

COVID-19 POLICY

PURPOSE

Following the closure of the school on 24 March 2020 this policy is to provide overarching principles which guide the school's reopening and transition through the government's alert levels until the Covid-19 pandemic is abated.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Board adopted this policy at its meeting on 27 April 2020 and it is effective until revoked by the Board or until the Covid-19 pandemic in New Zealand is abated. It sits on top of the school's existing policies but where there is a conflict this policy takes precedence. As instructed by MoE, 28 April is a Teachers' Only day, and from 29 April onsite learning can return to school if the school is ready. The Saturday Music School will not reopen until further notice.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

1. HEALTH & SAFETY OF STAFF, STUDENTS, WHANAU, COMMUNITY & CONTRACTORS IS PARAMOUNT

The health and safety of staff, students, whanau, community and contractors is the single most important consideration in all decision making during this time.

The school considers carefully and takes additional measures to protect staff and students who are more at risk from Covid-19 or who are living with at risk people.

A safe environment must be provided for students and staff onsite. Regular *Covid-19 Risk Assessments* are carried out to ensure the school is a safe environment for teaching and learning. All risks must be mitigated or eliminated and if there is any doubt the Principal raises it with the Board Chair immediately and any unresolved concerns are reported to the Board.

The Principal is to modify and keep updated the *Covid-19 Procedures* covering health and safety measures for on-site learning. It is envisioned that these Procedures will be subject to regular and ongoing change as on-site learning takes place and issues or improvements become apparent. They will also change as updates come in from MoH and MoE throughout the alert levels.

Staff and families of on-site students are made aware it is imperative that they follow the procedures for on-site learning as communicated by the school such as staying at home when sick, regular handwashing, staying in bubbles, social distancing including families dropping and picking up children from school so as to protect the health of everyone onsite.

Staff on-site follow the *Covid-19 Procedures* to protect those onsite and ensure the bubbles are not compromised. Staff raise any issues or breaches with the Health and Safety Officer or the Principal directly.

The Principal ensures the Board that the school is a safe environment for staff and students and seeks help and advice from MoH and MoE as appropriate.

2. THE SCHOOL IS PREPARED FOR ALERT LEVEL CHANGES

As the country or region moves between one alert level and another (up or down) the school is ready and able to provide education to all children. Being prepared means that transitions between different alert levels are as smooth as possible for both staff and students. The *Covid-19 Procedures*, *Distance Learning Plan* and *On-site Learning Plan* are reviewed regularly and updated.

If there was a Covid-19 case in our school community the Principal liaises with the Medical Officer of Health, MoE and MoH and the *Covid-19 Emergency Response Committee* before making a decision to close part or all of the on-site learning. The Committee will be available on short notice and will assist the Principal as required including keeping the Board and school community updated.

As we move through the alert levels the Principal will need to make various decisions about on-site learning eg what staff and students onsite can and can't do, how to manage staff absences and resources, when on-site bubbles can change in size, To be clear, the Principal has the authority, flexibility and support to make these calls, always acting on advice from MoH and MoE.

3. SIMILAR LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS ON AND OFF SITE

The school is not expected to provide two separate schools within the school. The curriculum will continue to be offered through the *On-site Learning Plan* and the *Distance Learning Plan*. Initially children on-site will be in classrooms but largely working on devices on their distance learning programme. As on site capacity increases and the students have a staggered return to school there will be a gradual move back from distance learning to onsite learning.

4. WELLBEING OF ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS

The school is to check in regularly with all staff to see how they are doing in the new teaching environment and seek and consider any suggestions for improvements.

Teachers will check in regularly with students and their families to see how they are doing in the new learning environment. The school will continue to pass on communications to staff and families on places they can go to seek support both financially and for counselling and mental health. Any concerns in this regard if unresolved will be passed to the Board.

5. ACCESS TO LEARNING FOR ALL

The school works to identify and minimise any obstacles to all students accessing learning whether by distance or onsite. Where a student is absent or not engaging in learning the school will endeavor to identify the reason. The School understands that there are many pressures on families at this time and therefore different reasons why some students will not be fully engaging in learning. However, where appropriate the school can provide access to technology (devices), additional teaching support, or information where families

can access other support [The nominated parent at this time is the 'Parent Link' person from each learning space].

Specific considerations for Maori/Pasifika communities and culturally responsive teaching should still be enacted by teachers within distance learning;

- having high expectations for all students
- knowing students as individuals, knowing the cultures they identify with and what this means for them
- developing strong relationships with students and families via phone calls and virtual communication, and
- at a distance develop effective pedagogies which are discursive and collaborative in nature, albeit remotely.

Where possible children with special or specific learning needs should continue to receive manageable yet similar support to the regular classroom programme.

The school will not send communications to families regarding school donations at this time as it understands that some families' financial circumstances might have changed making it difficult for them to pay, and in such cases there is no expectation for them to pay.

6. THE BOARD IS AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVE DURING THIS PERIOD

All Board meetings will be conducted via video conference until otherwise agreed by the Board. Meetings may be more frequent during this period. Meetings will remain open to the public and the school will facilitate online access for the community.

The following recurring items are added to the agenda as an update from the Principal:

- Any concerns or issues arising out of Covid 19 *Risk Assessments*
- Number of students absent from on site learning or not engaging in distance learning
- Number of children taking part in onsite learning and number of staff onsite
- Any requests for resources or support to ensure all students are able to access learning
- Notable staff absences or sick leave taken
- Any anticipated financial concerns or changes in school's ability to meet the budget
- Requests for resources or support for staff from Board as employer (summary of staff feedback)
- Any grants or assistance that might be available or required to the school during this time eg additional teachers

It is expected that the Chair and the Principal meet and communicate more frequently during this period.

7. OPEN AND TIMELY COMMUNICATIONS WITH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

School communications with families continue to be open and timely. Communications clearly set out the expectations on students as the school progresses through the alert levels and as on-site learning resumes.

Related Policies and Procedures

Covid 19 Procedures + Planning Alert Level 3

Coronavirus 2020

Crisis Management Plan

Crisis Action Plan

Distance Learning Plan

Infectious Diseases

On Site Distance Learning Plan

Pandemic Plan

Returning to work Staff Induction Plan

Returning to work Plan-Paperwork