

21 October 2021

Dear parents and caregivers

Re: Covid-19 Update – Return of Senior Students During Level 3

As you may be aware, the Minister for Education yesterday confirmed that all our students in Years 11 to 13 are able to return to school on Tuesday 26 October. There are no changes to individual student timetables and normal school routines including tutor time will continue. Junior students must remain at home and continue with their on-line learning. All external NCEA exams will proceed at the end of the year.

We appreciate that some of you may still be apprehensive about the decision but public health advice remains that with the expected health measures in place, risk of infection in a school setting is low. Therefore, we will be following **all** the public health measures that are required so that we can keep everyone as safe as possible. On Friday 22 October in preparation for our return to school, staff will limit any on-line learning lessons or support.

Buses

These will be running as normal. Wednesdays will have the usual later start time and finish at 2.30pm.

Canteen

Will be open for senior students.

In-class and Distance Learning Support

We do want to respect and where possible accommodate parental choice with regard to sending your child back to school while we are still at alert level 3. What this means is that students who wish to return are welcome, but teachers will also continue to provide on-line learning using Google Classroom for those students who may be immunocompromised or due to heightened levels of anxiety prefer to continue to learn remotely. As teachers will be returning to the classroom, they will be unable to offer online lessons each week to those choosing to study from home.

If your child has completed their NCEA qualification you can also choose for them to remain home. We encourage students and parents to check the school portal for up to date NCEA results. Part of NZQA's package to support learners was the reintroduction of Learning Recognition Credits (LRCs). These have essentially lowered the number of credits required for students to pass each level of NCEA.

- *To achieve Level 1 NCEA students now need to earn 64 credits and the LRCs will make up the other 16 required to pass.*
- *To achieve Level 2 and Level 3 NCEA students now need to earn 48 credits and the LRCs will make up the other 12 required to pass.*
- *To achieve University Entrance students now require 12 credits in 3 or more approved subjects (no longer 14).*
- *Numeracy and literacy requirements remain the same. 10 L1 Numeracy credits, UE literacy 5 L2 Reading and 5 L2 Writing credits.*

Practice Examinations

With the cancellation of our original practice exam season last term some subjects will still be carrying out limited practice exams during class time. These will be used as evidence to go towards unexpected event grades.

Unexpected Event (Derived) Grades

Every student will be given an unexpected event grade for every standard they are entered into for exams and portfolios. These grades will be derived from a number of sources like practice tests, class work done to date and other relevant assessments. For all students who are unable to sit all or some of their external exams because of covid related reasons they will be awarded the unexpected event grades. For those students who do sit their external exams they will be awarded the best grade from their unexpected event grade or exam grade. Unexpected Event Grades are not available for New Zealand Scholarship examinations. We are hoping to provide students with their **final derived** grade within the next couple of weeks.

Student Achievement Reports

Progress reports will be issued before exams begin so students have clarity around which subjects and standards they need to focus on.

Senior Student Last Day

At this stage it is still our intention to release senior students for study leave on Friday 12 November but we will confirm this intent once we have fully reviewed whether students require a longer period of in class support in preparation for their external examinations.

College Sport

All inter-school summer sport fixtures continue to be suspended while we are at alert level 3. All team trainings are not permitted at this time.

Vaccinations and Masks

Higher vaccine rates, including in those aged 12-19 are one reason why we are able to bring our senior students onsite now. While it is not mandatory for students to be vaccinated, we strongly encourage everyone to be vaccinated - the more people that are vaccinated, the more children can attend learning onsite with fewer restrictions in place. The school is required to collect vaccination data from our students. This information will be collected sensitively and confidentially through our student management database system.

Face masks are now compulsory within the public health order for all students when attending school and class. They must be worn at all times, including during break times, to and from school and on any public transport. Please ensure your child is provided with their own mask.

School Clean

The school has been given a deep clean. High touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected each day.

General Health and Wellbeing

We continue to emphasise the following health and wellbeing messages

- School counselling staff are available to students who need support
- Staff and children who are unwell must stay at home and get tested for Covid-19
- Children at higher risk of severe illness are to remain home
- Good hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette

- Where practical social distancing will be monitored
- Classrooms will be ventilated as much as possible

Cancellations of School Events

Unfortunately we have made some very difficult decisions regarding end of year school events. There have been many cancellations due to covid. These include:

- Sports Awards
- Expressive/Performing Arts Awards
- House Honours
- Graduation Dinner
- Year 9 Camp

At this stage we plan to proceed with Senior and Junior Honours. In addition, all large student and staff gatherings have been postponed while we are at level 3.

Visitors

Only essential visitors will be permitted onsite – parents/caregivers are asked not to enter the school without invitation. If your visit is essential then you must wear a face covering. Physical distancing will be adhered to particularly between adults. QR code posters for the COVID app will be displayed. A contact tracing register in place for everyone coming onsite including students and staff, through the attendance register, timetable and visitor register.

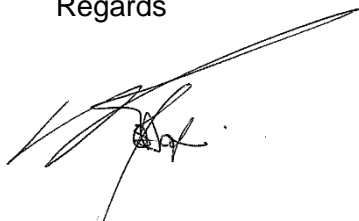
Supporting Covid-19 Vaccinations

It's important everybody continues to play their part – it is the government's clear intention to ensure as many people are fully vaccinated and I encourage all families to do so. Please stay at home if you are unwell, get tested if you have symptoms, maintain your bubble, and keep track of where you have been.

It is undoubtedly a cautious return for us all but we continue to do everything we can to ensure the school is safe and ready when students and staff return on Tuesday.

I wish all our community the very best as we recommence school for the final term of the year and hope that our younger students can return as soon as possible.

Regards



Mr I L Ropati
Principal