

St Bernard's College: Update 7 for Parents and Caregivers

COVID Alert Level 2: 7th September 2021

Kia ora koutou

As you will now be aware, all of New Zealand outside of Auckland, goes to COVID Alert Level 2 from Wednesday 8th September and students are able to return to school from Thursday 9th September. This is really positive news as we know that students learn best when they are able to be face to face with their teachers, and I am sure our students will be keen to catch up with their friends. Our staff are returning to school tomorrow to prepare for students on Thursday. They will post work online tomorrow but will largely not have Google Meets with their students.

You will also be aware that the COVID Level 2 regulations are stricter since the Delta variant has proven to be so transmissible. So our expectations of students are based on the recommendations of the Ministry of Health. These are:

- We keep a 2 metre distance from others whenever possible. We ask our students not to play any casual contact sports except in PE classes or in organised sports fixtures.
- We limit large gatherings. We will not have assemblies or Masses for the next few weeks.
- We wear masks when indoors or when we are close to people outside. We strongly encourage our students to bring a mask to school and to wear it especially inside. We will also be encouraging staff to wear masks. We are well aware though that some people cannot wear a face mask for health reasons.
- We wash or sanitise our hands regularly.
- We try not to touch our face.
- We cough or sneeze into our elbow.
- We stay home if we are sick.

So tomorrow we will be setting up the school to make these things possible. We will be changing seating arrangements in classrooms so students are facing the front and are spread out. We will move some classes into larger spaces and ensure there are supplies of hand sanitiser, tissues and wipes in all classrooms. In each block staff will develop an entry and exit plan to minimise contact between students.

We need our students to behave responsibly to minimise close contact with others. For travel on public buses and trains a face mask is mandatory. We will have new rules for the school canteen and for those travelling in our minibus. We ask our young men to be helpful cooperative and patient.

Students should be at school in uniform at 8.40am from Thursday. The day will start with Thursday Period One class which will be followed by a longer than usual Tutor Period when our COVID Level 2 expectations will be clearly outlined to students. It would be really helpful if students bring a digital device to assist them with their work if they have one.

Those students who were issued devices at the start of lockdown should bring them to school and use them each day. We will not be collecting them back in, while we are at COVID Level 2.

I will send another letter home tomorrow to the families of senior students about our Derived Grade exams which will take place next week.

Cardinal John Dew has informed us that there will be no Masses for the next two weeks in our Wellington Archdiocese and all churches are closed. We give thanks though for all the blessings God gives us and especially for being able to resume face to face schooling this week. We ask God to keep all in our community and in our country safe.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Neal Swindells', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Neal Swindells
Acting Principal.