

Kia ora koutou,

Today marks the end of Term 1. Not quite when or how we were expecting, of course. Regardless of how we got here, I would like to thank our school community for what has been achieved. Our students have enjoyed wonderful opportunities with the camps, trips and sports events - which have been really well supported by our brilliant parents.

The positive messages sent to the school as we went into lock-down were most appreciated. Teachers have worked hard to set things up to minimise the negative impact of school closure. In fact, the improved use of online learning will strengthen our range of strategies in the future. The past couple of days have served as a bit of a trial period, in anticipation of getting underway with remote learning in the Term 2.

Today we are saying 'farewell' to two of our teaching staff. Kathleen Mulligan (woodwind and concert band) is moving to Auckland after five years of service and Derek Rufus-Ellis (senior Maths, long term reliever) is retiring. I'm very grateful for the contributions made by each of these professionals in their respective areas of responsibility. We welcome Mr Allan Logan, who will be joining our Maths department in Term 2.

Key dates:

26 March Alert Level 4 commenced

28 March School holidays begin

5 April Daylight Saving ends (clocks go back, giving us a bonus hour of lock-down!)

10 – 14 April Easter (including the Tuesday after Easter)

15 April Term 2 begins (through distance learning)

22 April Current date for ending of lock-down period - back to school:). Note: this is subject to confirmation or change.

27 April ANZAC Day observed

The best way to communicate with the school at this time is by email - general@tauraroa.school.nz . Messages will be checked and forwarded to the most appropriate staff member.

Here's a great explanation of the science of viruses:

<https://thespinoff.co.nz/covid-19/25-03-2020/the-side-eye-viruses-vs-everyone/>

Remember, the government's website is the best place to go for up to the minute advice and facts.
[COVID19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)

The Ministry of Education is developing a very good website to support learning from home. It is aptly named
<https://www.learningfromhome.govt.nz/>

At the risk of 'information overload', I would like to offer the following advice to parents:

Look for the positives in the time spent with your whānau in your 'bubble'. It's a great chance to do stuff together - but allow sufficient 'time out'.

Especially during term time, please help your children maintain a routine (meal times, chores, etc). Deal with school work and other obligations early in the day.

Keep the basics of good diet, plenty of exercise and decent sleep going

Be a role model in your responses to the stress and uncertainty of the current lock-down. Our children need calm adults in their lives (although it's OK to express emotions). Your children are watching you for cues on how an adult responds to challenging situations.

Use this time to create memories of fun, togetherness and family.

Encourage reading!

Thank you, again, for your support of our school at this difficult time. I look forward to normal service resuming!

Nga mihi nui,

Grant Burns

Principal, Tauraroa Area School

Leader, Nga Kura mo te ako o Whangarei Community of Learning (Group 4)