

TOGETHER



WE GROW

Lake Rerewhakaaitu School

9 Ash Pit Road

RD3

Rotorua

principal@lakerere.school.nz

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Our latest update

This is an uncertain and unprecedented time that we are now entering. The following plan has been put together to ensure learners can continue with their studies, and whanau are supported to assist their children at home. We need to be prepared for any eventuality. Let's aim to be as normal as possible and as flexible as needed.

The Ministry of Education has been developing a website <https://learningfromhome.govt.nz> to support schools, students and whanau.

What to do now

Look after yourselves and your whanau, please do stay home and stay safe. Take these next few weeks to get into the routines of isolation and what that means for your family. Have plenty of family time. For the children this is an uncertain time and we need to make it as stress free as possible. Regular updates on the situation can be found at the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, the School Facebook page and Website.

School holidays brought forward

School holidays are being brought forward so that they are completed within the 4 week isolation period. Holidays will now begin from Monday 30th March to Tuesday 14th April inclusive (a reminder that the Tuesday after Easter Monday is always a closed day for schools).

At the end of the school holidays, schools will be open for distance learning but not physically open for staff to work at the schools.

Please note the instruction to stay home (Alert Level 4) will continue beyond the new school holiday period but schools will be technically open for distance instruction. Teachers will be working offsite.

What are we doing

A distance education plan is being put in place and we will contact all parents about this in the near future. Please use the next two weeks (as the school holidays) to set up schedules for your self isolation and get routines going with you and your children. The Ministry of Education is preparing a plan to try to get internet and devices to those that need them. What this will look like we don't know yet, but we will have everything to go by the end of the school holidays. Myself and the teachers are busily setting up google classrooms and programmes for the students. We will get all of the instructions out to everyone in the next couple of weeks.

Preparing yourselves for distance learning

Learning from home will be a big change for our students and whanau due to school closures. A few things our students and whanau can do to make this temporary transition successful are:

- Maintain a regular routine
 - Get up and go to bed at regular times
 - Create a schedule for the learning activities you need to do each day. You only need to allow about 2 hours for school work a day as you will be working one on one with your child.
- Be disciplined
 - Work in a distraction free zone (some music may be helpful, though)
 - Keep in contact with teachers
 - Keep up with your learning, this is not a school holiday.
- Remember to take breaks
 - Your brain and body both need you to get up and move around regularly to reduce your screen time and stretch your legs.
- Distance Learning
 - When we are ready to go we will be taking small steps to allow you and your children to become familiar with the process.
 - You will get all the help you need to make this work for you and your child/children
 - Set regular times to do your work
 - Keep in touch with your teacher

Expectations for distance learning

1. Remember your top priority is keeping yourself and your family safe and healthy.
2. Try to keep your work day as close to normal as possible. Teachers will be available, asynchronously (email and Google classroom), to students and parents from 8.30am-3.30pm, with regular checks of their Google Classroom (GC).

3. Your focus should be on making connections and keeping up relationships. Do not try to fill your child's day with 'busy school work', stick to the essentials.
4. The day's activities will be loaded in Google Classrooms by 9.30am.
5. Teachers will be available via ZOOM (video conferencing) from 2.00 - 3.00 each day (Monday to Friday). This will enable parents to seek clarity and for students to interact with teachers and other classmates.
6. Keep it simple and consistent: We will have one platform for our online programmes and activities (GC), and one platform for our synchronous contacts (zoom).
7. Emergency situations and after hours requests will go through the principal.

Conclusion

This is an unusual situation that we find ourselves in with school closures and distance learning for all. The main focus for teachers is to provide some consistency and connections for our students and whanau. By supporting each other and being consistent, we will be able to provide effective distance learning programmes that support our needs, and the needs of our students, whanau, and community.

Take care and stay safe.

Yours Sincerely,

Rick Whalley
Principal
Lake Rerewhakaaitu School