

Tēnā koutou katoa

To our school community

The Carmel BOT would like to welcome all of our students and staff back into the school next Monday as we move to Level 2. The past few months have been incredibly trying times for the education sector, our students and whānau and we understand that transitioning back into the classroom will not be without its own challenges and concerns for some. We'd like to reassure the community that the advice we have received from the MOE and MOH is clear – with no community transmission, very low infection rates in children and children likely to only become infected after close contact with infected adults/family, the school is a safe environment for all of our students and staff. With effective measures in place – staying home if sick and getting tested early, effective contact tracing and simple hygiene measures such as regular hand washing, it is very likely that any potential spread of COVID-19 in the school environment will be avoided in the future. We look forward to having our students back at school, restoring some sense of normality and regaining all the benefits that students have from being at school amongst their friends and peers.

To our staff

The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank the management, teaching and support staff for rising to the challenge and doing an absolutely stellar job of continuing to support and educate our young people via the internet. We know this came with significant challenges, most importantly the need to be able to adapt in an ever-evolving situation in the initial weeks, but what an incredible job you have done. I don't think anyone in their wildest dreams would have anticipated teaching solely via Zoom or Google classroom when they started back at school in February this year and yet, only a few months later, you not only were but you were providing a level of teaching that was above expectations. Thank you.

To our students

We have been blown away by the innovative and positive approach you have taken to these bizarre times. While the world as you knew it changed almost in an instance, you got on and changed with it. While managing the technological needs of at home learning was probably much easier for your generation than it was for those having to provide it, not having your teachers available in the same manner or your friends to both provide support and social interaction, is still a lot to contend with. So instead, you got active on social media and you changed the way the Carmel community interacted. We have watched on Instagram and Facebook as the student leaders, sports and student council set about connecting our students. You set multiple school challenges, even running the length of NZ (nearly there!), you engaged many students and teachers in these, and you opened your lives and your learning to everyone. You started a school website and you supported each other in ways that you may never have achieved on school grounds. We know that the impact of COVID-19 on your lives is significant, some of you have lost once in a lifetime opportunities, but you can be, and we are, incredibly proud of all you have achieved during this. We wish you all the best for the return to school next week. Enjoy being with your friends again, take care of each other.

Ngā mihi

Julie Scott, BOT Chair