cannot be cleaned easily.

Could you please make contact with us by emailing rsvp@marsden.school.nz **before midday on Friday 24 April** if the 'best guess' information you provided us last weekend regarding your child's attendance at school needs updating e.g. if you said your child would be attending and now this is no longer the case, or vice versa. It is important that we have accurate information by midday on Friday so that we can allocate students to bubbles and provide parents with information about drop-off and pick-up times, location of bubbles within the school etc. If we do not hear from you we will assume that the information you provided at the end of last week stands.

If your daughter will be using a Metlink school bus to get to school during Alert Level 3, please let us know before midday on Friday 24 April by emailing rsvp@marsden.school.nz so that we can provide this information to Metlink for their planning.

Thank you again for your support and patience as we work through all of these changes. I hope that, amongst your own work and helping your children with their learning, you have been able to get out into the sunshine every day this week for at least a short time.

Coronavirus Update #23 - 20 April 2020

As I am sure you are aware, today the Government decided that we will move into Alert Level 3 on 28 April. That means we will be open to receive students from Preschool to Year 10 at school from Wednesday 29 April. We are delighted that, from tomorrow, we will be able to start preparing the Marsden campus for this limited re-opening.

You would also be aware of the Prime Minister's key message that if you can, you should keep your children at home during Alert Level 3, but that you can send them to school if you need to. Of course, if your child has a health condition that means they are at a greater risk of a severe illness you must keep them at home and, as always, if your child is sick please also ensure you keep them at home.

In order to ensure the safety of those children and our staff who do come to school, we will be operating with strict enforcement of health and safety measures. The Ministry of Education has advised us that they are

working closely with the Ministry of Health to develop clear guidance that will support us to safely re-open Marsden to students and staff. This will help us work through the public health requirements that we all need to meet. As you will be doing, we want to be sure that what we do will keep our community as safe as possible.

Thank you for your prompt responses to our brief survey regarding your 'best guess' as to whether your Preschool to Year 10 children will need to be at school during Alert Level 3, this will be very helpful information as we work through our planning.

For now, we will continue to support your child's learning through our Remote Learning programme while we progress our planning for what Alert Level 3 will mean for you and for Marsden. We will be in touch again soon with more information. As you have been doing, please keep connecting with your teachers with any questions you might have.

Coronavirus Update #22 - 17 April 2020

This is just a quick note to ask for some information from you to help with our planning for Alert Level 3 at Marsden.

It would be really helpful to us at this stage to understand roughly how many students we may have attending school once we move to Alert Level 3, noting the Prime Minister's advice that:

Schools will be a safe place for children to go to learn if their parents need to return to work, or the children cannot learn at a distance. Children who are able to, should remain home and learn via distance.

I appreciate that you may not yet have a full understanding of what your work situation may look like under Alert Level 3, no doubt businesses all over the country are doing what we are doing right now... trying to figure out what this is going to look like.

Can I please ask each family to reply to this email with their current 'best guess' at whether their children from Preschool to Year 10 will be able to learn from home under Alert Level 3, or will need to be at school. Note that this is for our planning purposes only, you are not committing to anything at this stage.

Please reply to this email or to rsvp@marsden.school.nz with the following information for **each** of your students from Preschool to Year 10:

Student name

Year Level

Alert Level 3 learning location – Home or School

I would really appreciate it if you are able to take a moment to do this sometime today or over the weekend.

Coronavirus Update #21 - 16 April 2020

You may be aware that the Prime Minister has this afternoon announced details regarding what Alert Level 3 will look like for all of us, including schools.

The following information has been provided on the covid19.govt.nz website:

Under Alert Level 3 it will be safe for Early Learning / Education Centres and schools to open for children up to and including Year 10, with appropriate public health measures in place. All young people in Years 11-13 will continue to learn at home.

Physical attendance at school is voluntary, but all children not at school should be learning by distance. Schools will be a safe place for children to go to learn if their parents need to return to work, or the children cannot learn at a distance. Children who are able to, should remain home and learn via distance.

We are expecting further detailed information from the Ministry of Education following the Prime Minister's announcement and this will feed into our planning for reopening under Alert Level 3. I will provide you with detailed information about how Marsden will operate under Alert Level 3 as soon as possible.

Although the news about New Zealand's ongoing success at containing COVID-19 is encouraging, we are now moving into a time where it may feel like there is more uncertainty than we have had over the last couple of weeks. Will we move to Alert Level 3 next week, or not?

I am conscious that you and your children may have mixed feelings about what today's announcement will mean for you. You could be feeling relieved that students **won't** have to go to school, or relieved that they **will** be able to go to school if necessary. Our students may be experiencing disappointment or relief that they not be physically at school during Alert Level 3, particularly our senior students. I want to reassure you that we are in a strong position to support all of our students in their learning under the scenario presented this afternoon, and we will be working as quickly as we can to add additional certainty around exactly what this will look like for everyone in our community.

In the meantime, thank you for your support of our Remote Learning programme. It is heartening to hear the stories of the great learning taking place.

Stay home, stay safe.

Coronavirus Update #20 - 14 April 2020

I am writing to update you on the latest advice we have received from the Ministry of Education (MOE) and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), and also some decisions that we have taken regarding some school trips and other activities.

Change to alert levels and impacts on schools

You may be aware that last Thursday Education Minister Hipkins spoke about the potential change of alert levels and the implications for education providers and their communities. The Minister noted it would be wrong to assume that all schools and early learning services will reopen at Level 3.

The MOE has advised us that they are looking at various scenarios that will be based on health considerations and requirements under Level 3, particularly managing physical distancing. A hybrid model of both distance learning and on-site learning is very likely at least in the early stages of Level 3. The Public Health requirements

will affect each school differently.

We are expecting further detailed guidance on what the various alert levels may mean for us in time for any decision announced on 20 April and will communicate with you as soon as we have more information.

NCEA Assessment update

I know that many of our senior students will be concerned about their upcoming assessments and how these will be impacted by any extension to the school closure beyond 22 April.

Thanks to its flexibility, NCEA allows us to maintain credible assessment outcomes by changing the ways we gather and record evidence, and to manage disruptions to our teaching and assessment of standards. We have been receiving detailed advice from NZQA who are planning for a range of scenarios and they will continue to keep us informed as the situation changes.

Work is also underway to make sure that all qualifications, awards and pathways (including University Entrance and Vocational Pathways) will remain available through the current, and any future, disruptions.

School trips – Samoa, Fiji, China and Borneo

Due to the likelihood that border restrictions will be in place for some time we have made the following decisions regarding planned school trips:

- The Samoa service trip and the Shanghai and Toin (Japan) exchanges will be cancelled for 2020. If travel restrictions permit, we hope to be able to reinstate all of these trips in 2021 and to provide the opportunity for the girls who had signed up to travel then if they would like to.
- The Fiji Service trip is currently postponed and we are looking into the remote possibility of running it in December 2020 due to the fact that the girls going to Fiji are mostly in Year 13 and therefore will not be able to participate next year. Obviously it is too early to tell whether December is going to be feasible, so all fund-raising and preparation work will be put on hold until at least the beginning of Term 3, when we are hoping the situation will be clearer.
- The 2021 Operation Wallacea trip to Borneo will be cancelled and later in the year we will begin looking at options for a similar trip in 2022. Again, most of the students who had signed up for the 2021 trip will be able to travel in 2022 if they would like to. Even though this trip is some time away, there is a requirement for families to make a significant payment by 1 June this year and we don't believe that this is sensible in the current climate where COVID-19 has the potential to impact travel into 2021 and is a 'known event' for insurance purposes.

Over the next month or so we will be having discussions with our insurer regarding potential claims for payments made for these trips in late 2019. Please be patient as we work through this. The organiser of each trip will be in touch with families as more information comes to hand.

Sport and other co-curricular activities

We are not yet in a position to make any decisions around the resumption of sport and other co-curricular activities. How this plays out will depend very much on the physical distancing requirements of Alert Levels 2 and 3. All competitions and training sessions remain off until further notice.

Junior Production

We are sad to announce that the 2020 junior production is now cancelled. We'd like to say a big thank you to the seniors who had put so much work into it already and to the cast for their enthusiasm at rehearsals. We will be looking to harness all of the talent and creativity for some reimagined performance opportunities later in the year when rehearsing together and having live audiences become possible again.

Keeping in touch

If you need to contact the school by phone during the closure, please call the usual number 04 476 8707. This number has been diverted to an off-site phone which is being monitored by school staff. For absences please email absences@marsden.school.nz

Stay home, stay safe.

Update #19 27 March 2020

Thank you so much for your support of our Remote Learning programme over the last three days. We have received many helpful suggestions from both parents and students, have been ironing out a few glitches, and have been enjoying sharing creative ways of making the learning experience better as we go along. Our students have been amazing in so many ways... that Marsden resilience and creativity has been shining through!

Taking a break

I really encourage everyone (students and staff) to take a break from school work over the holidays. Due dates for any assessments which fall between now and April 15 will be pushed out to recognise the change in holiday dates.

Keeping in touch

Unless there is some significant change impacting the school that I need to communicate to you, I anticipate that the next time you will hear directly from Marsden will be via our newsletter on Thursday 9 April. This newsletter will include information relating to the start of Term 2 on Wednesday 15 April.

Over the holidays we continue to share helpful information regarding wellbeing and safety on our [Facebook page](#).

If you need to contact the school by phone during the holidays, please call the usual number 04 476 8707. This number has been diverted to an off-site phone which will be monitored by school staff.

Enjoy the time in your 'bubble'

I am looking forward to hearing the stories of 'school holidays in the bubble' when we get back next term. I am so grateful that we can all stay in touch with our families around the country and around the world easily, even though we are in our bubbles. I was delighted to hear from my daughter this morning that she had managed to get my mother using FaceTime for the first time ever last night... a very significant development for our family!

Stay home, stay safe.

Update #18 25 March 2020

We have had a great first day of remote learning today. I am so pleased that all of our students are safely with their families and are continuing learning. We have two more days of remote learning this week and then of course the term break, which will give everyone some well-needed rest.

We have had an orderly close-down of the school campus today and staff are all set up in their home offices with the equipment they need for the next four weeks. Please note that, in line with the directive we have received from the Ministry of Education, our school playgrounds are also closed.

If you need to contact the school by phone during the shutdown, please call the usual number 04 476 8707. This number has been diverted to an off-site phone which will be monitored by school staff. Absences should be notified via email to absences@marsden.school.nz. You can contact your child's class teacher, form teacher, tutor or dean via email and we encourage you to do so with any concerns about academic learning or student wellbeing.

Today we sent out our Term 2 fee accounts via email. Under normal circumstances these would not have been sent out for a couple more days but, as we cannot currently run our billing process remotely, we needed to do this before the shutdown. As always, you can contact Christine Allen at christine.allen@marsden.school.nz in our Finance Department to discuss any concerns you have around fee payments. I am very aware that the current situation may be causing financial stress for some of our families and I encourage you to reach out to us if necessary for a confidential discussion.

As we go move to Alert Level 4 tonight we feel really well prepared to support our Marsden community.

Please stay safe.

Update #17 25 March – Remote Learning II

Remote learning will commence for all Marsden students tomorrow, Wednesday 25 March.

Information has been shared today with Preschool and Primary parents, and Year 7 – 13 students have now been emailed their Synchronous Learning timetables and other information. You can also find the timetables [here](#).

From later tomorrow morning you will find all of the information for both parents and students consolidated in the new 'Remote Learning' section of our website. You will be directed there from the home page and you can locate it in the About menu. It will also be on MyMarsden (i-SITE). These pages will include the following:

[Learning @ Home Expectations Years 1-6](#)

[Learning @ Home Tips Years 1-6](#)

[Remote Learning Principles Years 7-13](#)

[Remote Learning Tips Years 7-13](#)

[Remote Learning – parent information Years 7-13](#)

There is also a padlet on our 'Remote Learning in Action' page, where students and parents can share what is

going on with learning and activities at home and to post positive messages. We very much look forward to hearing and seeing what great things are happening.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding Remote Learning please contact:

Preschool: [Helen McConnell](#)

Primary: [Jennifer Ioannou](#)

Year 7 – 13: [Margaret Adeane](#)

The learning day starts for all students at their normal time tomorrow!

Update #17 24 March - Remote learning I

"He waka eke noa".

School Term Dates

Although independent schools are free to set our own term dates, we have taken the decision to move our term break to remain in line with the state school dates announced yesterday for two reasons:

1. Everyone needs a break, and
2. Many families in our community have family members across both the state and independent school sectors and having the holidays out of sync would just add further complication for families during the next four weeks when everyone is sharing the same space at home.

The **last day of Term 1** will be **Friday 27 March**.

The **first day of Term 2** will be **Wednesday 15 April**.

Remote Learning

Remote learning **will commence** for all Marsden students **tomorrow, Wednesday 25 March**. We will **continue remote learning** when we return from the break on **Wednesday 15 April** until we are able to reopen. Our pastoral care and wellbeing programmes will continue while we are in remote learning mode. My hope is that everyone across the nation takes the 'stay at home' message seriously so that we can minimise the time we spend in Alert Level 4, because school is the best place for students to be during term time.

You will receive communication later today regarding tomorrow's remote learning arrangements. This will include timetables for Years 7 – 13, fact sheets for students and guides for parents.

Learning materials and equipment

If your child was not at school yesterday and needs to access their locker or collect other resources they can do this today or before 12 noon tomorrow. Please enter via the main reception as you will be required to sign in and observe physical distancing requirements while you are here.

SchoolTV SPECIAL REPORT: Preparing for Remote Learning

SchoolTV has just produced an excellent Special Report for parents as we face school closures in Australia and New Zealand. We know that the daunting task of establishing new routines and schedules, whilst juggling work

responsibilities, could prove to be disruptive and challenging for families.

Some young people will transition seamlessly, whilst others may struggle. Therefore, it will be vitally important for parents to be vigilant in looking for signs of anxiety and depression. Parents will need to continue to be reassuring and supportive in this time of uncertainty and acknowledge that this may be a stressful time for students of all ages.

We will be working hard behind the scenes to ensure that your child's academic needs are met, but parents will need to play a key role in providing them with the structure and groundwork for success. Young people will be looking towards their parents to keep things in context and help ease the transition to a different learning environment.

In this Special Report, parents and caregivers will be provided with some guidelines on how best to navigate this time of transition with minimal disruption. We hope you take time to reflect on the information offered in this Special Report, and as always, we welcome your feedback.

If you do have any concerns about the wellbeing of your child, please contact the school for further information or seek medical or professional help.

You can find your [special report here](#).

Aroha nui

Update #16 23 March – Message to parents/caregivers

As I am sure you are aware, schools across the nation will be closed to all students apart from children of identified essential workers from tomorrow, Tuesday 24 March, and fully closed from midnight on Wednesday 25 March. The Government has moved from Alert Level Two to Alert Level Three and will move to Alert Level Four in 48 hours. To break the community spread of COVID-19 the Government has put the restrictions in place for **four weeks** to be reviewed after this period.

Our Year 7 – 13 students met with their form teachers/tutors for the last part of the day today and were given the opportunity to pack up their essential learning materials so that their learning can continue remotely during the time our campus is closed. Our Preschool and Primary students had already taken their special packs of essential learning materials home last Friday.

There are still many details that are not clear, particularly regarding the reference by the Prime Minister to the 'school term break being brought forward' and the 'essential worker' definition. I am confident that we will receive clear communication from the Ministry of Education in the next few hours which will allow me to provide you with further details.

Arrangements for Tuesday 24 March and Wednesday 25 March

- We will provide a programme for children of '**identified essential workers**' both tomorrow and Wednesday, from 8.30am to 3.30pm. Students should bring their own lunch and snacks and may wear mufti. Note that **no school buses** will be running until further notice so you will need to make alternative arrangements for travel

to and from school. If your child will be at school tomorrow please contact [Jennifer Ioannou](#) (Preschool and Primary) or [Marg Adeane](#) (Year 7 – 13) as soon as you are able to.

- **All other students** can have a day of downtime tomorrow. It has been a stressful time over the last little while as the COVID-19 situation has been escalating, and it will be good for our students to take some time get themselves settled at home with their families and adjust to what is going to be our 'new normal' for a little while. We will need to wait for some further information before I can let you know the plans for Wednesday as it may be term break, or it may be the first day of our remote learning programme. I hope that we will be able to make arrangements for any students who were not at school today to come in tomorrow to collect their learning materials but I will confirm this once we have further advice from the Ministry of Education.

I will update you as soon as possible with further information as it comes to hand. Please be assured that we will be doing everything that we can during this difficult time to support both the wellbeing and learning of our students and staff.

You may like to read the [Family Lockdown Guide](#) that I sent through last week if you have not had a chance to already.

Update #15 23 March – Message to parents/caregivers

We are currently listening to the Prime Minister speak and are awaiting details from the Ministry of Education. We will be in touch between 4pm and 5pm regarding next steps.

Update #14 23 March - Message to parents/caregivers

Preparation for remote learning at Marsden

In these unprecedented times we are all learning, adapting and adopting different terminology that is relevant to our 'new normal'.

I would like to introduce you to some of the terminology that we will be using at Marsden if we need to move into remote learning mode at some stage in the future.

Self-Managed Learning Menu – our Preschool and Primary students will have a daily learning menu of online and offline activities which will be published each day by 9am. Our teachers will be planning effective daily learning and regularly connecting with students virtually.

Our Year 7 – 13 students will be doing both Synchronous and Asynchronous learning.

Synchronous Learning (SL): Year 7 – 13 teachers and students will meet online in real time through video conferencing or live chatting on our Google platform. There will be an expectation that all students attend timetabled SL classes unless students have been rung in sick. Teachers will keep their roll.

Asynchronous learning (AL): Year 7 – 13 teachers will create learning experiences for students to work at their own pace, absorb content and present their work in novel and innovative ways. Teachers will provide guidance and feedback through our Google platform.

Remote Learning Timetable: Year 7 – 13 students will have a new weekly timetable for their Synchronous

Learning and will self-manage their Asynchronous learning around this. There will be guidelines for including physical activity and wellbeing practices. Form time/tutor time and virtual assemblies will be built into the remote learning timetable.

Further, more detailed information, including timetables, will be provided if necessary.

Advice regarding NCEA assessments

We have had advice from NZQA that they are exploring options to create flexibility in our assessment of students for NCEA internal assessment. The aim will be to make it possible for us to assess students remotely, if required. NZQA is working to produce templates to help teachers adapt assessment to enable alternative ways of gathering evidence where appropriate. This may be through written, oral, digital or video assessment and it may involve teachers making their judgement by collecting evidence from a range of different examples of work. We are fortunate that the nature of NCEA, with its modularised assessment and internal component, enables such an approach. Our ongoing assessment programme can be adapted as required; we do not want students stressing about their NCEA and assessment.

Vulnerable people

Information about who is considered vulnerable was **updated yesterday** on the [COVID-19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website.

Thank you all for your ongoing support and positivity.

Update #13 22 March - Message to parents/caregivers

Update on potential 'close contact'

Further to my email last night, regarding the Marsden students who travelled on the same flight as one of yesterday's confirmed COVID-19 cases, I am pleased to confirm that none of our students have been identified as 'close contacts' of this case.

We have reflected on this situation and taken further advice, and have decided that it would be wise to ask all of these students to self-isolate until 14 days after the flight as an extra precaution to protect our broader community. Note that this is a precautionary measure only.

I know that there will be questions regarding the potential impact on other students. Our advice is that even if someone has been identified as a 'contact' (which none of our girls have been), 'contacts of contacts' are not required to self-isolate at this stage. If you have any concerns at all I ask that you contact Healthline or review the Ministry of Health [self-isolation](#) guidelines.

Update on Scots College Year 8

We have been informed by Scots College that they remain open tomorrow for all siblings and all year levels other than Year 8 and at that stage they are anticipating that all students and staff will be back at school on Tuesday. If this situation changes I will update you.

Alert Level 2

With the [announcement](#) yesterday that New Zealand has moved to [Alert Level 2 – Reduce Contact](#) for COVID-19, people over 70 years of age and those with [compromised immunity and certain existing medical conditions](#) are

asked to remain at home as much as they can from now on and avoid any non-essential travel.

This advice applies to school students and staff. I will be talking to impacted staff today about how Marsden can best support them at this time and we will be putting plans in place to ensure that educational programmes go ahead in the way that they usually do when staff are unable to attend due to illness.

Please email both absences@marsden.school.nz and your child's class teacher, form teacher or tutor to let them know if this situation impacts your family so that they can liaise with other teachers to ensure that arrangements are made for your child's learning to continue. Please reassure your children that we can be flexible regarding any assessments that they may be worried about.

School transport

The Ministry of Education (MOE) is currently working with the bus companies to assess the impacts on school transport as there are a number of school bus drivers over 70 years of age. The MOE has asked the bus companies to contact affected schools today if they have been unable to find replacement drivers. If any of our bus routes are affected I will let you know via email as soon as possible.

Event Cancellations

On Friday we received notification that The Big Sing will not go ahead this year. Just like the sporting tournaments which have been cancelled, this event is a really important goal each year for a large number of our girls. The cancellation email came in to my inbox as I was listening to the Ad Summa girls rehearsing next to me in the auditorium and I just couldn't bring myself to walk in there and tell them at that moment. Of course, with social media being what it is, the news was out before the end of the rehearsal and I know that many of the girls felt devastated. We will be reassuring the girls that they are not going to stop playing sport at Marsden and we are not going to stop singing or preparing for performances. The organisers of The Big Sing are looking at putting together virtual choir projects and other performances opportunities.

Marsden kindness

There has been a lot of talk of the importance of kindness as our community responds to the unprecedented situation we now find ourselves in. I feel very blessed to be part of the Marsden community where kindness is in our DNA. I know that many of the girls are feeling sad about event cancellations, but what I also know is that they try to live out our Marsden values of Excellence, Resilience, Creativity and Service every single day. Our Resilience might be being testing a little bit at the moment, and there will no doubt be times when all of us feel like having a good cry, but we will get through this. Our Creativity is going to be unleashed as we adapt to new ways of doing things for a while, and there are others in our community who are going to need the Service we can provide.

Update #12 21 March – Message to parents/caregivers

I am writing to let you know that we are aware that one of the confirmed cases of COVID-19 announced today travelled on the same domestic flight as a group of our students on Thursday 12 March.

None of our students have been identified as contacts of this person at this stage. However, in the interests of our broader community I have asked them all to self-isolate as a precaution until we get a definitive answer regarding whether the contact tracing is complete.

I have been speaking to the Director of Education for the Wellington Region regarding this situation and am hoping to receive an update soon. I will let you know as soon as possible.

Although I believe that it is unlikely at this stage that we will be impacted by this, I would prefer to be transparent about the slight uncertainty we currently face.

Update #11 - info re Year 8 students at Scots College 21 March 2020

You may have read in the press that a parent of a Year 8 Scots College student has been diagnosed with COVID-19. As there is a small possibility that the Year 8 son has been infected, Scots College has asked all Year 8 students to remain at home for Monday and Tuesday as a precautionary measure while the student is tested. Note that only Year 8 Scots College students are impacted as they have been away at camp for the past week rather than at school.

If you have a Year 8 son who attends Scots College and will be self-isolating I request that, as a precautionary measure for the Marsden community, you do not send any of your other children who attend Marsden to school on Monday or Tuesday.

Please email both absences@marsden.school.nz and your child's class teacher, form teacher or tutor to let them know if this situation impacts your family so that they can liaise with other teachers to ensure that arrangements are made for your child's learning to continue. Please reassure your children that we can be flexible regarding any assessments that they may be worried about.

Update # 10 20 March 2020 - Message to parents/caregivers

With so much information and misinformation swirling around about COVID-19, I wanted to share with you what will happen if we were to have a case in our school community. We have been planning for this and are in a position to respond quickly.

- As soon as a case is confirmed in our immediate school community (eg. a student, staff member, or member of their household), the Medical Officer of Health and Ministry of Education will inform me about this, and we will work together to get quick and clear messaging out to you
- If there was a case confirmed of someone in our school, we will likely be asked to close temporarily by the Medical Officer of Health. This will allow time for close contacts to be traced, appropriate testing to be undertaken, and a careful clean of the school to be undertaken.
- As you know, if our school does need to close temporarily, we have a plan in place to support student learning.

Whether you send your children to school on any day is ultimately your decision. If you wish to keep your children in voluntary self-isolation at the moment please be assured that we will respect your decision and their absence will be noted as 'Justified' Please make contact with us at absences@marsden.school.nz to let us know and we will ensure that the relevant teachers are informed so that they can provide work and keep in touch.

Rules on gatherings do not apply to schools:

You may have seen yesterday that the Government has announced that indoor gatherings of more than 100 people are to be cancelled. This does not apply to schools, early learning services, tertiary providers, workplaces, supermarkets or public transport. The Ministry of Education will continue to provide us with guidance around events and gatherings that could be relevant to schools.

Duke of Edinburgh's Awards:

We have received communication from the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards organisation letting us know that they're willing to be very flexible in this changing environment so participants can continue their Award activities in creative ways to ensure that they can keep their Award progress on track.

Our Year 10 students are due to do their Bronze Award practice tramp the week after next. We have been informed that a one day practice *without having to stay overnight* will be accepted for the award on the grounds that the Award Leader is satisfied that the participant is prepared enough and ensures it meets the Safety Management Systems of the Award Unit. **Our Year 10 practice tramps will now be day walks.** Elliott Brookes will be in touch with parents and students regarding the new arrangements early next week. Any other queries regarding Duke of Edinburgh's awards should be directed to Elliott Brookes.

Debating:

The organisers of the Wellington regional debating competition have been in touch to let us know that the Year 9 – 13 debating competition has been cancelled until further notice. We will be looking at alternatives for running an internal debating programme at Marsden until the students can compete again.

Making sure we are prepared:

At the end of the day today we will be encouraging students to take home any materials they might need if they were required to learn at home next week.... just in case! This includes their devices, reading and drawing material etc. This is a precaution only, at this stage we fully expect to be here on Monday.

Update #9 19 March 2020 - Message to parents/caregivers

I know that some of you have concerns about your children attending school at the moment, which is not surprising given what we are seeing in the media about other countries.

Our latest advice (yesterday evening) from the Ministry of Education (MOE) is that, at this stage, they are not expecting widespread school closures. The MOE is planning for temporary closures, as is happening at Logan Park School but, as the World Health Organisation has confirmed, the risk to children remains low, and parents should continue to send their children to schools and early learning centres. The MOE will be making any decisions about school closures on a case by case basis. In the meantime, unless students are unwell, they believe that parents should keep sending them to schools and early learning centres, as these environments continue to be safe and the best place for them to continue their learning.

Whether you send your children to school on any day is ultimately your decision. If you wish to keep your children in voluntary self-isolation at the moment please be assured that we will respect your decision and their absence will be noted as 'Justified'. Please make contact with us at absences@marsden.school.nz to let us know and we will ensure that the relevant teachers are informed so that they can provide work and keep in touch.

Changes to self-isolation recommendations

You would be aware that yesterday afternoon the Prime Minister requested that all people who arrived in New Zealand in the last 14 days self-isolate. This has impacted a small number of our families and I thank them for their proactivity in immediately acting on this advice, seeking advice from health professionals, and communicating openly with us. This type of considered and caring response is something that I have come to expect from the Marsden community and value highly.

Up-to-date information and advice

A reminder that information and advice for students, whānau and the education sector is [available here](#).

While the website is being regularly updated with education-related content, the [Ministry of Health is the Government agency leading the response to COVID-19](#).

Local and Regional Sports cancellations

We were advised yesterday afternoon by College Sport Wellington that all Term One events will be suspended as of this morning (Thursday, 19 March). This decision was made with the knowledge that, in all likelihood, these competitions will not be resumed.

The decision impacts our students who have been involved in Floorball, Futsal, Handball, Tennis, Rowing, Volleyball, Equestrian, Cricket and Athletics.

Looking ahead to the winter season, at this point in time College Sport Wellington won't be making any decision about deferring the winter season but will begin assessing from next week, as more Ministry of Health information becomes available. Currently, School Sport NZ is talking to the National Sports' Organisations about improving the consistency of messaging and better consultation with the school sporting bodies regarding directives around suspending trialling and training. By Monday, College Sport Wellington hopes there will be a clearer picture available. Wellington schools' Sports Directors are meeting on Monday and my hope is that through this the local schools will all agree to adopt a uniform approach to trainings/trials. I will communicate with you again following that meeting, but until then it is business as usual for our internal sports events that are run on our campus, including training and trials.

We have received notification that the following sports tournaments have been cancelled as more than 500 participants were expected to attend:

- Western Zone Football for Year 5 to 8 students – was to take place on Tuesday 24 March
- Primary Sport Futsal for Year 7 and 8 students – was to take place on Wednesday 8 April

All Wellington West events have also been cancelled.

Other school events

As we are now in the 'Stamp it Out' phase of the New Zealand pandemic response, school-related events for students and staff which involve international and domestic travel outside of the local area are being postponed. **At the moment our planning horizon on this goes out to the end of Week 2 of Term 2 (Friday 8 May).** Events impacted are in this period are:

- Year 13 PE Risk Management trip to Abel Tasman – we hope to relocate the learning activities to the Wellington area.
- Year 11 History trip to Parihaka (29 – 30 April) - we will be looking to reschedule this if possible.

Preparation for remote learning

At the moment I have asked Marsden staff to focus on two things only:

- 1. Providing the richest possible learning environment for our students in the current circumstances** which mean we are unable to run some of our usual activities, and
- 2. Planning for providing the richest possible remote learning environment** for our students if we are required to move into remote learning mode at some time in the future.

Both of these scenarios provide us with opportunities for creativity and innovation. I am so encouraged by our amazing staff and all the work that they are doing to keep things as normal as possible for our students, while planning ahead for an eventuality which would be unprecedented, but would offer us, as educators, rich opportunities for growth. The global education community is generously sharing the valuable experiences gained over the last few months as schools in various countries have moved to remote learning, and we are adopting a 'Brave, not perfect' mindset as we prepare.

In the background, our crisis management team has been actively working on the COVID-19 'incident' for over 7 weeks now... we have now passed the 50 day mark and are feeling confident that we are in a strong position to support our community going forward... whatever that may mean!

I would like to leave you today with Professor Lea Waters' latest Guardian article [Silver Linings: how to stay positive in the coronavirus crisis](#).

Update #8 17 March 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

1. National Sports Tournaments

As we expected, the Prime Minister has announced restrictions to mass gathering as part of the New Zealand COVID-19 response. Last night we received confirmation from School Sport New Zealand that all events on the School Sport NZ National Calendar are currently suspended. This will impact our teams who were planning to travel to the following events during Summer Tournament week:

- ~Maadi Cup in Twizel
- ~National Volleyball tournament in Palmerston North
- ~National Tennis tournament in Christchurch

~National Futsal tournament in Wellington

I know that this is disappointing for the girls and their coaches as they have been working hard in preparation for these events. School Sport NZ will review this decision on Monday 6th April. Some events where alternative dates are not possible will be cancelled, others may be postponed and we will be advised of changes in due course.

The suspension of the national calendar is a wise decision given that these events feature schools travelling from all over New Zealand and as such present a potentially heightened risk of wider community spread by comparison to regional or local events. Medical advice is that the risk of transmission is low at community level, where there has been no person-to-person spread, but significantly higher in situations in which airports, air-travel and hotels are involved as characterised by events on the School Sport NZ national calendar.

At this stage local and regional sports events are continuing.

2. Home Technology audit

As part of our preparation for the possibility of needing to implement remote learning at some time in the future, Form and Tutor teachers will be taking the students through a questionnaire tomorrow morning at form time, or tomorrow afternoon at tutor time, to ascertain what technology our students have available at home to access online resources. The questions will include if they have a device, the type and operating system (Mac or Windows), if Google Chrome is downloaded (this is needed), webcam and microphone access, Wifi access and whether it is unlimited, and available via fibre or VDSL. It would be fantastic if you could discuss these with your daughter tonight so we are able to collate answers from every student by the end of business tomorrow.

Primary teachers will be in direct contact with parents if necessary with any questions they have about access to home technology.

3. Sick children at school

If your child is unwell or showing signs of being unwell, we ask that you keep them at home. Sending sick children to school results in infection spreading and unhappy children. If your child displays symptoms of illness such as a sore throat, high temperature, cough and respiratory issues please consult a medical professional immediately.

Children displaying signs of illness at school will be assessed by our School Nurse who will make contact with parents. Please ensure that we have up-to-date contact details for your emergency caregivers in the case that your child is ill and we are unable to contact you.

4. Large gatherings at school

We have reviewed our plans for whole school assemblies for the rest of the term and have decided to run an alternate learning programme which keeps the girls in smaller groups, either in their year levels, form classes, tutor groups or primary class syndicates during assembly times. The focus of this programme will be on wellbeing. Unfortunately this means that we have postponed the Scholars Assembly which was scheduled for the last week of term. We will reschedule this as soon as we are able so that we can celebrate 2019's academic successes.

5. Further resources for parents

As you would be aware, Marsden provides parents with access to the SchoolTV platform. SchoolTV has put together a great update for parents which I encourage you to access here:

https://marsden.nz.schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/special-report-coronavirus

This is also a great article for parents, published in The Guardian, with significant input from our Visible Wellbeing partner, Professor Lea Waters: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/13/the-family-lockdown-guide-how-to-emotionally-prepare-for-coronavirus-quarantine>

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #7 16 March 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

I know that you will have been following the news at the weekend regarding the evolving global response to COVID-19 pandemic and would be aware that three new confirmed cases were announced taking the total confirmed cases for New Zealand to eight. We have been advised by the Ministry of Education this morning that these cases are not connected with any schools or early learning services and they are doing well and two are self-isolating at home/hotel with one being treated in hospital.

While the travel restriction measures announced by the Prime Minister at the weekend and likely future restrictions on mass gatherings will support the slowing of COVID-19 in New Zealand, it is unrealistic to expect they will prevent further cases and there is the possibility that any school could be closed for a period of time due to COVID-19.

At Marsden we have been actively planning for this for some time now and we are confident that our learning programmes will be able to continue through remote learning if necessary. We have strong online learning platforms in place (Seasaw in the Primary School and Hapara for Year 7 – 13) and video conferencing capabilities through Google classroom. My hope is that our school is able to continue operating as we know that, in times of uncertainty, routine and social connection is very important for children and young people.

We will be taking additional preventative measures including:

1. Additional cleaning of surfaces
2. Postponing non-essential large gatherings at school. Events will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and students and families involved will be notified of any postponements. This morning we chose not to run our Innovation Series lecture or Primary Assembly. Please be patient as we work through the detail and make considered decisions about future events.

Prevention remains a priority. Students, staff and our wider school community still have a very large role in preventing the spread of COVID-19 through:

1. **Awareness** – know the symptoms and where to get good information. The Ministry of Health website is the place to go.

2. **Vigilance** - As is normal procedure, if your child is unwell or showing signs of being unwell, we ask that you keep them at home. Sending sick children to school results in infection spreading and unhappy children. We will request that any child displaying signs of illness is collected immediately. If your child displays symptoms of illness such as sore throat, high temperature, cough and respiratory issues please consult a medical professional immediately. Please ensure that we have up-to-date contact details for your emergency caregivers, in the case that your child is ill and we are unable to contact you.

3. **Good hygiene** – hand washing and drying, good cough and sneeze etiquette will prevent spread of a range of ills as we move into cold and flu season.

If any member of your household is in self-isolation can you please let us know so that we can provide you with additional support via our school nurse. Please contact my EA, Alison McManus at alison.mcmanus@marsden.school.nz.

With prevention in mind, a key message for all of us is the importance of keeping COVID-19 out of the Pacific Islands. We saw the devastating effects of measles in Samoa and it is vital we do everything we can to stop COVID-19 from reaching their shores. The Ministry of Health website remains the best source of information on COVID-19 for New Zealand.

We can all play an important role in helping our children and young people to cope with unsettling events through the way we respond ourselves. For example, in my Year 10 class this morning we took some time to focus on all of the positive things going on at the moment, and agreed that the inability to travel when we want to, is a 'first world problem', even if it means we may miss family events or things we had been looking forward to... that may be 'sad' but it is not 'really bad'.

You may find [this graphic](#) from the World Health Organisation on 'Helping Children Cope with Stress in the 2019-nCoV Outbreak' helpful.

If you have any questions please contact us on 476 8707.

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #6 12 March 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

You may have seen that the World Health Organisation has now declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic. As noted by the Minister of Health, this doesn't change what New Zealand is doing to respond to coronavirus.

The Ministry of Health has been working through its pandemic plan since January. You will also know the Government has already implemented a range of measures to minimise the impacts to New Zealand. This includes border restrictions, a requirement to self-isolate on arrival in New Zealand from China, Iran, Italy and the Republic of Korea and immediate and detailed contact tracing of any confirmed cases. It is important to note those four countries account for more than 90% of cases globally and China and the Republic of Korea have significantly declining numbers of new cases.

We have 5 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand and it is pleasing to know they are all doing well and are at home. Their children, four students at Auckland schools, continue to be well and show no symptoms. While we expect that more cases will arise, the Ministry of Health says that with continued vigilance the chance of widespread community outbreak is expected to remain low in New Zealand. We all have a role to play in this.

At Marsden, our pandemic plan is also ready to be implemented if needed. In the meantime, we will continue to focus on good hygiene practices. Hand washing and good cough etiquette are very important tools in preventing the spread of illness including colds, flu and COVID-19.

You will appreciate the importance of giving children factual, age-appropriate information about COVID-19 so that they can feel informed and in control. The Ministry of Education has put together some guidance to support parents to have those conversations – [Talking to children about coronavirus](#)

With that, there is a good video clip from Nanogirl that may help your children to better understand the virus - [YouTube clip - Nanogirl](#). We watched this video in our Year 7–13 Assembly on Monday morning. You may like to watch it and discuss it with your younger children if you feel that is age-appropriate for them. Year 8 students were not at Assembly on Monday due to their camp so it may be good to watch this with them at some stage over the weekend. Our Primary students enjoyed practising hand-washing together whilst singing 'Happy Birthday' in their Assembly last Friday.

You may also have also seen the Prime Minister sat down with Dr Michelle Dickinson (aka Nanogirl) and the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Juliet Gerrard, to talk about coronavirus:

- [Watch on the PM's Facebook page](#)
- [Read and watch on the Newshub website](#)

One other action we can all take is to be vigilant about our own health and the health of our children. I am encouraging our staff to stay away from school if they are showing signs of illness such as coughs and colds. I ask that you please do the same with your children. Colds and flu are common in schools and by staying away, seeking medical attention and practicing good hygiene, we can all keep any spread of illness to a minimum.

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #5 10 March 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

Many of you will be aware that some of the very small number of cases of COVID-19 confirmed in New Zealand have had links to school communities. I appreciate this could be unsettling for some of you so I wanted to provide you with an update.

It was very reassuring to read the information from the Auckland Regional Public Health Service that the children in these families are not showing any symptoms of COVID-19 and are doing well. Because the children continue to not show any symptoms, they were not infectious when they were at school and the Ministry of Health is confident there is no risk for the students and staff in those schools.

You will also be interested to know that research published by the World Health Organisation notes that children and young people under 18 account for only 2.4% of all reported cases of COVID-19. This means we are unlikely

to see widespread cases in schools and early learning services in New Zealand.

The Ministry of Health's current advice is that with continued vigilance, the chance of widespread community outbreak is expected to remain low. So we all have a role here to minimise the spread of COVID-19.

Our school staff and leadership team remain well prepared for the possibility there might be a case in our community. If that were to occur we are confident we can put our plans in place and know we will be supported by regional health authorities and the Ministry of Education.

I am sure you are all keen to do what you can to prevent the risk of infection. The best preventative steps are:

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry thoroughly
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid sharing anything that has come in contact with saliva, whether in your living or social environments
- stay home when you are sick and seek medical attention
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the rubbish
- get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

If you want to know more about COVID-19 please make sure that any reading you are doing is from a reliable source. The Ministry of Health is the best source of information for New Zealand and they update this information regularly - <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

A reminder that anyone who is ill should not be attending school.

The COVID-19 symptoms are a fever, coughing and difficulty breathing. If anyone has these symptoms and has recently been to a [country or area of concern](#), or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19, please encourage them to contact Healthline (for free) on [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453) or their doctor immediately.

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #4 4 March 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

Many of you will be aware that some of the very small number of cases of COVID-19 confirmed in New Zealand have had links to school communities. I appreciate this could be unsettling for some of you so I wanted to provide you with an update.

It was very reassuring to read the information from the Auckland Regional Public Health Service that the children in these families are not showing any symptoms of COVID-19 and are doing well. Because the children continue to not show any symptoms, they were not infectious when they were at school and the Ministry of Health is confident there is no risk for the students and staff in those schools.

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- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid sharing anything that has come in contact with saliva, whether in your living or social environments
- stay home when you are sick and seek medical attention
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the rubbish
- get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

If you want to know more about COVID-19 please make sure that any reading you are doing is from a reliable source. The Ministry of Health is the best source of information for New Zealand and they update this information regularly - <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

A reminder that anyone who is ill should not be attending school.

The COVID-19 symptoms are a fever, coughing and difficulty breathing. If anyone has these symptoms and has recently been to a [country or area of concern](#), or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19, please encourage them to contact Healthline (for free) on [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453) or their doctor immediately.

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #3 2 February 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

I am writing with further updated advice regarding the novel coronavirus outbreak and the impact on Marsden students.

You may have seen that the Prime Minister has made an announcement this afternoon. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-zealand-restrict-travel-china-protect-against-coronavirus>. It includes information concerning New Zealand citizens and permanent residents returning from China, and foreign nationals travelling from, or transiting through mainland China:

“The Government is placing temporary entry restrictions into New Zealand on all foreign nationals travelling from, or transiting through mainland China to assist with the containment of the novel coronavirus and to protect New Zealand and the Pacific Islands from the disease.

New Zealand citizens and permanent residents returning to New Zealand will still be able to enter, as will their

immediate family members, but will be required to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival back in the country.”

The New Zealand Ministry of Education have updated their advice to schools, now recommending that all students and staff who have **travelled to China recently** should not attend school for two weeks after they return to New Zealand as a precautionary measure.

I am therefore requesting that parents or caregivers of any student who may be at high risk of exposure to the virus because they have **recently been to China or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with the virus, refrain from sending your children to school until they have been back in New Zealand for 14 days.** During this time, you should be on the alert for symptoms related to a fever or respiratory symptoms. These include a cough, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, a sore throat, or a runny nose. Please visit your local GP if these symptoms are present.

If your family is in this situation, please contact your child’s classroom [teacher \(Primary\)](#) or [Dean \(Year 7 – 13\)](#) as soon as possible, so that we can ensure that Marsden is able to provide academic and pastoral support whilst your child is not attending school.

The Ministry of Health has provided practical information on their website which we encourage you to read - [Novel coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) guidance – Ministry of Health website](#). **This includes advice about self-isolation.** This content will continue to be updated as further information becomes available.

If you have any questions you can also contact our School Nurse, Janet Callaghan, at janet.callaghan@marsden.school.nz.

Marsden will continue to closely monitor the information being provided by the Ministry of Health, in regard to the Coronavirus and provide updates regarding our response as required.

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #2 30 January 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

Since my letter to you earlier today, we have received further communication from the New Zealand Ministry of Education, which updates their advice to schools regarding students and staff who have recently travelled to China.

We have been informed that the Ministry of Health has updated their health advice with a more narrowed focus on which geographic areas within China are deemed at most risk for exposure to the infection – these are Wuhan City and Hubei province.

Based on the latest advice from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education’s advice to schools has now been amended to the following:

For any staff member or student who has recently been to Wuhan City or Hubei province, or has been in

close contact with someone confirmed with the virus, we encourage you to ask the staff member or parent/caregiver of the student to delay the start of their school year for 14 days and stay home.

I am therefore requesting that, if your family has been to Wuhan City or Hubei province, or has had contact with someone who has been confirmed with novel coronavirus, you refrain from sending your children to school for 14 days.

If your family is in this situation, please contact your child's classroom teacher (Primary) or Dean (Year 7 – 13) as soon as possible, so that we can ensure that Marsden is able to provide academic and pastoral support whilst your child is not attending school.

The Ministry of Health has provided practical information on their website which we encourage you to read - [Novel coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) guidance – Ministry of Health website](#). This content will continue to be updated as further information becomes available. If you have any questions you can also contact our School Nurse, Janet Callaghan, at janet.callaghan@marsden.school.nz.

Marsden will continue to closely monitor the information being provided by the Ministry of Health, in regard to the Coronavirus and provide updates regarding our response as required.

We thank you for your assistance with this situation.

Narelle Umbers
Principal

Update #1 27 January 2020 – Message to parents/caregivers

Email

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