

MENPS News

Te Whare Akoranga o Maungawhau, 14 May, 2020

From The Principal - Level 2

Kia ora koutou

Just an update today as we look ahead to our re-opening on Monday. We are all excited at the opportunity to breathe life back into the school at Alert Level 2, and we hope the children are feeling the same!

We know there may still be questions on some of the day-to-day details, so please see below for a list of Level 2 topics and answers that we hope you may find useful. As we all know, this continues to be an evolving situation, but we will endeavour to keep you as informed as possible.

As we draw distance learning to a close tomorrow, I would like to acknowledge all of the teachers and support staff who took this unique challenge and ran with it to provide such a wide range of imaginative, purposeful activities and engaging teacher-created content. While we knew it would be difficult, I am very proud of the work that was produced and the collective efforts of staff, parents and students.

Looking ahead, we are very much looking forward to catching up with MENPS students and families in person very soon!

Ka kite anō au i a koutou

Alan Jackson

Principal



What precautions will be in place at Level 2?

While we can't social distance as such in schools, we are taking a sensible approach towards;

- personal space - avoiding very close contact (the 'breath zone')

- a continuing focus on enhanced cleaning and sanitisation measures and attention to contact surfaces/shared resources
- frequent, supervised hand-washing protocols
- minimisation of contact between classes and year levels will also be carried out where possible, with a focus on maintaining an ability to contract trace quickly and effectively. This will include rostered break areas and staggered break times to help manage traffic volume and contacts at busy times

Who can come to school at Level 2?

The Ministry of Education and the COVID-19 website have publicly affirmed that, at Alert Level 2, **it is safe for all staff and children to go to school**. The only exceptions are children or young people who are;

- sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms;
- are in isolation, or;
- are awaiting the result of a test

For absences, please continue to use our absence form via the school website

Can my child come to school if they, or a member of my household, have a pre-existing condition?

According to official advice, **yes**. We would always recommend consulting with your healthcare provider if in any doubt

Can my child come to school if they have asthma?

Again, **yes**, as long it is currently controlled (as is always the case). It is essential that we have up to date information on file and that any required medication is available at school

Can I keep my child at home if they are well but I am still worried about the COVID-19 pandemic?

Officially, school is open and children are free to come to school safely, so the Ministry of Education have stated that **all children should now attend school**. Any elective (ie; non-sickness-related) absence will now be recorded as 'unjustified' on the roll as usual

From a compassionate point of view, we understand there are some who may be hesitant or not feel quite ready in the current circumstances. Nonetheless, the position taken by health authorities is that school will be formally re-opened for instruction as usual. We are, of course, always happy to discuss any questions you may have if it might be of help

Does the school have access to appropriate supplies?

Yes, we are well stocked with soap, approved cleaning products, and have a good supply of Ministry-approved sanitizer for every class

Will the school still provide distance learning for some students?

All of our teachers will be resuming classroom duties, so **distance learning will be discontinued from tomorrow**, Alternatives to classroom learning will only be an option for students who are in mandatory quarantine

Unfortunately, there are no exceptions to this. We will not be offering distance learning as an option for those who keep their children off school by choice

Can my child wear PPE to school?

No. Official health advice clearly states that this is not required, and we do not believe it is appropriate for the school environment

Can I drop off and pick up my child from class?

No. It is essential for us to restrict traffic on site to only those who are essential, and we are required to keep a detailed register of everyone who enters the school grounds (not just school buildings). Making 'exceptions' to this will quickly make this unmanageable, so we will be taking a blanket approach.

If you are concerned about dropping your child at the gate, please contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss strategies for this (for brand new enrolments, we will make prior arrangements for class visits on an individual basis).

If drop-off is a factor that legitimately needs to be managed, it can likely be done at the school gate just as effectively as it can be managed at the classroom door - staff will be on hand to help if needed, so we ask all children to drop/pick-up from outside the school gate

Please think about your travel plans now - we would like as many children as possible to walk or cycle to school, so please consider your options - now is not a great time to be dropping off and picking up by car, and the perfect time to walk, bike or scooter to school to help ease congestion

Will the school be sending reading books home?

Yes, we will be picking up on this, and getting our usual homework programmes up and running. When returned, any books sent home will all be thoroughly cleaned. We plan to re-start our usual home learning programmes **from Wednesday, 20th May**

Will the school library be open?

No, not fully at first, but we will have modified protocols for using the library during Level 2 and children will still be able to take out and return books

Will there be assemblies at Level 2?

No

Will teaching and learning be different?

Yes, **to some extent**, but much of our approach to teaching and learning will be similar. We will be taking care to give personal space as far as possible when working in groups and taking sensible precautions to minimise very immediate contact and sharing of resources during Level 2, and/or to sanitize as appropriate

Will the learning programmes effectively start from scratch?

No. We will very much be picking up from where we left off. While distance learning has had obvious challenges, the children have still been productively engaged and done some fantastic work, so we will be looking to build on this

What about reports & parent conferences?

Our immediate priority is for a settled return to school. Teachers will then begin re-testing and assessing where the children are currently in their learning, with reports and conferences **likely to be deferred to a later date** (to be confirmed)

What else will be different around school?

Not a great deal in most other respects! We have been advised that, as with public playgrounds, school playgrounds can remain open. We may restrict some high-contact, shared play equipment where we feel it would be appropriate, but our focus will be on good hand hygiene before and after breaks

What about other trips and events?

These will be assessed on a case by case basis. Large scale events are not permitted for the time being due to gathering limits (including previously-scheduled events such as production)

What about clubs and extra-curricular activities?

Many of our extra-curricular activities will likely resume, but not until after the first week back. Each will be assessed on their ability to comply with school level 2 protocols. Where this is not possible, they will be deferred until they can be reviewed when the alert level changes. **Please contact providers directly for further information** on individual classes and bookings

What about sports teams?

We will be reviewing the current guidelines on a case-by-case basis. Organised Inter-school sports will not resume at this stage due to limits on gatherings, but PE and fitness will resume in school. We also plan at this stage to hold cross-country later this term within school (more information on this will be sent home soon)

There will be further information shortly about when and if any team coaching may resume and how this will work

What if my child is anxious about returning to school, or if I am worried myself?

We understand that this has been a difficult period of time and that it may take time and reassurance for some to settle in. The focus on our return will be on checking in and ensuring the children feel happy and safe at school. **Caring for the children is our core business, and we will be there to take good care of them!**

We will listen and discuss in age appropriate ways, and will be sensitive to the children's needs as always. We want all of our families to feel assured that we are taking all reasonable steps to take care of the children at MENPS, and will continue to keep you as well informed as we can along the way

Is SKiDs before and after-school care operating at Level 2?

Yes, SKiDS also re-opens on Monday 18th. SKiDS staff have also been trained in Level 2 protocols

Will there be 'catch-up' work if I am worried that my child has fallen behind?

No. It isn't the children's fault that there has been disruption to their learning, and every child in NZ is in exactly the same position, so no individual is disadvantaged relative to their peers.

We believe it will all even out over time - please don't ask teachers for extra work/books/worksheets to be sent home as we will be taking a long-term view and not be providing over and above our usual home learning materials

Will a Term overview be published?

Probably, but only once we have reviewed and made decision on the schedule for the remainder of the term (which may not be finalised until after the next Alert Level review)

Will the 2020 School Term Dates be changed?

No. The Ministry of Education has determined that the remaining dates in the 2020 school year will continue as planned. Extra days will not be added in lieu of the lockdown period. Our originally-scheduled Teacher Only Day on May 29 has now been postponed

Is the Teacher Only Day Scheduled for May 29 Still Going Ahead

No, this date has now been cancelled/postponed, so children will be at school as usual

Does my child need to bring anything other than what they would usually bring to school?

We are asking that all children bring a **named drink bottle** (drinking fountains are still restricted), but otherwise, nothing out of the ordinary - just their enthusiasm and readiness to get back into classroom learning!

Are EZlunches operating?

Yes, from Monday 18th

Will new enrolments be allowed to start?

Yes, we expect that enrolments will get back on schedule and we will be catching up on any that have been delayed. Our mid-term cohort entry date will be proceeding as planned at this stage

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER
QUESTIONS!

 Staff | Mt Eden Normal Primary ...

www.mteden.school.nz

Meet the MENPS team



Keep in touch

 Facebook

Check back on our website, or join the official Mt Eden Normal Facebook page to keep up to date!

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