

21st April, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian.

Kia ora koutou. I hope that you and your “bubble” are well. You will have seen the Prime Minister’s announcement on Monday 20th April about the country’s move to Level 3 next week. We are all hopeful that we can make this transition work and continue to minimize the risk of the horrors we have seen occurring in other countries.

I write to clarify with you what this move to Level 3 will look like for St Bernard’s.

- The Prime Minister’s message is clear that only students from Years 7 – 10 who have no other option should attend school. The key message is that if you can, you should keep your son at home and you should only send your son to school if you need to because you are an essential worker and/or are returning to your place of work.
- If your son has a health condition that means they are at a greater risk of a severe illness you must keep them at home. If someone else in your “bubble” is also at greater risk then your son should not attend school. If your son is sick please also ensure you keep them at home.
- Under level 3 the College is required to ensure that any student who attends maintains physical distancing at all times. The numbers of students within any space must be therefore be strictly limited. The College is also required to ensure that any mixing of student groups is minimized. Under level 3 the normal timetable and normal class makeup will therefore be suspended. Attending students will be placed into groups of around 10 students and will work from the same room during the school day. This group will form their “bubble” at break-times as well. There can be no mixing of groups.
- Because the significant majority of our boys will continue learning from home, all of our teaching staff’s time is largely committed to their remote learning timetables and they are therefore not able to teach physical classes. Because of this, students who attend will be supervised but not necessarily by a teacher and almost certainly not by their normal subject teacher. They will in effect be ‘remote’ learning on site.
- Any attending student must therefore bring their own device to enable them to access remote learning. This is because the College has supplied a significant number of its stock of devices to students who did not have one at home. It is not possible for attending students to share devices under the Level 3 rules. If your son must attend school and is not able to bring with him a suitable device to access remote learning we must know this well in advance of his attendance.
- The College canteen will not be open nor will students be allowed to leave College grounds during the school day. The water fountains will also be switched off to ensure that there is no possibility of cross infection through their use. Any attending student must therefore bring their own food and water bottle to be refilled from taps during the day. Sharing of food etc. is clearly not a possibility.

- We will attempt to run some safe physical activities during the day for attending students however this will depend on the numbers of students present. Any activities must be run with minimal risk of cross infection and minimal risk of injury because the health and safety of the office staff (who generally deal with the sick and injured) must not be compromised.

All of this paints a fairly 'bleak' picture of what schooling will be like under level 3 and I am sorry about that. It is certainly far from the normal happy (occasionally far too happy) bustle and interaction that we are used to at St. Bernard's. As a country we are all being asked to manage a difficult situation at present and we are asking our boys to do the same as best that they can. I re-iterate that if possible your son should remain learning from home. However, if that is not possible, he is very welcome here.

Please advise the College office if your son(s) must attend school from next Wednesday (29th April) by completing the form in the link below:

<https://forms.gle/aqYmmB9njrPGGLC59>

If the link does not work for you please email ngrant@sbc.school.nz who will assist you. This must be done by Thursday 23rd 5pm. If we do not hear from you we will assume that he will not be attending and we will plan accordingly.

It is important that we know this information by Thursday evening in order for planning to be finalized and presented to the Board on Friday evening. The Board will then decide whether the College reopens on Wednesday 29th or whether further work to ensure the health and safety of staff and attending students needs to be carried out. This is likely to depend largely on the numbers of students we are being asked to manage. Further details and information will be provided to those families who indicate that their sons will need to attend.

Kia haumaru te noho (stay safe) and lets continue to pray for each other.

Kind regards.

Simon Stack
Principal