

Bayview Primary School

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Dear Bayview Whānau

Firstly I would like to say THANK YOU! You have kept your children safe, acted in unity and got on with things the very best you can during this once in a lifetime experience. It must have filled you with panic and anxiety and caused a great deal of stress to have received the text message from us saying that we had been directed to close the school on Monday 23rd March as the country was going into lockdown. Schools across NZ were given one hours notice of this, so we were all scrambling to get things organised and try to explain this to the children in a calm and kind way. Thank you for staying calm during this time.

I am grateful that everyone recognised the difficulties this short time frame created in distributing resources and setting up for learning at home. We were lucky that most of you had already engaged with our online platform 'Seesaw' as this made the transition to learning from home much easier.

For many of you learning at home was a time to get to know your child as a learner. For others it was a struggle. Whatever your experience was, I want you to know that in 10 or 20 or 30 years time your child will not remember that they wrote that long story or that they learned their 5 times tables, what they will remember is the special time they spent with you, the games and the laughter and staying up a bit later, the baking together, the building forts in the lounge and watching their favourite movie cuddled up next to you. They will remember how you made them feel - loved.

"At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel."
Maya Angelou

Whatever you did with your kids was the right thing! It had to work for you and your bubble and your personal circumstances.

We understand and appreciate that everyone's experience during lockdown was different. Some families loved this time to be together, others struggled with the inability to visit local parks and to travel. We know for some it has meant the loss of jobs and income and this alongside the stress of having to do everything from a distance has been unbearable. Some of you have had to work from home which we know has been extremely difficult with your children at home as well. Hopefully moving to alert level 2 and being able to send your children to school is helping in some way for you to find your new normal.

We know the return to school has been incredibly difficult for some parents. My heart has gone out to the parents of new children and in particular our brand new 5 year olds. We know it has been so hard saying farewell to your child at the gate and watching them walk in with their teacher. We know you are wondering what the class looks like and where they hang their bags, and whether they have made friends. Hopefully the photos on Seesaw have helped a little bit. I can tell you that all the children are happy and smiling. The playground has had a happy vibe filled with laughter. Classes have been filled with smiling children happy to engage in learning (well mostly!) :)

On Monday the Government may give an indication of what lies ahead. Like you I am wondering if we will move to alert level one or stay at alert level two. At this stage we don't know what alert level one looks like. We may still have to collect contact tracing information which may continue to affect drop off and pick up. I

am hoping that it means we can loosen some of the restrictions we have currently in school, but we won't know until we receive official notification from the Ministry of Education.

All politics aside I must say that I am grateful to have had a compassionate and decisive leader overseeing the country during this time. I have also been extremely impressed with Dr Ashley Bloomfield and the Ministry of Health staff. I can also tell you that Iona Holsted, the Secretary for Education has been exceptional with her communications with schools. During lockdown I was receiving almost an email every week night with important information. It really has been a team effort.

I would like to take this time to briefly outline our goal for the rest of this term. We recognise that our assessment schedule was interrupted by the lockdown and as such we have not been able to hold feedback meetings nor are we able to write a mid year report. The feedback you received via Seesaw is written feedback on learning so hopefully this helps you understand your child as a learner a bit better. Once the children have settled back into school and are feeling safe we will begin our assessments of how they have progressed in reading, writing and mathematics. Early in term 3 we will hold feedback meetings with you to share this information. This could be face to face or potentially by google meet, we will let you know closer to the time.

In the meantime hug your children tightly, tell the ones you love that you love them, reach out to friends, share your smile and above all else let your kindness be your compass.

Stay well.

Kia kaha, Kia māia, Kia manawanui

Diane Raynes
Principal