



NEWSLETTER - week 1, term 2, 2020

From the Principal

Kia ora e te whānau,

What an astonishing time we are living through. We are all hoping you and your whānau are well and are managing your 'bubble' time together. For those of you who are working with the public in essential services, we cannot thank you enough. And for those working from home, we appreciate that this brings its own challenges while also caring for your children!

After Easter there will be a new chapter in education. There is a huge learning curve that students, school staff and parents/caregivers will be navigating together. As we embark on these new methods of teaching and learning, please offer grace to your child's teacher and other school personnel. Students, school staff and parents/caregivers are about to navigate uncharted waters with minimal prep time, a rapid technological learning curve, as well as very little certainty as to what exactly they are preparing for - with a number possibilities as to what will happen over the term.

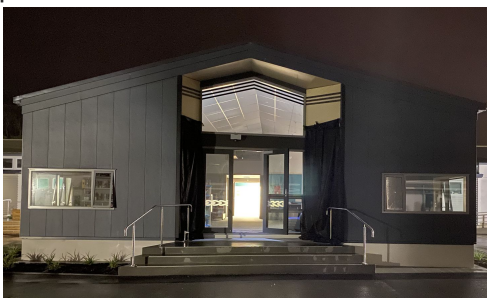
Along with that, we also know that there will be a wide range of home situations for our students. When it comes to supporting learning, what works for some students and families won't work for others. Our teachers are very aware that this could be a very stressful and challenging time for many families.

Please remember that teachers deeply care for all of their students and will be doing their absolute best! Your feedback to classroom teachers and myself will be helpful, as we learn what works and what doesn't. I encourage you to do this directly via email and with courtesy, rather than through social media.

This is a whole new experience for all of us and we don't want it to be overwhelming for anyone. So please remember that wellbeing for students, parents and staff comes first - then learning.

TE KOROWAI MANAAKI WHAKAWĀTEA (BLESSING)

At dawn on Saturday 21st March Te Korowai Manaaki, our new library was blessed and officially opened. Just in time for school to close! It was a special and moving occasion, particularly as the entrance artwork designed by the late Brian Gunson was also unveiled. I would like to thank Kahu Ropata, Patariki Grace, Kohai Grace and the Gunson family for their support. We are preparing a short video presentation of the opening, but here are some photos in the meantime.



LEARNING AT HOME

On Wednesday 15th April and on subsequent Monday mornings each syndicate will send home an email to all parents, and students in Years 5 to 8 that will contain a learning plan for the week. Some key things to note:

- **Seesaw App** Kōwhai, Mana and Hongoeka syndicates are using the Seesaw app to share and celebrate learning with each other and parents within each classroom. Guidance on posting some of your child's work to Seesaw was sent home last term.
- **Google Classroom** Taupō and Hongoeka students will be working on Google Classroom where they can share and collaborate with each other and their teacher. They will be expected to give you "view" access to their online work via your email.
- **Google Meet or Zoom** Teachers will be using Google Meet or Zoom, online video meeting tools, to support learning from home. This week teachers will schedule options for initial meeting times. The purpose is for their students to reconnect and familiarise themselves with these tools and online meeting expectations. A meeting schedule for your child will be provided. Parents of students in Mana and Kōwhai syndicates will need to assist with access to the meeting.

If you need assistance with these please email your classroom teacher and a staff member will contact you.

NEED ANOTHER DEVICE AT HOME?

If your child does not have an internet capable device or access to the internet at home, then please complete the form at this [link](#). This will help us to provide a solution or alternative to online learning.

GUIDANCE FOR LEARNING AT HOME

We do not expect you to suddenly become teachers, but rather be available to support your children when needed. With that in mind we have the following recommendations:

- If an activity gets too hard and stressful please put it to one side!
- Where possible, set a routine for 'school work', that fits in with the other demands in your household.
- Allow for your children to have plenty of breaks and downtime.
- Students should only spend a maximum of 2 hours per day on the activities supplied by their syndicate. Working together at home will likely be more intensive than working in a classroom setting.
- Help your child spread the learning activities provided across the week. Some students will want to complete the week's work as quickly possible so they can get on to games or social media, or some other preferred activity. Please ensure they focus on quality with the work they complete. Teachers will be giving feedback and encouraging quality work.
- Ensure that your child has a work area that is accessible and easy for others in the household to monitor (such as the kitchen table rather than in their bedroom behind closed doors). Please check in frequently on students working online - youtube, searching for memes, games and social media can be enticing distractions! Cybersafety will be parents' responsibility at home. Please be vigilant!

CYBER SAFETY

It is important that all students treat the digital platforms that we will be using as spaces for schoolwork and school-related communication only. Please remind your children (in an age appropriate way) to show kindness and aim high online. adhere to the following guidelines when in the digital learning space:

- Make all comments **work related** when communicating;
- Be kind. Do not make personal, derogatory comments about anybody else, writing with grace takes time and effort, but gracious words in an email and other online platforms can build relationships and preserve integrity;
- Use language that you would use in a normal classroom environment with the teacher present;
- Do not set workspaces up behind closed doors, parents must be allowed to look at your work;
- Ensure that all communication is suitable for your parents or teacher to read;
- Digital footprints last forever - read twice and think of this before you press enter.

INTERNET FILTERING

Network for Learning (N4L) helps to keep your child safe at school through internet filtering. While your child is learning from home, N4L has a simple, FREE way to block the worst of the web. To "Switch on Safety", you need to change the 'DNS' settings on your child's device. There are simple instructions for the different devices at switchonsafety.co.nz

COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL AND YOUR TEACHER

For 'classroom' matters, please use the teacher's school email (during term times). You can request that they call you. Be mindful that they may not reply the same day. Teachers will also be managing their working schedules around family demands, online meetings, and in many cases their own children's learning.

You will be advised if your child's teacher is unable to monitor their class learning and emails, due to sickness. In that case another teacher will be assigned to support your child's learning.

For other queries the following staff will be accessible via email, including during the term break:

Office queries

office@plimerton.school.nz

Principal - Mike Forrest

principal@plimmerton.school.nz

Deputy Principal and SENCO - Rosemary Oxnam

rosemaryo@plimmerton.school.nz

Deputy Principal - Jill Symonds

jills@plimmerton.school.nz

Executive Officer & accounts - Louise Ioane

louisei@plimmerton.school.nz

STAFF MOVEMENTS

Clare Layfield and Kansas Davis have both been successful in winning teaching positions at Pauatahanui School. This is a great opportunity for both to continue building on their strengths, and we wish them both well in this next exciting step in their teaching careers. Clare and Kansas will be leaving at the end of term 2. Their final day will be Friday 3 July.

We have appointed Kate Walker to teach in Room 12 in terms 3 and 4. Kate taught (and co-led) in Kōwhai syndicate until she left to travel at the end of 2018. Kate is excited to be returning to Plimmerton School.

Miranda Mercer and Trish Kolston will teach in Room 3 in terms 3 and 4. Miranda and Trish are current part-time teachers in the school who have both had experience teaching in the junior school and have also very successfully taken on classes mid-year.

WELL-BEING

We are nearing the end of the third week of isolation. It is recognised that stresses, frustrations and anxieties can peak at this time. Bas van der Hoeven, a school parent and drama therapist, has kindly provided some suggested [activities and strategies](#) that may help with children's well-being during isolation.

The [Ministry of Health](#) has also compiled links to a range of advice, support strategies and services that would be very useful for any family with well-being concerns.

POSSIBLE TIMELINE FOR SCHOOL REOPENING

At this stage, we are looking at a minimum of 8 days of distance learning. However, there are signs that it might be extended. The Government has directed 88 million dollars into distance Learning - 2 TV channels are booked for a month, and comments made suggest a longer time away from school or a staggered start to school. We'll know more next Monday. In the meantime, this is what we know:

- Wednesday 15 April - Term 2 begins (through Distance Learning)
- Monday 20 April - Government to announce where to next
- Wednesday 22 April - Possible end of Alert level 4 (at 11:59pm)

If (and only if) the alert level changes at this date then the following is the timetable currently advised by the Ministry. Please note this is not yet confirmed:

- Thursday-Friday 23-24 April - School cleaned and recommissioned
- Monday 27 April - ANZAC Day holiday observed
- Tuesday 28 April - Staff Only at school
- Wednesday 29 April - Physical school reopens - possibly only for children of essential workers

*Ngā mihi,
Mike Forrest,
Tumuaki - Principal*

"Ka ako tahi tātou, ka tupu tahi tātou. Together we learn, together we grow."

PTA News

With the current situation all the PTA fundraising events are currently 'on-hold' and decisions on this year's events will be made when we have more information on alert levels and physical distancing requirements.

This includes the Annual AGM, which will be held when we are able to have public meetings again.

Community News

These are provided as a service to the community & may not reflect the policies and practices of the school.

From Cengage (Children's book publisher) ...

Helping With Reading at Home

Do you want to know how to best support your child with their reading progress at home?

Please join us for a one-hour webinar which will provide:

- The things I need to know about helping my child to read
- Helpful 'tips' for reading at home
- What to do before, during and after listening to reading.

This session is suitable for parents and caregivers of all primary-age children, from Year 1–8.

Designed to supplement the work of schools, the webinar will inform parents and caregivers about how to best work with children as they practise and consolidate their reading. This webinar is free of charge.

Full webinar details, including links to view available session times and to register your attendance, can be found [here](#).