

Coming Events

Tues 17 March:	7.30pm P.T.A. Annual General Meeting in staffroom. All parents welcome.
Fri 20 March	Counties North Yr 7/8 Summer Sports field day Carnival Evening
Tues 24 March	Junior School swimming carnival Counties Zone Yr 7/8 boys cricket
Wed 25 March	Counties North Yr5/6 Summer Sports field day
Thur 26 March	Storyteller at School
Tues 7 April	Parent teacher interviews 1.00 pm on
Thurs 9 April	Last day of Term One.
Fri 10 April	Good Friday

Travel Wise Tip: Walking to and from school with your child is a good opportunity to show safe behaviour and it's good for you too. One less car at the School gate means it's safer for other children too!

Quiz: In nutritional terms, can you explain what the following equation means? $E = MC^2$

Quote: If you think education is expensive these days, try ignorance!

Best Wishes

Murray Wratt
Principal

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Homework: please detach and return to school

- I support the idea of the School investigating other forms of homework credits. Yes/No
- I would prefer that the School continue with the existing format of homework Yes/No

Please note, reading will always remain a form of homework even if alternatives were considered. Thankyou for your response.

Answer to quiz: Energy = milk chocolate squares

OPAHEKE SCHOOL

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“The Opaheke Way”

Dear Parents,

Greetings to all of you as we approach the equinox-a time of equal length days and nights. Already we are over halfway through Term One.

Homework : Lately, there has been much debate about the value of homework especially at primary level. A recent highly regarded study by University of Auckland education professor John Hattie which analysed the effectiveness of 113 different teaching strategies, ranked homework well down the list at 88th. Hattie found ‘zero evidence’ that homework helps improve time management or study skills. Parental interest/support by having high expectations is a far more powerful influence. Furthermore, homework made no difference to primary school students’ achievement although at college level homework could boost achievement. Home reading of course, is highly important and the value of parent interest, support and providing books is not to be underestimated.

At school, staff are very concerned that a significant number of pupils fail to complete their homework for various reasons, some sound, some doubtful and the question is asked; is there a more appropriate and useful format that homework can take? A few schools are pioneering a new programme named ‘Pride’. On top of reading, students are given ‘credits’ for real learning such as helping in the community, joining sports teams and cooking three course meals for their family. Each activity is linked to an academic task for example if a student trains for and enters a duathlon they have to provide photos and prepare a report. At the end of this newsletter, there is a tear off response seeking parents’ opinions on this idea.

New Zealand Curriculum Questionnaire: To date a total of 71 responses have been returned. Well done everybody who took part and thank you. Mrs Marquet will begin analysing the responses and start providing feedback via coming newsletters. Any responses still to come will be welcome.

School Amenity: We continue to be pleased with the support by parents with payment of the amenity. This is fully tax deductible. As explained previously, much of this support is used to provide additional staffing especially in our junior classes. Pupils who receive careful teacher help in the junior classes in smaller class sizes get the best possible start to school. For example, our junior class sizes at present are: 12, 14, 13 and 12 pupils respectively. Later in the year this will obviously increase, but we have aimed to have a lower pupil teacher ratio than private schools. For those parents who prefer to direct credit their family amenity, the School account number is 12 3031 0728049 00.

Parent interviews: advance notice. Please make a note in your diary parent interviews will be held on Tuesday 7th April, the final week of Term One.

Success In Literacy : This year our school along with all other primary schools and the two colleges in Papakura, are participating in a major professional development programme aimed at raising achievement levels of all students in literacy. Called the Papakura Achievement Initiative or P.A.I. for short-this programme has Ministry of Education financial support with each Board of Trustees supplementing it through teacher professional development. In class assistance is provided by highly capable advisors, test results are analysed for patterns of strengths/weaknesses, afternoon/after school workshops are arranged for teachers to attend and teachers have access to the latest research on how to help pupils who are at risk of failing to learn to read to their age level. It is exciting, with a high work component and demanding but teachers here are relishing the skilled analysis and support provided.

Celebrating Successes: Congratulations to the following students.

School Councillors: Darby Fullerton, Charlotte Pritchard, Maia Jean Watene, Chester Davies, Aaron Crossan, Keegan Bloem, Chelsea Andrew, Mitchell Holmes.

Bus Monitors: Melanie John, Natasha Tulp, Jeremy Collins, Adam Wainwright

Rhiannon Wood Y2 who completed a special Manurewa Library Challenge over the Christmas Holidays.

To all of our students who represented the School and Counties North. Our Yr 7/8 swimmers were runners up in Counties North Competition and Charlotte Pritchard, Natasha Tulp and Campbell Turner represented Counties North in the Counties Zone at Pukekohe last week. Charlotte gained three 1sts, and two 3rds. Natasha also made the finals while all three were in the relay teams gaining four 2nds and one 3rd

Our Y 5/6 School team was 5th at the Counties North swimming sports



The George Keown interschool swimming relay races. Our Year 5/6 teams were 1st and 5th while the Year 7/8 teams were 2nd and 4th. It was most exciting. Congratulations to all of those who represented the School at these events.

Carnival For Kids: only 9 days to go until our P.T.A kids Carnival. Friday evening 20th March from 4-7pm. Lots of fun events, many at no cost. It's an evening for all of our children to enjoy. Lots of parent help will be necessary for the evening to be successful. Can you assist? Please let our School office know or phone Marilyn on Ph 2995634 or Jacqui ph 2965973. In essence, the aim of the Carnival is enjoyment. If some profit comes from it, that will go back into some direct benefit for our students.



P.T.A News: AGM; You are cordially invited to attend the Opaheke School Parent, Teacher Association General Meeting.

When : 7.30 pm

Date: Tuesday 17th March

Where: In the Staff Room

Food and drink will be served in the Staffroom after the meeting.

A Message from your Public Health Nurse: Hi there, my name is Ronda Bright and I am the Public Health Nurse that is working in your school. Kidz First Public Health Nurses are Registered Nurses, who work in your school and community, we assist in helping kids keep healthy. You may hear from us for the following reasons

- Follow up of any health concerns that you or the school might have
- 5-7 year old immunisation screening
- Follow up on hearing and vision failures/concerns
- School immunisation programs

We also run a free Ear clinic and offer advice for parents regarding children who have bed wetting issues. We are available to discuss and offer advice on any health concerns you have for your child. Feel free to contact us on 2951280.

Community Notices: Superkids Papakura After School OSCAR Programme is now open for 5-13 year olds. Pick up from all schools in Papakura (including Opaheke at 2.30pm). Daily activities include homework supervision, games, afternoon tea and fun filled activities. OSCAR Subsidies available. Phone 299 9394 or email afterschool@harvestchurch.net.nz for more information or enrolment.