



# MT ROSKILL INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

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Dear parents and families,  
Salaam alaikum

New Zealand and our community were shocked by the appalling terrorism last Friday at the Al Noor and Linwood Mosques in Christchurch. Our hearts, thoughts and love go out to the Muslim community in our school, Mt Roskill and New Zealand, and those personally affected by this tragedy. We stand with you.

We have been working with the Ministry of Education Traumatic Incident Team to guide us in how we provide students the opportunity to process what has happened and support students who are more directly affected. The homepage of the Ministry of Education website currently has links from useful websites to help support conversations you may have with your child at home around this topic.

I have attached an information page from the Ministry of Education.

It has been heartwarming to see New Zealand come together to resoundly reject hatred and violence in our country. We are proud to be the most diverse school in New Zealand, we celebrate our differences and see it as our strength. Love and unity are stronger than hate.

We have been informed by the Police that there will be an increased presence around our school gates and local Mosque Masjid e Umar, for the next week or so, and as a precautionary measure these officers will be carrying guns. We have spoken with our students about this

It is important to reassure you that we do have lock down procedures in place at school. We will be revisiting this procedure with our students. Should the school ever be placed in lockdown, the other Mt Roskill Campus Schools, Mt Roskill Primary and Mt Roskill Grammar will also go into lockdown. We will communicate any lockdowns to parents through our school App, email and School Webpage. I would encourage you to download our school app from School Stream.

The school webpage will then be where information is updated from. In the event of a lockdown, we ask that parents DO NOT come to school, as this can place you in danger, and we are unable to let you into any part of the school. Staff and children can only be released from a lockdown situation by me or the deputy principals in person. We communicate directly with staff to keep them aware of the situation and also liaise directly with the Police.

Please let us know if you are worried about your child.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Kristen Walsham  
Principal

## Message form the Board of Trustees:

The Board of MRIS would like to offer our most sincere condolences and support, to the families and friends of those affected by the tragic events in Christchurch and also to the Muslim families of our school community. You have our unwavering support and we stand together with you, walking this difficult road together.

As one of New Zealand's most diverse schools, we all live together, learn together and in times like this, we grieve together. Our staff will be doing all they can to support all our students through this time but if you are aware that your child, or anyone you know, needs help and support, please let your child's teacher know, or contact any of our Deputy Principals.

Kia Kaha whanau.  
Ngā mihi  
MRIS Board of Trustees



## Tips for parents and educators: Supporting children and young people.

Lockdowns are an important part of school safety and crisis preparedness. We want to thank schools and early learning services for keeping all children and young people safe on Friday.

Now we need to help them recover well. An incident like this can confuse and frighten anyone who may feel unsafe or worried that their friends or loved-ones are at risk. They will look to others for information, guidance and support.

Parents and teachers can help children and young people feel safe by;

- providing reassurance and keeping to routines
- staying calm and promoting a calm environment
- doing enjoyable things together
- taking time to listen and talk

Be guided by their questions, be factual and age appropriate with your response. Children and young people do not always talk about their feelings readily – ask them if they are feeling worried.

- Keep your explanations developmentally appropriate.
  - Very young children need brief, simple information that should be balanced with reassurances that their ELS, school and homes are safe and that adults are there to protect them.
  - Older primary school aged children will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what is being done at their school. They may need assistance separating reality from fantasy. Discuss efforts of school, emergency services and community leaders to provide safe schools.
  - Secondary school students will have strong and varying opinions about the causes of violence in schools and society. They will share concrete suggestions about how to make school and communities safer and how to prevent violence and tragedies in society. Have a way of recording the ideas and how you might build on the ideas expressed.
- Emphasize the role that students have in maintaining safe schools by following school safety guidelines (e.g. Signing out when they leave school, not providing building access to strangers, reporting strangers on campus, reporting threats to the school safety made by students or community members, etc.), communicating any personal safety concerns to teachers and accessing support for emotional needs through teachers and the pastoral care system.
- Observe children's emotional state. Changes in behaviour, appetite, and sleep patterns can also indicate a child's level of anxiety or discomfort. In most children, these symptoms will ease with reassurance and time. However, some children may be at risk for more intense reactions, particularly those who have experienced difficulties and change. Parents and teachers, seek support through your school pastoral care system or your GP.