



## School Update No.1

15th April 2020

Kia ora koutou,

Day 1 of Term 2 has drawn to an end.

Thank you to those parents who have provided feedback on our take of what distance learning is.

We know that every 'bubble' has different expectations.

We are all in this together and whether we are a student, a parent or a teacher, teacher aide we all need support in this new way of learning.

Today I have a focus for Parents/ Caregivers:

Perry Rush, President of the NZ Principals Federation has stated that teachers are not trying to recreate our classrooms in your living rooms and that you as parents aren't teachers. I think the key thing is to be realistic, it may not work perfectly the first day, or even the first week. These things take time to get up and going.

Neuroscience educator Nathan Wallis said caregivers needed to have realistic expectations of themselves as parents as they entered a stressful time and tried to juggle two jobs - parent and teacher.

"Don't aim for perfection. Remember that the research says kids get good outcomes if they have 'good enough' parents. So that takes the pressure off you. You don't have to be a good parent, you just have to be good enough."

He also warned against falling into the trap of letting kids be online all day and recommended striving for at least two hours of device-free time each day

At home, six hours of teaching could be done in just over an hour with the parent being actively involved. Another hour could be supported learning where the parent did their own work alongside them

Parenting Place senior family coach Jenny Hale said having a rough plan in place was important for kids who were used to the predictability of a school day.

"Children actually wobble if there's a free for all... Children love there being a plan."

While the plan didn't need to account for every 10 minutes, it would give children an indication of when they might play, have intervals, do maths, spelling and reading or

even a time in the day for board games and crosswords. Free time was also really important.

And while parents didn't have to replicate school at home, they should follow their children's lead and let them choose the things they did at school at home, she said.

Everyone's wellbeing is important, so while you may be facing some challenges at home working alongside your children, many of their teachers who are working to provide distance learning are also teaching their own children in their bubbles.

Nigel Latta, NZ psychologist has said the most important role you have as parents is to keep the home calm and settled and provide a safe environment for everyone.

**Where Do You go to Find Learning:** If you log onto our school website you are able to click a link on the home page that will take you to homelearning set up in teams. Classes are either using Seesaw or Google Classroom as the tool to communicate between home and school. All senior students have passwords to access their online classroom. If any parent is having difficulty with logging on you can either email the classroom teacher or ring the school office where that number has been re-directed to me. If I can't answer then I get the classroom teacher to contact you.

For those families not online teachers and teacher aides will be contacting you at least twice a week to support learning in other ways.

The following link is to a government site that will provide TV scheduling and has several learning resource links.

<https://learningfromhome.govt.nz/>

**Attendance:** There is still a Ministry of Education expectation that we will mark the roll each day. This in itself has its challenges because not everyone may be active on line at 9.00am or be learning in an online environment. Teachers will have flexibility on when the roll is marked. It will also identify families that may not have online access and teachers or other staff will ring to chat about the learning that is taking place in your home.

On Friday we are coming together as staff to review and reflect on our first 3 days. While we will share our successes, the key point of our hui will be to problem solve any issues that have arisen. As parents you also have a key role in this process so if you have constructive feedback that could help us improve what we are doing, please email [principal@forestlake.school.nz](mailto:principal@forestlake.school.nz) before 2.00pm Friday.

Tomorrow the government will be announcing what we can expect if they decide to move New Zealand to Level 3 after the 4 week lockdown period has completed. I will provide an update of how those decisions will impact on schools once I have received official word from the Ministry of Education.

If you have a question that you think other parents may be interested in the answer, then send it to me and I'll do my best to respond or find someone else who can.

Ngaa mihi

**Whaea Chris**