



Geraldine Primary

Desire to Learn, Aspire to Achieve
Whaia e koe te iti Kahurangi

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Newsletter

Thursday 9 April 2020

From the Principal...

Kia ora Whanau. Ka nui te mihi ki a koutou - greetings to you all.

We are certainly living through astonishing times! I hope you and your whanau are well and are making the most of your 'bubble time' together during the term break. For those who are working with the public in essential services, we cannot thank you enough. There are also those who continue to work, albeit from home at this time as their jobs continue away from colleagues. While this can have some benefits, it also creates additional challenges too! I also acknowledge that for some families, the Covid-19 lockdown is and will create additional pressures – loss of jobs, reduction of work hours and social isolation, all of which can create an emotional toll.

Once the holidays end, we will begin a period of distance learning, commencing on Wednesday 15 April. This is also when the newly dated Term 2 commences. All other term dates, including the end of Term 2 remain the same.

Staff have been working over the term break to prepare for the distance learning that lies ahead of us. This has involved Zoom or Google Meet sessions in as well as individual planning time at home. We took part in online professional development earlier this week which focused on implementation of distance learning programmes. We don't know how long distance learning will go for, but we know it will be for at least a week until the four week lockdown period is set to end on Wednesday 22 April. I'd imagine we will know more about the actual date soon.

Teachers will be setting learning activities for students as well as scheduled online catch ups, on either Seesaw (Year 1 – 3), or Google Classroom (Year 4 – 6). They will be in contact with the exact times, as these are different for each syndicate to avoid double ups within families. I understand that this will be a new type of learning, for both teachers and students and that there will be some challenges attached to this. These activities aren't designed to place demands or stresses on families. They are there to maintain an amended form of learning while schools are closed.

You may have caught up on the Education Minister's announcement on 8 April about the steps that the Ministry of Education are deploying to support learners at this time.

You can read about this on the Beehive website:

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/covid19-government-moving-quickly-roll-out-learning-home>

These initiatives will take time to roll out across the country and the initial focus will be on students in Years 11 – 13 and those who experience the greatest disadvantage, then from Years 10 through to 1. More immediately, the MOE have developed Home Learning TV, available on TVNZ Channel 2 +1, Sky 502 and TVNZ On Demand. This will run from 9am – 3pm each day from 15 April and will cover a broad range of the NZ Curriculum.

Best wishes to you all. Our staff are all thinking of our GPS community at this time. We hope that you are keeping well and look forward to a return to normality soon.

Kia kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui – be strong, be bold, be steadfast.

Andrew Leverton
Principal