



ST PETER'S COLLEGE
PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

Final COVID-19 Newsletter from the Principal before Lockdown

I thought I would message our community once more before we all begin our four weeks of self-isolation. We are **currently** in school securing what we can and **doing all the last minute jobs that need to be done before school closes today**. There will be one final mail out today with work for students as teachers attempt to get everything out, particularly to some students who were not here on Monday. **I am already aware that some teachers have had virtual meetings with their classes** and I am heartened that they were able to stream a class meeting without the system falling over. Given the cell phone network is currently quite unreliable I was expecting some issues with internet streaming. **All department heads have assured me that work is either now online or written material has been sent to support students**. If you have queries about classwork please contact the teacher directly through email (each student can ask questions of their teacher through Google Classroom – the majority of teachers will be using this platform).

We have had about ten families approach us because their children do not have a device at home. **We have been able to give each family a school chrome book device to help out** and we have endeavoured to support everyone we know about (**unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to meet any further requests as the school has been locked down and we are no longer able to enter the site**). This is particularly important for our senior students who will need to continue work to meet their NCEA programme. **Alistair Baird** our ICT Manager is considered an essential worker so he **will continue to maintain our ICT infrastructure**. Typical of ICT it is likely to break down from time to time so please be patient if this was to happen and usually these issues can be solved in a matter of hours rather than days.

As the official holidays start next week it will give families a chance to adjust, spend some time together and develop the routines they will need to cope with this new way of life. **If the lockdown was to continue past the four week period that we are now entering, I remain confident that we can continue to use our remote platforms and engage our students in meaningful learning that will build the evidence we need for assessment both in the senior and junior school**. I would categorically state that neither the Ministry of Education nor NCEA would allow our students to be unfairly treated given the circumstances.

I would like to **thank everyone in our community** for your generosity and understanding over the last week. It is a very unusual and worrying situation and the decisions we have had to make were both significant and complex. **I am very grateful for the work of our staff** in the last two weeks as they have continued to do their normal duties while creating extra resources, responding to all sorts of issues and building our online capacity – **I feel very lucky to lead such a group**. You have been brilliant St Peter's College community.

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The next four weeks will be hard with self-isolation but the sacrifices you make will support my old parents and people I care about and I hope my actions will be of support to many others including those in the College. I **received a lovely poem from Lorraine Wilson** our Head of Religious Studies and **I will share it with you** as I believe it is appropriate at this time as we reflect upon the days ahead. It is full of hope and that is not a bad thing at all in these times. **God Bless you all.**

Kevin Shore

*"And the people stayed home.
And read books, and listened,
and rested, and exercised,
and made art, and played games,
and learned new ways of being,
and were still.
And listened more deeply.
Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.
Some met their shadows.
And the people began to think differently.*

*And the people healed.
And, in the absence of people living in
ignorant, dangerous, mindless,
and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.*

*And when the danger passed,
and the people joined together again,
they grieved their losses,
and made new choices,
and dreamed new images,
and created new ways to
live and heal the earth fully,
as they had been healed."*

- by Kitty O'Meara