



17 March 2020

Dear Parents/Staff

I will continue to keep you updated as the College responds to the ever evolving situation of COVID-19. At this point the College has stopped all EOTC activities that include one or all of the following:

- a) Overnight stays of groups of students
- b) Travel involving students outside of the Manawatu Region
- c) Events or occasions that involve large groups of students – we are being very conservative with what constitutes a large group of students rather than the 500 that the government is defining as a large group.

As a result of this decision by the College and Government directives a number of events have already been postponed including the upcoming Year 7/8 Camps, 'Survive a Slum' Caritas event, MISSA Athletics event, Yr 12 Outdoor Education trip to the South Island, Yr 11 Physical Education Trip to the Tongariro Crossing and so it goes on.

We will also discontinue all school assemblies and mass gatherings immediately. As a result of stopping assemblies our Thursday timetable will change from the 19th March. The school day on a Thursday will start at 9am and finish at 3pm. All other days will run as per our normal timetable.

We might be seen as over cautious but given what the government is asking of us we have also decided to postpone some of our school and house events that lead to large gatherings including the Easter Liturgy, House Haka competition, Walk of Faith (previously called Cross Walk) etc.

However, we are going to look into video conferencing software so that we can run an Easter Liturgy in the Chapel and transmit this out to each of the classrooms. We may be able to use this technique to run remote assemblies and house activities in order to maintain an element of school spirit that we do not want to completely lose.

It appears all national Secondary Sports tournaments have been postponed or cancelled which will impact our Futsal Team and Athletics Squad. Some local sports competitions may also be affected in the coming months and we will keep you notified as and when we have further information.

The upcoming O'Shea Shield event being hosted by Chanel College is now in question. Even if it was to go ahead we would be unlikely to send a team given the criteria we have adopted in the first paragraph of this notice.

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In terms of any possible school closure we are starting to investigate how we can support students in this eventuality. Wednesday at Staff Professional Development we are looking to upskill staff in using e-learning software including something like 'Google Meet' allowing our teachers to deliver classes on-line. We will have some families who do not have internet access and teachers will do their best to ensure paper based work is available for these students. Moving from a classroom delivery to e-learning/ paper based lessons is a big change but we will do our best (it will not be perfect) to support our students and whanau. We hope that our school will not be closed but we are preparing for it.

Finally, if family members have been overseas and are having to self-isolate in the home we ask that you consider keeping your sons and/or daughters at home. It would appear a risk to us to have family members in close contact with someone who has been overseas and travelling through airports etc. We ask that you consider our whole community if you are in this situation.

We are sorry to have to take some of these steps but we are trying to do our best to look after not only our community but the wider community as well. We are wanting to be responsible citizens.

Please talk to your sons and daughters and assure them that we are being very cautious and we consider the College currently to be a safe environment. We will continue to focus on hygiene and hand washing as our first and foremost strategy.

God Bless

Kevin Shore