



14 May 2020

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome Back to School

The Prime Minister announced that New Zealand will move to Alert Level 2 from today Thursday 14 May, with schools to reopen for all students on Monday 18 May, therefore this week marks the final days of our distance learning phase. I want to sincerely thank our students for their efforts and focus during these challenging weeks, and our families and whānau for supporting your young people to continue their studies.

This “bumper edition” contains important information for families and for students as they return to Waimea College at Alert Level 2:

Key Messages:

- School will resume for all students on Monday 18 May.
- As previously communicated, increased hygiene practices will be in place.
- If a student continues to self isolate during Alert Level 2, **please inform the school** via the Attendance Office.
- School and Ministry of Education laptops issued during the lockdown period need to be returned to the Library on Monday 18 May.
- If your teen has a device that they can bring to school, please encourage them to do this as it will be a big help.

Return to School

Waimea College will be open to all students from Monday 18 May and students are asked to report directly to their Form Class at 8.40am. Form Time on Monday 18 May and Tuesday 19 May will be extended to allow for a Health & Safety briefing for students about keeping safe at school under Alert Level 2 and to allow a little extra time for the Form Teacher to check in with students.

Year 9 and 10 students will be issued with a new timetable during Form Class as the new term signals a change in their option subjects. Special Education and Alternative Education students will receive separate communications about the return to school.

We understand that the return to school after such a lengthy period of online learning will be a process of readjustment for some students. In support of this, the focus for the first week back at school will be reconnecting with students and re-establishing routines.

Learning, Assessment and NCEA

We recognise that for a variety of reasons, some students will have been better able to engage with distance learning than others. Teachers will be sensitive to this and will work hard to support students who have gaps in their learning.

Teachers will not be undertaking high-stakes assessment activities with students during the first week back and Heads of Curriculum areas are reviewing their teaching programmes and assessment plans for the remainder of the year to ensure that students are not overloaded. Any changes will be clearly communicated with classes.

Yesterday the Ministry of Education announced a number of changes to NCEA to address impacts of COVID-19. More information about this can be found here:

<http://www.education.govt.nz/news/changes-to-ncea-address-impact-of-covid-19/>

Senior Students will receive a briefing about NCEA during Week 2 to provide updates and reassurance about the way forward.

Attendance

- If your teen is unwell, for any reason, they must stay at home. Please contact us via the regular channels if this is the case.
- If students become unwell during the day, we ask that they report to the Student Office. We will contact you and ask you to collect your teen as soon as possible.
- It is essential that our information about who is on site is accurate. Should students need to leave the school grounds e.g. for an appointment, they will need to sign in and out via the Attendance Office. Students cannot leave the premises during the day without doing this.
- If your teen, or someone in your family, has a health condition which means they are vulnerable to serious illness or have a compromised immune system please contact the school and let us know if your teen will not be attending school during Alert Level 2. You may be asked to produce a medical certificate – we will continue to follow Ministry of Education advice around these requests.
- As we settle back into the “new normal” of Alert Level 2, a key focus will be to reconnect and re-engage with our students. Classroom teachers will prioritise their efforts on delivering lessons to the students onsite. However, we will do our best to make work available online for those who cannot physically attend school.

Contact Details

If you have not already done so, please ensure we have the most up to date contact details (including an alternative contact) for your family. This will be vital, should there be a need for contact tracing. To update your details please contact main.office@waimea.school.nz.

Hygiene and Physical Distancing

- Maintaining good hygiene practice (coughing into your elbow, handwashing and drying) is essential as we return to school.
- Hand sanitiser will be available in every classroom and in other high use areas. Students are asked to sanitise their hands on entering and exiting every classroom. Students are also encouraged to bring their own sanitiser for personal use during lunch breaks etc.
- Our cleaning routine has been intensified to ensure that high use areas are maintained in line with Ministry guidelines.
- The physical distancing advice from the Ministry of Education states that “in schools, physical distancing means children, young people and staff maintaining enough distance so that they are not breathing on or touching each other.” There are no other specified physical distancing requirements under Alert Level 2.
- For some situations e.g. sporting activities, physical distancing of any sort is not possible. In these situations, extra emphasis will be placed on handwashing and drying (or cleansing with hand sanitiser) before and after activities and regular cleaning of equipment.
- While there are no restrictions on numbers of people indoors or outside at schools other than what other public health or health and safety measures require, we will not be holding events such as full-school assemblies during Alert Level 2.

Facemasks and other personal protective equipment

Public Health officials have [advised](#) that if the school is following the guidance listed above, facemasks and personal protective equipment is not needed under Alert Level 2, however students and staff are able to wear facemasks if they wish.

School Bus Service

- The school bus service will be operating under Alert Level 2. Hand sanitiser will be provided for students to use as they enter and exit the bus.
- It is essential that you advise the school if your teen has changed their bus route. Please contact the Bus Controller [Kerry Parkes](#).
- Any student who travels to and from school via a fee-paying bus (for example the Motueka buses) must have a concession card (available from the Waimea College Finance Centre). We have been advised that bus drivers will not be accepting cash.
- Students need to be respectful of others to ensure they are not touching or breathing on each other. If you have concerns about physical distancing in this setting, you may wish to consider other modes of transport.

Food, Drink and Personal Equipment at School

- Students must remember to bring their own drink bottles to school as our shared drinking fountains will not be available for use during Alert Level 2.
- Ensure students bring their own equipment (pens, rulers etc) as sharing of equipment with others is not permitted.
- A reminder that students must not share food with each other.
- The school kiosk will be operating from Monday 18 May with the appropriate precautions being taken.

Devices

- If you have been issued with a Chromebook or other digital device, either from Waimea College or directly from the Ministry of Education, we ask that these devices be returned to the school Library on the first day that school resumes. This will allow us to continue with using these in our teaching programmes as soon as possible.
- One of our Associate Deputy Principals, **Llywelyn Adlam**, will be in contact with families directly with further information about this.
- A reminder of the initiative launched by Spark aiming to provide affordable broadband connections. Follow this link for further information: <https://www.skinny.co.nz/jump/home>.

Library

The Library will remain closed to students on Monday 18 May for the first few days through until Thursday 21 May, to allow the return of borrowed devices and Chromebooks to be processed and reconfigured to school network settings. We ask that students start returning their Library books from Thursday 21 May. New books will also be re-issued from that date.

Uniform Shop

The Uniform Shop will be open at its usual times from Monday 18 May 2020. The opening times and further information are available on the school website.

Sport, Field-Trips and other Out-of-Classroom Activities

We are currently working through the guidance about the activities that can occur during Alert Level 2 and what this will look like, however many activities are likely to be limited during this period. We have been advised that Trades Academy classes are able to resume next week.

Online Assemblies

Check out the online assemblies put together by the Senior Leadership team and Head Students on the [Waimea College YouTube channel](#). The last “lockdown” assembly is being released today and will feature some student lockdown experiences.

We are looking forward to welcoming our students back next week. We know there will be a period of readjustment for everyone – students, whānau and staff. Please contact the school if you have any queries or concerns or email inspire@waimea.school.nz.

I will leave you with some very good advice shared by our Prime Minister earlier this week – “wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands, and be kind!”.

He Waka Eke Noa – A Waka that we are all in together.

Ngā mihi



Scott Haines
Principal