



## ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Hato Hohepa



Pine Avenue  
P.O. Box 40-448,  
Upper Hutt  
Phone 04 528 4910

Monday 11th November 2019

### RE: Reunification Drill - FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2019

In the event of a major disaster we may have to evacuate the school. In order for us to ensure our processes will work we need to practise our school evacuation procedures, this practise is called a '**Reunification Drill**'. We intend holding this Reunification Drill on **FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER**. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the process, so that on the day of the drill families will know what to do.

#### **Step One** - (Update contact information)

Attached to this letter is the contact information we currently have for your child. Please check to see the details are correct also add 4-5 additional adults who you would allow us to release your child/ren to in the event of a school evacuation. During the Reunification process students will only be released to adults listed on our school records, even after 2:50pm! **So updating this with accurate contacts is essential.**

#### **Step Two** - (Drill Day)

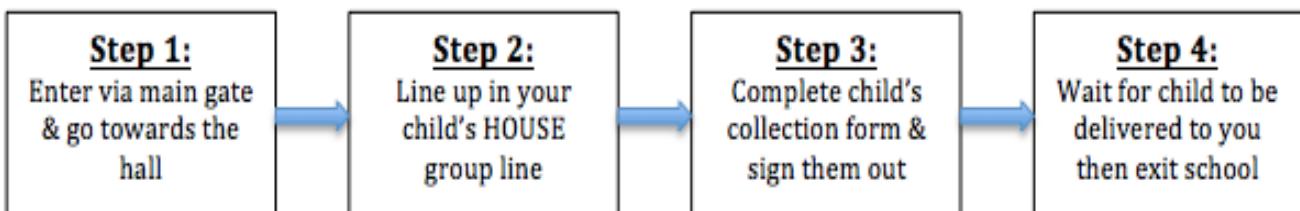
On the day of the drill, **Friday 29 November**, primary caregivers will receive an email and/or text message advising that the Reunification Drill has commenced. Someone will be required to come and collect your child/ren from school as soon as possible. Who comes and gets your child is at your discretion, however, for us to release your child/ren the adult must either be one of your Primary Caregivers, Emergency or Secondary Contacts. If you cannot come to get your child/ren then you need to contact one of the adults that you identified. **Further communication during the Reunification Drill will be posted via our school website [www.stjosephsuh.school.nz](http://www.stjosephsuh.school.nz)**

#### **Step Three**

Adults uplifting children must enter via the main gate (all others will be locked) making their way towards the Hall. There will be four desks set up, one for each **HOUSE** (Manaaki, Faith, Aroha, Mercy). The adult is to line up at the desk which relates to their child's House group.

While waiting in the queue the adult will be given a form to complete (stating which children they will be collecting and where they intend on taking them). The staff member will check the adult's name against the reunification form. If collecting students who are in different House Groups you need to inform the staff member and they will send a runner to collect them for you. Adults will not be allowed into the marked off areas to collect the child/ren, instead staff members will take the form, gather the child/ren and bring them to you.

Once the listed child/ren have been collected by the adult they can take the students off the school grounds. If it is safe to do so students will have access to their classrooms to collect their belongings before exiting the school grounds.



## Some questions you may have:

### **What will be happening at School during this time?**

- We will be holding a normal evacuation drill
- We will account for all students and staff
- An email and/or text message will be sent out to all primary caregivers to advise that the drill has started
- Students will then be taken to the hall (or netball courts)
- They will line up in House groups and sit with siblings or friends
- Different staff members will be with the students to ensure they are calm and safe
- Adults will sign out their children and take them home

### **Why do we need you to identify your intentions once you leave school?**

- In the event of a real disaster and evacuation, parents who are not able to come to the school or make contact with emergency contacts will be worried about their children. By advising them of the time collected, who collected them and their likely destination some of this stress can be alleviated.

### **Why are parents not allowed to go into the courts to get the child/ren?**

- In a real disaster, children will be very upset, as too will parents and staff. If parents were to come into the courts this could potentially cause greater upset for those students who are still waiting to be collected; we must minimise this to ensure the wellbeing of all our students.

### **As an adult who may be picking up other people's children, what should I consider?**

- Once you collect the child/ren from school you will be responsible for their safety and wellbeing. The parents of the child/ren should know that they are in your care, we ask that as you leave the school grounds to text the child/ren's parents to advise them that the students are safe with you. You must also be prepared to house these children for a number of days in the event of a real disaster.

### **What if the adult getting my child/ren does not have their own children at St Joseph's School?** - For any adults that you have listed who do not have students at St Joseph's, such as Grandparents, Aunts etc, ***we ask that you forward this letter to them so that they will be aware of the processes on the day of the Reunification Drill.***

### **Why have you not been given the time of the drill?**

- We cannot predict the time of an actual disaster; we want this drill to be as authentic as possible.

### **Why is email the method of advising of the drill?**

- On advice received from WREMO (Wellington Region Emergency Management Office) we have decided that email will be the most efficient method of contacting parents to advise of a whole school evacuation. It is for this reason that you must ensure that we have your correct email and also mobile number in our records.
- We are aware that in an actual disaster internet and cellular networks can become overloaded. If unsure please check the St Joseph's School website: [www.stjosephsuh.school.nz](http://www.stjosephsuh.school.nz)

**We appreciate that this drill may cause some inconvenience to you. We can't apologise for this as we need to be prepared for the unknown and ensuring our procedures are in place will ultimately ensure better outcomes for your child when required.**