

Kia ora Whanau

Like me, I am sure you have followed with interest the announcements made by the Prime Minister.

It is reassuring to hear how well our country has done at minimising the impacts of Covid-19. Alert Levels 4 and 3 have not been easy and I thank you for your ongoing support for the work we are doing.

Today, the Prime Minister advised that in Alert Level 2 schools are safe environments for children, young people and staff and that additional public health control measures are in place to prevent the spread of disease and to support contact tracing.

The good news is that we will be ready to welcome all students back to our school site from Monday 18 May - please note year level start arrangements below.

The key Public Health approach is to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and second to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school is infected.

As we have done in Alert Level 3, you can be assured that in Alert Level 2 we will know who is at school, who our staff and students have been in close contact with, and take appropriate measures to keep everyone safe.

Physical distancing is a good precaution to prevent the spread of disease. We do, however, know it is challenging in schools, so good hygiene practices and regular cleaning are even more important here. This includes staff and students coughing into their elbows, handwashing and drying and regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Under Alert Level 2, we advise any students and staff to stay at home if they are sick, and we will send anyone home immediately if they show any symptoms.

Our school has safe and sensible practices to maintain the health and safety of everyone on the school site. As described by Dr Payinda in his [NZ Herald article](#), "Covid's not measles or chickenpox, it doesn't hang in the air for hours waiting to infect passers-by. It travels on invisible drops of spit. You don't have to cross the street to avoid anyone. Just avoid getting in their 'moist breath' zone". We all just need to remember to have some breathing space at Alert Level 2!

It's important however that not just at school but at home, safe hygiene habits are practised by everyone, as this is essential to minimise the risk that someone gets infected with Covid-19.

For more information about the public health measures at Alert Level 2, you can visit the covid19.govt.nz website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

If you have any questions about our health and safety plan or have a child who might be vulnerable to serious illness and would like to discuss a plan for them, please contact your child's Head of School.

Our plans for opening are:

On **Thursday 14 May and Friday 15 May**, the Ashburton College campus will be **open to staff** as they prepare for face to face teaching. There will be a staff meeting and faculty meetings (via zoom), so that lessons can start the following week.

Note: There will be **no online learning classes for students on Friday 15 May.**

Our support staff will be ensuring that our campus is set up to follow all Covid-19 Alert Level 2 Health guidelines.

On **Monday 18 May** we will have **Year 9 & Year 13 students back on site only.**

(Catching up with Year 13 students and their progress needs to be a priority for our teachers). Students will start with a 15 minute Health & Safety briefing at 8:45am during their Ako class.

Note: Year 13 students will be unable to leave the campus during study periods or at lunch times while in Alert Level 2.

On **Tuesday 19 May** we will be **open for all year levels** at 9:00am. Students will start with a 15 minute Health & Safety briefing at 9:00am in their Ako class. Period 1 will run from 9:15am to 10:00am.

My thanks for your continued support of your child's safety and learning during this pandemic.

Ngā mihi

Ross Preece
Principal