



Monday 18 March 2019

Tēnā koutou katoa

We are all stunned at the events that unfolded in Christchurch on Friday afternoon. Some of our families/community may have lost a family member or friend, and there will no doubt be others in our community who have also been affected. Our hearts go out to our Muslim community, and to all those who have personal connection with these events.

The teaching staff had some advice on how to support students and how to respond. They were advised to:

- Avoid initiating conversations
- Acknowledge the event if raised by a student, also keep focused on the positive ways that people have responded and united together in support for those affected
- Validate any comments/emotions ie: – that it is OK and very normal to feel this way
- Keep routines and processes as normal as possible to help our tamariki/children feel secure
- If students ask questions – some of these may be directed home for families to answer

Some key messages for us all are:

- To reassure children that they are safe
- It is OK to feel sad
- To not go into a lot of detail as this could add anxiety
- Some questions may need to be directed home for families to answer
- If someone is seen to be struggling, we will let their parents know

As part of our support plan we will be reminding students of our lockdown/emergency procedures and hold a drill later in the week – with plenty of warning for the students so that they feel supported through this.

At this time, we are reminded that our school values are very important both within the school and in our wider world. We continue to reinforce these with our students:

Respect - for others and our differences

Responsibility – acting with kindness and good intention

Empathy – showing caring/understanding to others and celebrating our uniqueness

Confidence – having faith and trusting in what you know is right, acting in a way that is consistent with this

Resilience – having the strength to take positive action in the face of adversity, knowing that we can cope with unexpected and distressing/difficult times.

In the meantime, please let us know if you have any concerns about your family members. The national helpline contact is 1737 and anyone can access this 24/7. Please also see the attached Tips for Parents & Educators from the MOE. You may find further information on-line from the Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki and the Children's Commissioner.

It may be that people have suggestions for positive actions that can support the message of unity/caring for each other and to support our Muslim families. Please feel welcomed to share these with the school for consideration.

Waiho i te toipoto kua i te toiroa
"Let us be close together, not far apart"

Nga mihi

Karen Hardie
Principal

Kelvin Russell
Board Chair