



COVID-19 UPDATE 21st April 2020

RE: MOVING TO ALERT LEVEL 3

Dear Parents and Caregivers

We hope that Term 2 and our distance learning programme has been a success for you so far. We know there may have been a number of challenges for you to deal with, however, we have been getting resounding positive feedback from our community with children learning. This is fantastic news!

Yesterday the Government decided that we will move into Alert Level 3 on 28 April. This means schools can potentially open on 29 April in a limited capacity. We will need to make decisions quickly on the date that we will open and how this will work over the next few days. Therefore, please read the following in its entirety to understand and to assist us in our planning.

#### WHO CAN RETURN?

The key messages from the Ministry of Education to you is;

- **Stay at home** - if you are not at work, school, exercising or getting essentials, then you must be at home, the same as Level 4.
- **Work and learn from home if you can.** We want the vast majority of people working from home, and children and young people learning from home. If you can, you should keep your child at home. **You should only physically send your child to school if you need to.**

In addition to this

- If your child has a health condition that means they are at a greater risk of a severe illness you must keep them at home.
- If your child is sick or becomes sick during Level 3 please also ensure you keep them at home.
- In order to ensure the safety of those children and our staff who do come to school, we will be operating with strict enforcement of health and safety measures.
  - Therefore if your child will find it too challenging to work in a strict enforced classroom "bubble" setting with access to outside school facilities and equipment being less frequent and more restricted than normal; please also ensure you keep them at home.

Your child will NOT be disadvantaged in any way if they are learning from home as the teachers will deliver online learning to their students in exactly the same way that they are this week. Equally children on site are NOT advantaged more than others as children at school will simply be supervised in their online learning or hard pack learning by the teachers present.

### **CONFIRMING STATUS OF ATTENDANCE IN LEVEL 3**

Whether your child is on-site in Level 3 or remaining with us by distance from home, we need to know as soon as possible. Either way, learning will still happen.

We need you to email or confirm to your child's teacher by this Thursday 3 pm to either;

- My child/ren **WILL BE RETURNING** to school to learn on-site in Level 3 as I/We are returning to work and our children do not have other child-care arrangements.

or

- My child/ren **WILL NOT BE RETURNING** and we will stay at home in Level 3.

Teachers will also start contacting parents tomorrow and Thursday so a final decision about the date for opening can be made on Friday and then further logistics will be sent out to those families after this.

### **LEVEL 3 ON-SITE ATTENDANCE**

All children whose parents have confirmed them as on-site learners next week need to attend school regularly once school starts again. This means that these children will come to school from Monday to Friday unless they are sick. We want to avoid at all costs children "coming and going" from one day to the next. If you have shift work that may affect this please email Patrice who will look at this on a case-by-case basis, however the priority will be the Health and Safety of our kids in those "bubbles".

### **WHEN WILL SCHOOL OPEN?**

To make a final decision about opening our school for Level 3 we need to determine first *how many children in our school community need to return.*

As you can appreciate logistics/organisation will determine the date of school opening ie: A smaller number of children in one "bubble" is easier, than multiple school "bubbles" as there will be more logistics for maintaining Health and Safety to put in place eg; Creating learning areas for "Bubbles" to be apart, scheduling breaks, organising exits and entries, organising separate toilet and eating spaces away from other "bubbles" etc...

We will aim for Wednesday 29th April, however, once we know numbers we will be able to confirm our opening date on Friday afternoon.

### **ALERT LEVEL 3 SCHOOL "BUBBLES"**

Children who have to return to on-site learning will be put into closely supervised "Bubbles" prior to starting. Learning will not be as "normal".

Key information:

- Siblings will be in the same "Bubbles".

- “Bubbles” will be supervised by consistent teacher/s to limit contact with others. Your child will not necessarily have their classroom teacher.
- “Bubbles” will be separated on our school site, therefore your child will not necessarily be in the same classroom as “normal”.
- Learning in the “Bubbles” will be the same learning they do online with a few adjustments to each bubble made for social distancing and accessing outside facilities ie:
  - They will Zoom, Seesaw or Google Classroom with their class and class teacher.
  - The teacher for their “Bubbles” will support them, give them supervised breaks outside according to Health and Safety requirements etc
  - Access to outside facilities beyond the class will be timetabled and limited due to Health and Safety requirements.
  - Some additional activities will be given in the ‘Bubble’ to support online learning.

Further information will come out over the next few days prior to learning as we learn more from the Ministry and know the numbers of children involved.

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR ALERT LEVEL 3 “BUBBLES”**

The Ministry has stated that children and all parents/family on-site work and interact with small “bubbles”. The social distancing rules at present are

- “Bubbles” will have 10 children in it.
- If outside there is a 2m distance required at all times.
- If inside there is a 1m distance.
- “Bubbles” will not mix with other “Bubbles” so breaks and outdoor times will be carefully organised and timetabled.
- Health and Safety restrictions may need to be put in place to reinforce social distancing with the community and “Bubbles” to access and use the school site. Eg: Different Entry and Exits for bubbles or staggered starts and finishes.

As you can appreciate we can do most of these things, however you know children as well as us. In particular, the current 1m distancing within the “Bubbles” may be tested, however, we will endeavour to do our best. This rule or others may change as more information comes to light.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

In addition to these social distancing rules for “Bubbles,” the Ministry of Education has advised that they are working closely with health to develop clear guidance over the next few days that will support our school to safely re-open our premises to students and staff. This will help us work through the public health requirements that we all need to meet.

We will follow these to ensure our children, staff, parents and community remain as safe as possible. Those families needing to come on-site will have clear communication sent out prior to the beginning of Alert Level 3 at Greytown School.

### **CLEANING AND HYGIENE ON SCHOOL SITE**

Our cleaning and caretaking team are already preparing our school site for Level 3 and beyond. They are following all the health and safety cleaning guidelines that we have available from the Ministries of Health and Education eg: Hand sanitising and extra soap dispensers available, cleaning surfaces multiple times during the day using specific products, signage, taping off

playgrounds etc...We will continue to ensure that all children, parents and staff on site are protected as much as we can.

## KEY DATES

22nd and 23rd April	Teachers confirm with parents numbers of children who will be learning ON SCHOOL SITE in Alert Level 3.
24th April	Letter to parents confirming the date when on-site learning begins for those returning. Note: The earliest date will be on 29th April however this will depend on numbers.
27th April on	Alert Level 3 "Bubbles" will be confirmed with key information about site learning, access and critical Health and Safety information.
28th April	Teacher Only Day to get ready for learning to deliver both on and off-site for Alert Level 3. There will be no ZOOM meetings on this day.
29th April	This date is the earliest school could be open for Level 3. This will be confirmed on Friday 24th once numbers of on-site learners have been collected.
11th May	The NZ Government will review Level 3 and a <u>possible</u> move to Level 2
12th May	We will send out further communication for the next stage of learning.

## THANK YOU

We want to congratulate all of our parents and families for your assistance with distance learning for our children. You have responded compassionately, calmly and with energy and creativity. You have kept the wellbeing of your children and family front and centre, while helping your child to learn and your teachers to teach. Thank you for supporting our school community in keeping everyone safe, happy and learning.

Thank you to our teaching team who are working behind the scenes (and devices) to help our children learn and connect with each other. We are proud of what you are achieving and how you are supporting our kids and families during this time.

## FINALLY

For now, we will continue to support your child's learning by distance while we progress our planning and site preparations for what Alert Level 3 will mean for you and for our school. As you have been doing, please keep connecting with your teachers with any questions you might have or email Patrice at [principal@greytown.school.nz](mailto:principal@greytown.school.nz) We want to assure you that we will do our very best to continue to support your child's learning at home or at school as we move to Level 3.

Thanks,  
Patrice O'Connor

Jane Cooper

Principal of Greytown School

Board of Trustees Chairperson of Greytown School