



Lake Rerewhakaaitu School

9 Ash Pit Road

RD 3

Rotorua 3073

(07) 3666 814

principal@lakerere.school.nz

27th January 2022

Kia ora e te whanau

Welcome back to school for 2022. I hope that everyone has had a great holiday period with their children and are refreshed and ready for the new school year. Just over a week until the children come back to school and we are getting everything ready for their arrival.

Below is some important information for everyone

2022 Term Dates

Term One	8th February	-	14 th April
Term Two	2rd May	-	8 th July
Term Three	25 th July	-	30 th September
Term Four	17 th October	-	20 th December

School Bell Times

School Starts	8.55am	Morning Tea	11.00am
Second Block	11.30am	Lunch	12.30pm
Third Block	1.15pm	School Ends	3.00pm

Staffing

With Whaea Deb leaving at the end of last year and Whaea Chelsea deciding to not return this year after her sick leave, we were busy over the holiday period employing two new teachers to take on the vacant positions.

I would like to welcome Natalie Gow (Miss Gow) and Puti Mareroa (Whaea Puti) to our school community. Natalie is our new deputy principal and comes to us from Ngakonui Valley School where she was the assistant principal. Natalie will be teaching in Mahuri. Puti comes to us from Te Kura Maori o Waatea and will be teaching in Tupu. We also have Vicki Arnott back fulltime in Kakano for Term 1 .

Principal	Rick Whalley	principal@lakerere.school.nz
Deputy Principal	Natalie Gow	natalieg@lakerere.school.nz
Year 0-2 Kakano	Vicki Arnott	vickia@lakerere.school.nz
Year 2-4 Tupu	Puti Mareroa	putim@lakerere.school.nz
Year 4-6 Mahuri	Natalie Gow	natalieg@lakerere.school.nz
Year 6-8 Rakau	Lauren Harris	laurenh@lakerere.school.nz
Finance/Office Administration	Carla Williams	
Teacher Aides	Rora Arnott, Anna McMillan	
Cleaner	Tricia Druery, Anna McMillan	
Caretaker	Anna McMillan	

Buses

Go Bus is our new bus contractor effective from the start of this school year. We have been advised that both the Lake and Waimangu buses will be running as usual from the start of term. For any bus transport queries, please contact GoBus Rotorua.

Parents need to ensure that their children are ready at least 5 minutes prior to catch the bus in a safe place.

After school, the children that travel on the bus meet quickly on the decked area outside Tupu. If a child is being collected from school or travelling on the other bus on a particular day, notification must be made via text or phone call to the school phone or a note must be sent to school by the parent explaining the change.

Behaviour on the bus is a shared responsibility between the bus company, parents and the school. The school reserves the right to withhold permission to travel on the bus with instances of poor behaviour.

If you pick your child up from school, please ensure they are signed out and let the teacher know.

School Lunches

We are fortunate to be enrolled in the Ka Ora, Ka Ako Free School Lunches scheme for all our tamariki. These nutritious lunches are provided each day by Waimangu Volcanic Valley.

Please ensure your child brings a water bottle and snack for morning tea.

Stationery

Students' stationery will be delivered in bulk to school, at no cost to families due to some wonderful local sponsorship. We will distribute these directly to classes once they arrive.

COVID Update

Now that we have Omicron in the community there are certain restrictions and protocols that we will need to follow to keep our community and children safe. We will be starting school in the Red traffic light system.

Omicron and testing

We have all seen the very large numbers of cases overseas and we will very likely see much larger numbers of cases in Aotearoa than we have previously experienced in the last two years. While Omicron is more transmissible than previous strains, most people who get COVID-19 will have a mild to moderate illness and will fully recover in their own home.

However, some of our community who are immune compromised, are ill or have other vulnerabilities, even when they are fully vaccinated, could be more affected by Omicron. So, we all need to continue to play our part to minimise the spread of the virus.

In regard to testing, the health system currently has capacity to process 40,000 PCR tests a day. PCR testing is the most accurate test for COVID-19 and will continue to be used while New Zealand is in the stamp-it-out phase.

Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) will begin to be used more widely over time. They are not as accurate as PCR tests and this means that some people who do have COVID-19 will get a negative test result back. There are currently 4.6 million RATs in the country and 10s of millions ordered.

If you are symptomatic or need to be tested to access a workplace or service, you will be guided at the time on which test is best for you.

Managing cases in our school

We have a good contact tracing system in place so that if there is a confirmed case who has been at school while infectious, we can quickly identify who was a close contact of that person. We will then quickly advise those contacts of what they need to do.

Only if the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education advises to do so, would we consider closing a physical onsite school and moving to distance learning for everyone. At Red we will keep everyone learning onsite for as long as we can.

Please make sure your contact details we have on file are up to date, so we can get in touch with you if needed.

Face coverings

Public health advice is that an appropriate face covering will fit snugly and seal well around facial contours. This can include single use, disposable masks (medical masks) and reusable fabric masks with three layers.

Don't worry if you don't have these specific types of face coverings, as public health experts also say that any face covering is better than no face covering. Children should bring their own masks and have spares in their bag. However, we will have masks at school for those that require them.

The Unite Against COVID-19 website also has information on [how to make a face covering](#).

For those of you with children who might be reluctant to wear a face covering, there is some [helpful advice from Michigan Health](#), including using simple, specific explanations about why they need to wear a face covering, adults being the role models, providing small rewards for wearing them, bringing face coverings into play such as drawing face coverings on characters in colouring books, or letting them choose/make the mask.

The basic requirements currently are:

- Face masks are required:
 - for all ākonga Years 4 and up when indoors or in close contact with others
 - for staff working to provide or support the provisions of education for Years 4 and up
 - Currently public transport and school transport requires face coverings to be worn for those aged 12 and above at Red, however there has now been agreement to extend this to Year 4 and above so that the requirements are consistent. We will advise you when this change takes effect.
- All visitors, parents/whanau must report to the office when entering school
- All visitors, parents/whanau must wear a mask and scan in when entering school.
- Essential support services and agencies such as learning support services may be on site.
- No non-essential visitors on site.
- Children with complex medical needs can seek advice from their health professional about whether it is appropriate to come to school. Parents, caregivers and students will need to work with the school to develop a plan to support attendance on site.
- Support for off site learning will be provided for those who are advised to remain at home.
- If you or your child is showing symptoms of the cold or flu, please get tested and stay home.

We will be updating this information as and when we receive it from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. We appreciate your cooperation and help in this trying time of COVID and look forward to when we can get to some semblance of normality.

Keeping good hygiene practices

Basic hygiene measures include good hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, avoiding touching your face, and cleaning surfaces.

- Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds) and dry thoroughly. Use an alcohol-based sanitiser and rub hands together if soap and water is unavailable.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or cover your mouth and nose with tissues. Put them in a bin immediately.
- Avoid touching your face, including your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean. Surfaces may have infectious droplets.
- Clean surfaces regularly. This includes items frequently touched like door handles and phones.

Preparing for COVID-19

You can also prepare for COVID-19, making sure you and your household have a plan and know what to do. This will mean your whānau and community can help each other if needed. Find out more here:

- [Be prepared for COVID-19](#)
- [Download the COVID-19 Readiness Checklist \[PDF, 121 KB\]](#)
- [What to expect when self-isolating at home](#)

Self-isolating at home because of COVID-19

Many people will be able to manage self-isolation with help from friends and whānau, but there is help available if you need it – both with health support and access to food and other essentials.

- [What to expect when self-isolating at home | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)
- [Getting extra support if you have COVID-19 or are self-isolating | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)
- [COVID-19 positive – managing your symptoms | Health Navigator NZ](#)

If you know anyone in your community affected by COVID-19 and who may need help, such as food and other financial assistance, Work and Income has a range of [support available for individuals, families, employers and self-employed people affected by COVID-19](#).

Work and Income support

The beginning of the year can be a tough time for parents who are faced with many costs and it is important you are aware of what assistance you may be able to get from Work and Income. These are available to people on a low income as well as those on a benefit.

[Check what you might get here](#)

- [School costs](#)
- [Out of School Care and Recreation \(OSCAR\) Subsidy](#)
- [Other Childcare Assistance](#)
- [School and Year Start-up Payment \(for people getting Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit\)](#)
- [Help with living costs \(including food and rent/mortgage\)](#)

Use the links above or call 0800 559 009 to find out more, or to apply.

MoneyTalks can assist with [free budgeting and debt help](#)

You can also contact your local community provider. [Please find more information here.](#)

Getting ready to return to school

The Ministry of Education has some helpful information on their [Parents and Whānau website](#) to support your tamariki to get back to school. There is also a very important reminder about how you can [take care of yourself](#).

While this might all feel a little overwhelming at times, we know that all these measures will help our children return to school, reconnect with whānau and friends and do what they enjoy.

We are also here to help. Please get in touch if you have any concerns or need help in any way

Looking forward to seeing everyone back at school

Rick :)