

# **School Leader's Report - September 2021**

## **Alfriston College Covid-19 Delta Response**

### **School Responses - Tuesday 17 August to current**

#### **Week 1**

- Media reporting during the day of Tuesday 17 Aug suggested a lockdown was likely.
  - AC staff were emailed at approx. 3:25pm and reminded to take laptops and other necessities for working from home with them when they left for the day.
- The PM's announcement that evening confirmed an Alert Level 4 lockdown for all of NZ.
  - The AC communication tree was activated and all staff alerted by text to work from home and check their email for further updates.
  - All Learners, parents, caregivers and other contacts were alerted by text to stay home and reminded by email of the learning at home arrangements.
- Preparation for learning at home had continued after the experiences of the 2020 lockdowns and included:
  - Changes to digital systems to ensure that all staff could remain connected and work effectively from home. These included:
    - Moving email from Outlook onto the Gmail platform
    - Installing a VPN for remote access to KAMAR
    - Updating KAMAR to allow direct web access
    - Providing a laptop for every member of support staff (teaching staff already had one)
    - Logging school-owned Chromebooks into the library system so they could be loaned and tracked much more reliably
    - Requiring every class and course to publish learning tasks and resources etc. on a Google site which had public access for parents to see what their children were doing
    - Publishing the links to the class Google sites in another website linked to from the main AC website. This site also posted learning leader names and contact details, and the Google meet schedule for each class.
  - The pivot to online teaching and learning was much faster and with far fewer problems that it had been in 2020.
- Teaching staff were asked to set up a Google meet for every class they had during the first three days. Some key decisions were made during those three days:
  - There would be two Google meets per class, per week, max. 20-30 mins. The schedule to be decided by the Learning Leader and posted on the Home Learning directory
  - Vertical tutor group Learning Leaders would make a phone call home each week to the parent or caregiver to check on the welfare of the learner and the whānau.
  - Requests for devices, hardpack materials, food parcels or other needs were passed on (WLs and SLT for devices and hard packs, KI and TP for food)

#### **Week 2**

- On Thu 26 August, all staff were emailed with an update and summary of our response so far, acknowledging and thanking them for their efforts and recognizing the difference it was making for some of our learners.
- On 27 Aug, after 10 days of lockdown, a pānui was sent to parents and caregivers with a detailed description of what the arrangements and provision for learning at home were. This pānui also contained other school news about normal events.
- Over the weekend starting on 27 August, the AC driveway and carpark was the location of a pop-up Covid-19 testing centre, which remained for 4-5 days

- That week also saw several staff access the site under a Section 18 exemption to collect equipment required for the continuation of working from home.
- JO accessed school to assemble packs of materials for senior learners in Technology so they could continue learning tasks at home. These were delivered to 14 learners by contactless drop off.
- OS and OL spent 2 days on site assembling personalized packs of Art materials for senior learners in Visual Arts. These were packed into courier packs for collections and delivery by NZ Couriers.

### **Week 3**

- Monday morning briefing had a fun quiz hosted by LB – engagement and enthusiasm was high
- CN provided an all staff response to a learning leader with a known anti-vaccination stance, who had queried the school's response to learners asking for information about vaccination during the briefing meeting.
- Dance group trip to Christchurch cancelled due to uncertainty about funding and travel due to Covid restrictions
- ERO survey – CN had a phone meeting with ERO which was a continuation of work that was started last year. Discussion about the school's response, MoE support, learnings etc.
- WE, TP, TA and CN were onsite for the packing and pre-arranged collection of hardpack materials for junior learners and Chromebooks for senior learners. Approx. 50 hard packs and 45 Chromebooks were collected for learners who had told us that they needed them.

### **Week 4**

- SE joined the WL meeting on Monday and suggested that due to fatigue of learners and staff, and in line with what other schools were doing, we should ease back a bit on the schedule of Google meets. It was decided that Wed and Fri of that week would be designated meet-free. Parents, caregivers and staff were emailed on Tuesday 14 Sep with this decision. Overwhelmingly the response was positive.
- Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori – RL, MY and TP ran a session each morning at 8:30am. Around ~40 staff engaged each day.
- Arrangement made for a Vaccination Bus to be onsite next Tuesday 21 Sep. All parents are caregivers invited to bring anyone in the community aged 12 or above to receive a Covid-19 vaccination.
- Turftech onsite to maintain condition of sports pitches under Section 18 exemption. Two more hardpacks and two more Chromebook delivered by WE to learners who missed out collecting them the previous week

### **Week 5**

- Round 2 of the Monday morning staff briefing quiz. High engagement and enjoyment again.
- Announcement at 5pm on Monday 20 Sep by the PM that Auckland would drop to Alert Level 3 from Tuesday at 11:59pm. School could now open for children of essential workers, who were aged 12 or 13, and who had no other option for childcare.
- All parents and caregivers of 12 and 13 year olds (338 learners) were emailed and asked to respond if they needed to send their child to school on Wed. No responses.
- School did not open to learners on Weds. Zero learners were reported to MoE on Thu.
- Vaccination Bus onsite on Tuesday – 93 vaccinations given. Not as many as hoped for.
- Google meet-free days continued – Tue and Thu. Website updated with this info.
- CN, ANA, STY, MAR on site on Weds. Financial payments made, road sign changed and four more Chromebooks collected, and two more delivered by CN.
- Parents and caregivers of 12 and 13 year olds emailed to thank them for keeping their children safe at home and confirming that there were no requests for school to look after their child.
- Welfare phone calls by vertical whanau tutors suspended after some parents felt they were being nagged and there was inconsistency in whether they were being done at all. Calls replaced by a

text sent by admin staff, from the tutor's email address asking them to reply with YES if they would like a phone call.

- Turftech back onsite under Alert Level 3 protocols to maintain grounds
- BB Cleaning back onsite. Have started the end of term clean in anticipation of not opening to any learners this side of the Term break.
- Masks ordered, hand sanitizer stocks checked in readiness.
- New QR code posters available for all visitors to scan for tracing app

## **Week 6**

- Last week of Term 3, another pānui to go home midweek
- Google meet-free days Monday and Friday

## **MoE Responses**

- Daily email notices of key changes and giving advice on implementing these at operational level
- Requested hardpacks to support junior learners on 23 Aug. These were dispatched from Wellington on 25 Aug, Arrived in Auckland on 28 Aug but weren't delivered to school until 10 Sep.
- No additional devices requested. We had ~380 last year, most of these are still in the hands of learners and we have sufficient school devices available to meet the demand for extras (seniors only).

## **NZQA Responses**

- Wed 25 August - External assessment (exams) would be pushed back by 2 weeks to start on November 22
- Changes to the submission dates for portfolio subjects, MCAT, DCAT, Vis Arts submissions etc.
- Evidence gathering templates from 2020 resent for use in gathering evidence for a derived grade. May be especially important this year because externals will not go ahead in Alert Level 3 or 4.
- Thu 2 Sep – announcement that Learning Recognition credits would be reintroduced for all schools once a threshold of 20 days closure had been reached. The rate would be 1 LRC for 5 cr earned, slightly lower than in 2020.
- Wed 22 September – LRCs for All Auckland schools will be awarded at the rate they were last year i.e. 1 LRC for every 4 earned cr up to a max of 16 for L1, and 12 for L2 and L3, with 44 cr required for a certificate endorsement at all levels.

## **Other Information**

- Two new staff have started with us under lockdown conditions:
  - Narinder Kaur, LNS Assistant - Pathways/Careers
  - Adam Kemp, Learning Leader, WBL and Science. Adam is still living in Balclutha in his old school house accommodation whilst waiting to be able to move to Auckland. He is working from home just like the rest of us but is 1500 km further away!

## **Alastair Caine**

*Acting School Leader*

*24 September 2021*