

# St Joseph's Catholic School

## Morrinsville

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Morrinsville



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Kia ora Parents and Caregivers,

We are very ready and excited to welcome all students and staff back to our school site on Monday 18 May. We look forward to settling children back in to school, to learning, to fun times and of course reconnecting with teachers and friends.

As NZ is operating at Alert Level 2, there is some important information that parents, caregivers and students will need to know. The information given today is based on the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education Guidelines for Schools.

### **Who can come back to school?**

All staff and students are expected to return to school on 18 May. The Ministry of Education has shared that the only exceptions for students not to return are if a student is sick or has any COVID-19 symptoms, are in isolation, or awaiting a test result.

[Please register here](#) if your child/ren **will not be** attending school next week for the start of Level 2. One of our Leadership team will be in touch soon after to discuss distance learning needs.

### **Is there a plan to support the transition of students back into school?**

Yes. Our staff are very mindful of the wellbeing and readjustment of children back to school. We know that students and their families will have experienced this lockdown in many different ways. Connection, belonging, kindness, learning, communication and hauora are a priority and our staff will take the necessary time to focus on this to rebuild culture and relationships, in a manner similar to what we would do at the beginning of the school year. We have a [return to school questionnaire](#) that we encourage you to fill in. This information will aide our staff in further supporting individual children in their return to school.

### **Will students be in 'bubbles?'**

No. At Alert Level 2 the bubble system is not required. Students and staff will still avoid physical contact as much as possible and to keep personal space. We are promoting that students and staff should be far enough away from each other so that they are not breathing on or touching each other. The students will be free to move around the school.

### **Will students be using drinking fountains at Alert Level 2?**

No. Please ensure your child has a personal water bottle. The bottles can be filled at home or at school.

### **Is the school playground open?**

Yes. The students will be expected to sanitise/wash hands after playing on the equipment.

### **Will students be able to take part in PE or play sports at school?**

Yes. Students will also be able to share school sports equipment. There will be compulsory hand sanitising after activities. Students are not to bring their own personal sports gear to school at this stage.

### **Will there be School/Syndicate assemblies of large school events?**

Not at this stage. Although this is deemed okay, in the short term we will not be holding these as they bring together large groups of students, and parents would be unable to attend. We will only meet as a whole school in the event of an emergency.

### **What Health and Safety procedures will be in place?**

The overriding principles for Alert Level 2 are:

- to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place
- to ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact with a person, if someone in a school is infected
- understand that Level 2 is not business as usual

It is safe for all students and staff to return to school in Alert level 2. Schools are safe because hygiene habits will be strong and schools will put into place safe and sensible practice.

Our school will follow detailed Ministry of Health Guidelines to maintain the health and safety of everyone on the school site. This includes regular cleaning of surfaces and high touch areas, use of sanitisers, handwashing, and reminding and helping children with important hygiene habits, such as coughing into their elbows, handwashing and drying correctly, and washing hands after the use of the toilet. No one at school is required to wear any PPE, but some staff may choose to if they wish.

Students and staff will be sanitising on entry and exit of the classroom space and at regular intervals throughout the day.

### **How can I notify the school if my child is absent?**

Please use one of the following processes to advise of your child's absence:

- absentees form on our school app
- phone the school office on 07 889 5306

Any child or staff member who is unwell must not be at school. Symptoms of special concern are any respiratory symptoms such as a head cold, blocked ears, sore throat, coughing, sneezing, chills and a fever. Please notify the school immediately if your child has any of these symptoms. Please note students and staff will be sent home if they are at school and are unwell.

### **Can parents and caregivers come on-site at school at Alert Level 2?**

With conditions. We are minimising the risk that someone gets infected in the first place. The data we have received from the Ministry of Health shows that the risk of infection is much greater for adults than for children. Therefore, limiting the amount of adults on our school site is important for health and safety. Every time someone comes on to our school site, the risk is increased.

We ask you to drop off and pick up children outside the school gates. **Please only come on to the school site if it is necessary** – please see below with regards to signing in. We will have extra staff support available to assist with students who may be reluctant or need some special support coming into school.

Classroom spaces are for staff and students only. There will be some exceptions to this (such as new students to school, students who require additional support). The staff ask that you respect this request. Your child's class teacher will be in touch if they feel you need to accompany your child into the classroom for any reason. Likewise you can let the class teacher know by filling in the [return to school questionnaire](#) that you may need to accompany your child into the classroom on the first day.

### **I have come on school site. Do I need to sign in?**

Yes. This is a requirement. We must keep a detailed list of who has been on site, for what reason, and the length of time on site. This is for track and tracing purposes.

We have two ways of recording people on site. The easiest and preferred way is through our school app (similar to our absentee button on the app). This will be available by Monday 18 May. We will send out details of how to use it. If you have not used the school app system, then there will be a sign in and out register placed in two locations, one between the office and Akonga Hub, and one outside Room 10. If you enter the school grounds, you must sign in and out. Please only come on to the school site if it is necessary.

**What time can my child be at school, and what time so they need to be collected or leave?**

Our school grounds open at 8.15 am, so we suggest that students arrive at school later than 8.15 am. School will start at the normal time of 8.50 am. We are staggering the leave times under Alert Level 2 to assist with picking up and dropping off outside the school gates.

- If your child is an **only child** at our school and is in **Whakatipu or Akonga Hub**, they can be picked up at **2.40 pm**
- If your child is an **only child** at our school and is in **Rooms 3, 4, 5, 6**, they can be picked up at **2.45 pm**.
- Students with siblings at school can be picked up at the normal time of **2.55 pm**
- Buses will run as normal

All students are to be off-site by 3.10 pm (with the exception of bus students and students attending SKIDS). We appreciate your support with this.

**How do I communicate with my child's class teacher?**

Communication with teachers at this stage is through the teacher's school email or seesaw. From there the teacher will organise with you what is needed.

**What will the first day at school look like on Monday 18 May?**

We ask that students arrive to their class before school and will stay in the classroom until the bell goes. This is because we want to make sure that all health and safety measures and rules are discussed with the students and shared by their teacher. From Tuesday onwards, the students can arrive at school, organise their gear and then go out to play before the school bell rings.

All class teachers will be in the teaching spaces ready to greet students and support students to resettle into school. Additional staff support is available before school by the school gates to assist students. There is also extra teacher aide support assigned to class spaces throughout the day.

**Thank you**

On behalf of our school, we would like to thank you for your support and understanding. Alert Level 2 is not business as usual, but we will do everything we can to keep our students and staff safe, happy and well.

Please feel free to contact me at [principal@stjoes.school.nz](mailto:principal@stjoes.school.nz). should you require any assistance or support. We so look forward to our school opening fully on Monday. Take care and God Bless.

Ngā mihi nui

Andrea Colebourn  
Principal

