



17 August 2021

Dear Parents

As you are no doubt aware, the Prime Minister this evening has announced that New Zealand is at COVID Alert Level 4, for at least 3 days outside the Auckland/Coromandel area. As a result, Ilam School is closed for the remainder of the week. Information is below as to what the next three days, from a learning perspective, might look like for Ilam families.

A reminder of what Alert Level 4 means?

It is really important we do everything we can to keep our community safe. Alert Level 4 means we need to stay home in our bubbles and avoid any travelling as much as possible. Supermarkets, pharmacies, foodbanks and other essential services will be open – but remember to wear a face covering if you are out and about (even a scarf wrapped around your mouth and nose will help). Check in using the NZ COVID Tracer App wherever you go and please also keep a distance from people you don't know and wash your hands well and often, especially before and after using any public facilities.

Recently visited the Auckland or Coromandel region?

Please go to the Ministry of Health website if you have recently visited the Auckland or Coromandel region. There is a list of locations the confirmed case has visited while they were considered to be infectious. If you were at one of those locations **and** at the same time as specified on the website, then please follow the relevant instructions to isolate and potentially to get tested. Please keep checking that webpage as new locations may be identified over time.

Work for this week

Prior to this evening's announcement, we have had a plan in place in case this situation arose. Activities are on the COVID-19 Home Learning page of the Ilam [website](#) . Parents might want their children to work on some of these this week. Your class teacher may suggest you visit this site too. From tomorrow, classroom teachers will be in contact via email with families and will be providing specific learning activities for children.

Home Learning TV, developed by the Ministry of Education, can be [accessed on demand here](#) or via the TVNZ App on a device (mobile phone, smart tv or tablet).

Final Thoughts

I would like to emphasise that programmes sent to families will not, and can not, replicate a standard school day. Each home situation will be different and you are not expected to suddenly become trained teachers and your home becomes a classroom during this time. While it would be ideal if there is an opportunity for children to do some of the activities provided, your greatest priority at that time may be looking after the health of family members. We do not want homes to become a battleground over schoolwork.

A quote from Nathan Wallis (A renowned New Zealand neuroscience educator) from last year's lockdown is a good reminder for all of us. *"At the end of all of this, your kid's mental health will be more important than their academic skills. How they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during those weeks is long gone."*

In summary, your relationships with your family members will be the most critical aspect of this time ahead. While completing some school work will be beneficial, assuring everyone that they are loved and safe and that we are all doing the right thing to look after each other will be more important.

Please take care. Information about Alert Level 4 is available on the [Unite against COVID-19 website](#) . I will be in touch when I have new information to inform you about.

Kia kaha, kia māia (Be strong, be brave)

Ngā mihi nui

Paul Dolan

Principal