



12 November 2021

Kia ora koutou,

I hope this letter finds you and your whānau safe and well. **LOTS OF READING TODAY!**

We are delighted to be able to welcome more tamariki back onsite under Alert Level 3 from next **Wednesday 17 November**.

We know learning is the best option for children and young people. It's important for them to connect with their friends and teachers and it helps their social, physical and emotional wellbeing.

So we look forward to bringing children back on site fulltime. The staff at Pukekohe East are outstanding in their willingness to support families with this, as many schools are only offering part time. However, to help us, **we need to hear from you if your child is not returning. Please email [merillees@peps.school.nz](mailto:merillees@peps.school.nz) now.** This will enable groups to be formed. Children may not necessarily be in their usual classrooms. We cannot plan without knowing numbers.

However, if any staff become ill, we will have to revert to part time attendance.

Even with the Delta variant, the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools is low because of all the public health measures we will have in place. What this will look like:

- we will keep those onsite in separate groups
- we'll ensure our classrooms are well ventilated
- we'll continue to practice physical distancing where possible
- we'll have staggered breaks during the day so not all children are together in the playground.
- we'll have staggered pick up times, so there is less congestion around and outside the school gates – 2.30pm for Oaks, Totara, Pines, 2.45pm for Titoki, Kowhai, 3pm for Rimu and Kauri. You must use the drive through if possible so that there is little congestion at the gate. If there are multiple siblings, they will be picked up at the time of the youngest sibling. Please help us by getting in the pick up area in your time slot, not before.
- no parents on site. Drop off at the gate. There will be a few exceptions for some special needs children and some 5 year olds who have not been at school yet.

**In addition to this, all staff as well as children in Years 4 and above are required to wear face coverings indoors** (unless they have an exemption), and we'll ensure all staff (and external contractors) who are on site are fully vaccinated or will have had had at least one dose of the vaccine and return a negative weekly test. **All of our staff are fully vaccinated.**

What you can do to help:

- stay at home if you or your child is sick
- avoid catching up with other parents, children and whānau at the gates
- wear a face covering and maintain a two-metre distance from people not in your household bubble
- get advice from your doctor if you or your child has complex medical needs (and please get in touch so that we can support your child to return onsite, wherever possible)
- avoid having playdates inside with children from other families at Alert Level 3.
- provide your Year 4 – 6 children with at least 3 masks a day. They only need to wear them inside, so when they come in they can renew their mask if disposable. Naming on the outside will help your child and us.

**We would encourage you to talk to your child about what our plans are and why this is happening.**

Please note, we'll continue to **support learning from home** for those tamariki who will not be attending onsite. Katie Ghirelli is fully vaccinated and pregnant, so she will be remaining at home to assist with home learning throughout the school. This will enable classroom teachers to focus on the class in front of them. Depending on numbers, the classes may be mixed, resulting in different age groups in the class. Students will remain in that classroom until the next plan is given to us by the Ministry of Education.

The **Bus Society** will inform you of their plans. ALL children must wear face coverings when travelling on the bus. It will keep the same timetable in the morning and leave school at 2.30pm in the afternoon.

If you have questions or concerns, you can contact me by phone or email.

Thank you for trusting us to do our best for our school community.

We look forward to seeing you back at school next week.

Ngā mihi,

Merillees Nicholls  
Principal  
Pukekohe East School