

Community Notices:

- In Goodtime HorsePark. Riding lessons on miniature & small ponies in Karaka ph 092919153 or ingoodtimehorsepark@xtra.co.nz
- SuperKids Papakura After School OSCAR Programme currently has vacancies for 5-13 year olds and picks up from Opaheke School. Daily activities include homework supervision, games, afternoon tea and fun filled activities. OSCAR subsidies available Ph 299 9394.

Coming Events

Tomorrow	Yr7/8 winter sports field day at Bruce Pulman Park
Fri 19 June	Saving day for Yr5/6 winter sports field day if required 10.30am Whole School photograph in front of new classroom block – weather permitting
Tues 23 June	Kids for Kids choir rehearsal and concert at Pukekohe
Thur 25 June	School disco 5.30pm NE – Yr 4, 6.45 – 8.00pm Yr5-8
Wed 1 July	Mid year reports sent home 7.30pm
Fri 3 July	Last day of Term Two 11.30am Visit by Counties Steelers Rugby Team to school
Mon 20 July	Term Three begins

Quiz: Can you name the year that reads as the same when turned upside down?

Quote: Experience is a hard teacher. It gives the test first and the lessons afterwards.

Best Wishes

Murray Wratt
Principal

Answer to Quiz: 1961

OPAHEKE SCHOOL

Sharing Caring Learning And Achieving

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17 June 2009
Newsletter No 09/09

“The Opaheke Way”

Dear Parents,
Greetings to all of our families as we work through uncertain times economically and from a public health viewpoint.

Pandemic Update: The World Health Organisation has upgraded the influenza virus H1N1 (swine flu) to that of a Level 6 status. This will obviously impact on our country, community and school. Over the last weekend there were reported cases of New Zealanders who had not travelled overseas recently nor come into contact with overseas travellers, being affected by the flu virus.

Our Board of Trustees have discussed the effects of such a pandemic at length and informed parents via last Wednesday’s notice that any child or staff member travelling overseas while this alert is in place, is to remain at home for 7 days upon returning, to ensure that they are free of any symptoms of cold or influenza. While understanding that this action may cause those families considerable inconvenience, the Board is considering the greater good of all of our students and staff at Opaheke School during these uncertain times.

What can each of us do to limit the spread of this flu virus?

- Use disposable tissues when coughing or sneezing.
- Washing hands and drying hands thoroughly, especially before meals and after going to the toilet.
- In each classroom teachers have a supply of Bactol Gel hand cleaner and tissues and we encourage children to use them.



We are currently updating our parent information in case the Ministry of Health closes schools and teachers are considering how school work can be continued if school does close. If you have not yet sent in updated contact details could you please do so.

School Vision: The vision statement sent out to parents in the last newsletter has since been confirmed by the Board of Trustees. One word was added to the others under the heading of 'Individuals' – that of 'being respectful'. Interestingly, throughout the consultation process with parents, the notion of 'respect for others and respect for ones self' was the most common theme to emerge. A big thankyou to all of those parents who took part in this consultation process. Your comments were heard and included in the final draft. Opaheke School does want all of its students past, present and future to be **Lifelong Learners, *Contributors, *Thinkers, *Individuals*. The Vision Statement will now be included in the School Charter and will provide the front piece for Opaheke School's curriculum plans. A special thankyou to Mrs Marquet who led the project.

Mid Year Reports: Class teachers are currently preparing mid year reports for parents on each child's achievement at School over the first half of this year. Writing reports is time consuming and we have a comprehensive checking process to ensure that assessments are accurate and error free. We trust that the reports which will be issued on the 1st July, will provide parents with a comprehensive understanding of their child's progress and achievement at school.



Draft National Standards: Last week, senior leaders from School attended a seminar with Ministry of Education personnel to find out more about the national standards proposed for 2010. Parents are encouraged to take part in this process and to complete a feedback. All submissions close on Friday 3rd July. There are some copies at the School office for interested parents. While there would appear to be some value in setting standards for each level in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, what is exercising the mind of those attending, is the uses to which any data obtained, is used/abused by outside sources. For example, would any value emerge if attempts were made to 'rank primary schools under a 'name and shame' regime? If teachers are 'pressured' or 'coerced' to narrow the teaching curriculum down to simply preparing students for some kind of nationwide assessment, this will mean that our world class education system would be in jeopardy. The lesson from the English experience needs to be very carefully studied and considered before the Minister of Education and the Ministry go down that road.

Celebrating Successes: Congratulations to the following students:

- ☺ Argyle Morling, Carlin Dempster, Joshua Palmer (Year 4) whose team played and won the Manurewa 9th Grade Soccer tournament for Papakura City Rangers.

Opening of the New Classrooms: Last Wednesday morning was a very happy occasion in the life of our School as all pupils staff and some invited guests gathered outside Rooms 21 to 24 to officially declare the classrooms open. Following a speech by Mr Shaddick, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, our oldest pupil Cayley Colyer Yr 8 and our youngest pupil Caitlin Morris New Entrant, cut a blue ribbon to declare the new classrooms open for use. Finishing the project 7 weeks early was a major achievement and helped preserve the School grounds from long term damage by vehicles. There was an opportunity for parents to have a look at the new classrooms and withdrawal rooms and on Friday, Mrs Fairweather and Mrs Greenman moved in to their new upstairs classrooms. Mrs Read's class will also move over to a new classroom before the next holidays. Room 12 will be used during Term Four for a new Year One class drawn from the two New Entrant classes. Mr James' class will become Room 25 and Ms Edwards' class will become Room 26. A special thankyou is offered to Mr Gant Mclachlan on the Board of Trustees who oversaw this project on behalf of the school. Grant has given many hours of time to ensure that the School's interests were carefully considered and that there was minimal disruption to students' learning programmes. The Board of Trustees, staff, parents and students are very grateful to Mr Mclachlan.



Junior Adventure Playground: Now that the upgrade to the equipment has been completed, the Board and PTA are turning their attention to replacing the wood chip base with a more suitable permanent material similar to that used on the senior adventure playground. As soon as resource consent is obtained from the Council, the wood chip will be removed and parents given an opportunity to take home a trailer load of garden mulch for a donation. We will also want 4 – 5 adults to bring rakes to help with clearing wood chip from under the equipment for the bobcat to remove. The playground area will also be covered over.

School Gala: Yes it's on! Sunday 1st November. Parents, please keep the day free. From the middle of next term the organising committee will begin collections, starting with books, DVDs and bottles for a silent auction. There will no white elephant this time but there will be car boot sales as well. Keep an eye out for updates.

Speeding Cars: Parents, when travelling on Opaheke Road, especially during the morning, please be mindful of our pupils on or near to the road pedestrian crossing. At times it is alarming to note the speed of vehicles as drivers hurry to their various destinations. Children deserve much more consideration from speeding drivers.