

Dear Parents / Caregivers,
Teena koutou whaanau,

I am hearing that this lockdown is harder than it was last year for many in our CHS community with students, parents and staff all being finding it hard for a range of reasons. These are difficult times for all of us and I appreciate the support and understanding that you are providing your children and the school staff. Please keep an eye out for each other and keep in touch with those you know are vulnerable in our community. And if you are one those finding it hard to manage, please get in touch with someone. Later in this letter there is an important message from our counsellors offering avenues of assistance and we have other options at school, such as our House Deans or the SLT, who are keen to connect you with assistance. We are fortunate to be a part of a supportive community, and I know we all benefit from showing and receiving kindness and understanding during such challenging times.

The attached letter is longer, as I won't be communicating again until next week, when we know more about the situation. Please stick with me and have a read, there is a bit of something in it here for everyone.

In today's update:

- **Engaging in online lessons and coursework.** We are running an online school while in Levels 3 and 4. While we are flexible to recognise the different stresses on the family unit during this time, we need students to engage.
- **Anticipated future Level changes.** It remains possible that we are back in school on Monday, but we are planning for longer disruption.
- **Learning expectations for juniors.** We have made minor adjustments to the learning plans for juniors to give the home and our staff more flexibility, while offering the same support and predictability.
- **Sport and Culture update.**
- **Ongoing support for students and families.** Our counsellors, House Deans and form teachers are here to help during this time. Although we have limited ability, please get in touch and we will see what we can do.

Engaging in online lessons and coursework.

We need your support in keeping our community learning. I know that this can be a difficult on both ends – from the teaching and the home perspectives, but we need you to try. Last year we had a significant number of students treat lockdown as a holiday and, as such, they hardly engaged. This gap in learning made it incredibly difficult for them and for staff when they returned to school. We want to be flexible and support the home unit, but students also need to keep making progress. CHS staff have been working very hard to make sure that learning can continue and finding that some students are not turning up to lessons or are not engaging with the classes. We need your help to ensure that students keep up with the learning expectations while in lockdown. If you are finding those expectations difficult to manage then please contact staff to discuss a solution.

Also, there have been a few questions with regards to protocol of online lessons. Here are a few key points we need all students to engage with and follow:

- Lessons are arranged in line with our school timetable. That way, there can be no clashes of meetings.
- If your teacher arranges a lesson, you need to do all you can make that lesson or send in your apologies.

- Treat the lesson as you would a 'normal' lesson. Engage with the learning and tasks, ask questions, show your face (at least for the first bit). Respect the fact that everyone is trying hard to make this work for your learning so give it your best and do your bit.
- Remember that trying your hardest to make it all work is an excellent outcome. Even if you think it isn't your best work, there are lots of valid reasons for that. Just giving it your best shot during these times is a huge success in itself.
- Expectations for work are set across a reasonable time period. Not everything is due at once so take responsibility for your learning and prioritise your work based on deadlines.
- Remember a reasonable turn around time for queries and assistance. Staff are supportive of students, but we can't respond to everyone's queries at all times of the day. We have a lot of students who also need assistance.
- Keep a balance. We are forced to do a lot more online time than normal so look for ways to balance this out. Get outside in between online lessons. Instead of messaging each other, pick up the phone. Find a way to help around home – baking or mowing the lawns are two seriously good breaks from online life and they get you massive brownie points around the home!

Anticipated future Level changes.

We hope that we will be back in school as normal as soon as possible, but this is uncertain. We are planning for at least another week's worth of disruption, as it is likely that we will have a mix of Level 3 and Level 2 expectations to accommodate when we do return. Maintaining our online learning and learning plans during this time will give us some predictability and structure during this time.

Learning expectations for juniors.

We have slightly adjusted how we engage online with our juniors. We will engage with juniors early in the week, with a preference for the first lesson of the timetable. This will not always be the case though, as it may support the learning better to engage later in the week. All expectations will be shared in the learning plans.

A reminder that these plans are emailed home every Monday morning and stored on the [learning section](#) of the school website.

There is no change for the seniors. They will continue to be engaged with as semi-independent learners, managing their own timetables and expectations according to the needs of their learning in the different subjects they are studying. We will keep the family in the loop with communication so you know what your child(ren) are working towards)

Sport and Culture.

All the latest updates about the status of all sporting and cultural activities can be found here for [Sport](#) and here for [Culture](#). These pages are being updated with all the information as it comes to hand.

Ongoing support for students and families – message from our counsellors.

With the news of lockdown being extended, calling on your supports for wellbeing has become even more important. You may be in a small bubble, a big bubble, a bubble for one, or helping others in the community who need support.

Connect with your friends and family online, check in on your neighbours (at a 2 metre distance), message your child's form or whaanau class teacher, subject teachers or email our counselling team

on counsellors@camhigh.school.nz for support. While there are some limitations to online support, our counselling team can signpost you to additional resources.

Your self-care and wellbeing might include, baking, taking a shower, playing a card game, making a meal for your bubble or going for a walk together. Keep a routine and be mindful of the effects of 'breaking news' notifications pinging through to your smart phone.

There are lots of resources in the community too – see the links below that could be helpful for you or someone else you know:

- [1737 - Need to Talk?](#)
- [Just a Thought](#)
- [Free Counselling for Kids & Teens in New Zealand | 0800 What's Up \(whatsup.co.nz\)](#)
- [Youthline - Youth Health Services, Youth helpline Program Centre NZ - Youthline NZ](#) 0800 376 633, text 234, email talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat
- [Who else can help | Depression and Anxiety](#)
- [Suicide Crisis Helpline - Lifeline Aotearoa](#)
- [Parenting Place | Parenting tips and articles](#)
- [Making Homes Violence Free in New Zealand - Shine \(2shine.org.nz\)](#)
- [Free tools, resources and apps | Unite against COVID-19 \(covid19.govt.nz\)](#)

Should you have urgent concerns about your mental health or that of a family member, contact the Crisis Line on 0800 50 50 50. And in an emergency phone 111.

Go well and take care,

Mr Gleave, Jess & Whaea Kate

Finally, I know that we will all be tuned in on Friday evening for the latest decision from the Government. As mentioned, we will have a plan in place for online learning regardless of the announcement and so I will not be contacting you afterwards. I think it will be time for us all to have a weekend by then and take some time out.

I will be in touch again early next week, until then, be kind to each other and make sure you look after yourselves and your wellbeing.

Ngaa mihi nui

King regards

Greg Thornton