



South Otago High School

Newsletter 24th April 2020

Nga mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa

Warm greetings to you all

Dear Parents/Caregivers

Kia Ora Tatou

Tomorrow the nation will mark ANZAC Day. This year will be very different to any other ANZAC Day that we have had in the past. There will be no public events where we communities will come together to acknowledge the sacrifice of service people as they followed their duties in both conflict and peace time. It is also a time to acknowledge the sacrifices made by those civilians who supported service men and women in times of conflict.

Each year at South Otago High School we hold our own special ANZAC assembly. I have missed this opportunity this week. Each year I share stories of the contribution the people have made. Our Head students have the opportunity to prepare and deliver speeches, some of which are very moving.

This year as we cannot come together as a community in the traditional way, I encourage you all join the 'Stand at Dawn' event which will be a chance to listen on line or from the radio/ TV. Details can be found at: <https://medium.com/@nzdefenceforce/stand-at-dawn-anzac-day-2020-b5270082c0e6>

Move to Level 3 of the Covid-19 Alert

On Tuesday 28 April we will have a teacher only. This will mean that online learning will resume on Wednesday 29 April (Monday is a public holiday)

Thank you to all Year 9 and 10 parents who responded to the survey and indicated whether their children will need supervision at school as we enter Alert Level 3. Should parents require supervision in the future they should e-mail Mr McDowall (pmcdowall@sohs.school.nz) at least 24 hours prior to the start of needing supervision. This will provide time for transport and supervision to be organised within school.

We are not able to supervise or allow access to the school site for senior students. Similarly we would ask that any parent needing to come to school should call or email (office@sohs.school.nz) first to make an appointment.

We are aware that some senior students do need resources and equipment. This can now be requested by the student e-mailing their class teacher who will organise the materials for either collection or delivery.

Online learning

Feedback from teachers on the delivery of online learning is largely positive. However, some teachers are finding that some students are not engaging as expected. The concern is that if students do make an attempt at the

work and continue to contact teachers then they will fall behind in their studies which could have serious consequences when students return to school. Teachers will not be able to catch up on months of missed work with students who have not made an effort to keep up with their studies.

Students who need support should be contacting their teachers. If parents need assistance please do e-mail the class teacher, mentor or dean as appropriate.

Internet access

This week the Ministry of Education has asked for verification of internet access for students. From the feedback we received earlier we believe that all students now have internet access. If your son/daughter does not have internet access to be able to continue with their studies please do e-mail me urgently and I will add your details to try to get you connected.

For parents on rural broadband which is currently capped, except between midnight and 9am and those with poor internet connectivity I have been asking for support for you from the Ministry of Education. I will continue to work on your behalf and will keep you informed of any developments.

Students in paid employment

I have been made aware that some students are in paid employment during the school day. I would like to remind parents that students should be available to study and follow their timetable to meet with teachers from 08:40 until 3:10pm. The Ministry of Education have advised that employers would be acting illegally if they employ students during school time. I have been contacted by some employers for clarification and explained what our expectations are for our students to be available for learning during what would be the normal school day.

Finally

As we move to Alert Level 3, I would like to echo the advice from the Government. Please protect the gains that have been made whilst we have been under lock down. For the school the advice to all staff has been to continue to work from home unless absolutely necessary. Please do remain in your bubbles. Whilst some of the restrictions have been relaxed around physical activity and travel please do take care of yourselves.

Keep safe and I hope that we can return to a more normal life soon

Ka kite ano
Mike Wright
Principal

Keeping Safe Online

I hope that you are all well and thriving in your bubbles and engaging well with on-line learning. While students are using devices at school through our Wi-Fi we have a filtering system that blocks and reports attempts to access inappropriate material. When a student is using their device at home usually there are no similar blocks in place.

To increase safety online we encourage you to look at www.switchonsafety.co.nz to install something similar. The feedback nationwide from the use of this is that:

In only seven days (from 14 March) 6,500 parents have applied the filter settings to their children's device. In this time, the filter has blocked 244,000 attempts to access inappropriate content and blocked 74,000 threats.

The netsafe website <https://www.netsafe.org.nz/advice/staying-safe/> has some excellent advice around staying safe online. It's amazing to read how you can help with some simple tips even on sites such as Trademe and Netflix.

Take care and stay safe,
Mr Scarth - Deputy Principal

IF YOU NEED FOOD

The Salvation Army
is here to help

Please text
your *name* and
post code to

4114

and a representative
from your area will
call you back within
48 hours to complete
a food assessment.

Response time may be longer over weekends.

