

MENPS News

Te Whare Akoranga o Maungawhau, 17 February, 2021

From The Principal - Level 2

Kia ora koutou

Just an update following confirmation that Auckland will move to Level 2 from midnight tonight (17th). This is great news, meaning a return to school and our core business of in-person teaching and learning tomorrow!

We're fortunate to have experienced a relatively brief Level 3 period this time around, and we're very much looking forward to welcoming the children back to class!

As you know, Level 2 involves some restrictions and precautions here at school, which are summarised below. We will keep these under ongoing review as the situation develops further.

The key change to be aware of for the time being is that we will be implementing gate drop-off - as we have previously at Level 2 - to help minimise traffic on-site and assist with contact tracing requirements. Our experiences last year showed that children can adapt to this with remarkable resilience. In the event it proves to be a challenge for any of our brand new Y1 students (many of whom will no doubt have experienced similar protocols at pre-school in 2020), staff will be on hand at the gates to help if needed.

Please also assist with efforts to reduce gatherings outside school and meet social distancing requirements by making a plan for your child to walk, bike or scooter to school if you possibly can – even if just for part of the journey.

Above all, the usual message of staying home if unwell continues to be key.

As ever, huge thanks to the staff, parents and students for navigating the sudden challenges of distance learning and Level 3. It's been a great team effort once again!

Alert level changes can be periods of heightened anxiety for obvious reasons, but please be assured that we remain vigilant and have robust processes in place at school, including continued enhanced hygiene and cleaning protocols.

We should be reminded that Alert Level changes are guided by the best scientific advice available. While further COVID cases may emerge in the coming days, the outbreak is currently

considered 'contained', with all children (other than those attending Papatoetoe High School) now safe to return to school.

We will continue to keep you updated as more information becomes available, with thanks again for all your efforts over the past few days.

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 initially (and kept under review of the next few days), with a focus on maintaining our ability to contract trace quickly and effectively. This will include rostered break areas and staggered break times for now 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 is recorded as 'unjustified' on the roll as usual

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

Can my child wear PPE to school?

Yes. Official health advice clearly states that this is *not required*, and we don't therefore recommend mask as such.

If, however, any staff or students (parental discretion) feel more comfortable wearing a mask at Level 2, they are free to do so. Staff won't question this if it is your preference

Those using public transport to/from school will need to observe mask requirements for public transport as usual

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

No. We aim to restrict traffic on site to those who are essential, and 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 as we have before.

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 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 as quickly as possible

Will there be assemblies at Level 2?

No

Will teaching and learning be different?

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 (the 'breath zone')

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

What about clubs and extra-curricular activities?

Most of our extra-curricular activities will resume as normal, but are 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?

Organised Inter-school sports will be postponed at this stage due to limits on gatherings, but PE and fitness will resume in school. We will be reviewing events as the situation develops and the Alert Level is reviewed

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

Yes, SKiDS also re-opens as usual

Will the Term overview be amended?

Yes, if needed. We recommend keeping up to date via the calendar on our school website

Are EZlunches operating as usual?

Yes

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

Remember to pack a **named drink bottle** (drinking fountains will be restricted for the time being), but otherwise, nothing out of the ordinary - just their enthusiasm and readiness to get back into classroom learning!

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

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

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