

School Dental Clinic: Rosehill Intermediate clinic is temporarily closed please phone dental therapists on 837 6635 in case of emergency.

Community Notices:

1. Papakura Athletic Club Massey Park registrations 19 & 26 October at 6pm ph 2989157.
2. Papakura Swim Club lessons and coaching for beginners up, ph 2927446.
3. Rosehill Intermediate School Orientation Day 9.30am – 11.00pm Thursday 29 November.
4. Papakura High School enrolments interviews Tuesday 23 and Monday 29 Oct 4.30 – 5.00pm

Coming Events:

Wed 17 Oct 9am Travel Wise launch
Thur 18 Oct 8.30am Kapa Haka group parent support whanau meeting
2.00pm Kapa Haka group first session
Rooms 5 & 7 to Massey Park Pools
Mon 22 Oct Labour Day
Tue 23 Oct Board of Trustees meeting
Wed 31 Oct Junior classes trip to Auckland Zoo

Quiz: The hottest temperature in the solar system was recorded on what planet?
Mars Jupiter Venus Mercury

Quote: ‘And that’s the world in a nutshell, an appropriate receptacle’ *Stan Drum*

Best Wishes

Alana Cantley
Acting Principal

Answer to Quiz: Venus

OPAHEKE SCHOOL

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Newsletter No 15/07

“The Opaheke Way”

Dear Parents,

Greetings to all of you as we start the fourth term. It promises to be very busy with many exciting events to look forward to and full classroom programmes planned for students. Mr Wratt is currently recovering at home after having a knee operation in the holidays. We wish him well and hope he has a speedy return to full fitness.

Education Issues: There has been some publicity recently over a number of education issues that may impact on schools. As parents are aware, the Education Ministry are currently finalising details of a new national curriculum which is due to be released into schools later in the year and introduced in 2009. This curriculum introduces a shift in approach, with the emphasis upon students learning skills and processes rather than content knowledge. In social sciences, for instance, students will be asked to consider ways of making their community a better place to live and take appropriate action, rather than remembering facts about societies or historical events. There is some debate, however, over the validity of this approach, with some education groups advocating continued teaching of knowledge to ensure students leave school with essential knowledge across a range of curriculum areas. It is clear that many educators support the direction of the draft curriculum. Yet schools should be mindful of the two approaches and devise programmes that incorporate both skills and knowledge.

Media attention has also been focused recently on a projected shortage of teachers as the government fulfils their pre-election promise to decrease class sizes in New Entrant classrooms. From May onwards the number of students in these classes is set to decrease from 23 to 18, which will mean a possible shortfall of about 700 teachers. It is predicted that Auckland will face a real shortage of teachers, with South Auckland already emerging as one of the worst hit areas. This means that schools will be competing to attract staff and may have to look to foreign teachers to fulfil staffing requirements. Opaheke School is fortunate to have quality staff

and strives to maintain high standards that will continue to attract quality applicants to any teaching positions advertised.

From time to time there may be issues or concerns which parents wish to discuss with the school. We take all concerns seriously and do our best to solve any problems to the satisfaction of all parties. We would like to remind parents, however, that there are procedures to follow should they wish to express a concern:

1. Ring for an appointment to discuss the matter of concern directly with the child's teacher. In most cases this will lead to a resolution.
2. If the resolution is unsuccessful make an appointment to meet the Team Leader. The Team Leader will investigate the matter and discuss the concern with all parties.
3. The parent/caregiver may ask to meet with the Deputy Principal should the matter still not be resolved. In this instance the Deputy Principal will inform the Principal and the matter will be fully investigated by the Principal.

While it is sometimes appropriate to speak directly with the Principal the previous steps should generally be taken in the first instance. It is important that concerns are expressed reasonably and in an appropriate fashion and that appointments are made to discuss issues at a suitable time. Staff are often very busy before school, and after school is generally a better time to meet. Staff attempt at all times to enter into open dialogue and are happy to communicate with parents regarding issues that may arise.

Crossing Awareness: As part of the Travel Wise programme mentioned below, our focus for Term three and four has been crossing awareness. We urge all adults who are collecting children from school to model appropriate behaviour and use the pedestrian crossings at all times. It is important for parents and caregivers to be good role models for Opaheke school pupils.

Kapa Haka: On Thursday of last week the kapa haka whanau group met at school to make further plans. The first kapa haka session will begin this Thursday 18 October. The whanau decided to include Year 1 to 3 children in the group with these children leaving school at the usual time of 2.30pm. Year 4 to 8 students will continue until the later time of 3.30pm. We look forward to a really exciting programme which includes waiata, myths, stories about the local area and tikanga (cultural practices). Many thanks to the dedicated group of parents and teachers who have committed to making this group a success. Interested parents are welcome to attend the next whanau meeting in the school staffroom on Thursday 18 October at 8.30am.

Science Fair: The science fair held at the end of last term was a great success with many parents grandparents friends and past pupils coming to view the work of our Yr 7/8 students. Placegetters were as follows: Yr 7 – 1st James Biggelaar, 2nd Troy Davies, 3rd Aseem Anand, Highly Commended Teresa McCarthy, Lauren Hare. Yr 8 – 1st Sonia Everitt, 2nd equal Stephanie Bolland and Emelee Rikona, 3rd Troyden Sorenson, Highly Commended Rachel Ritchie. Congratulations to all the winners and to students for the work and effort that has gone into their exhibits.

NEMP: This week teachers from the National Education Monitoring Project will be working with some of our Year 4 students in the areas of Science, Visual Arts and Information Skills. This is an Education Ministry initiative which assesses different learning areas in a four-year cycle or order to give a picture of progress across time.

Living History Museum: Rooms 21, 23 and 24 impressed parents and pupils last week with their knowledge of famous people. Students researched the person of their choice, wrote a short biography, dressed like that person and delivered the information as a 'live' exhibit in a museum.

Travel Wise: On Wednesday 17 October Opaheke School will officially launch their Travel Wise programme with a walk around the neighbourhood and assembly led by Papakura District Councillors, members of the Travel Wise working party, BOT members, Walking School Bus co-ordinators and local personalities. Following this launch, a programme of strategies aimed at safe travel to and from school will be implemented.

Staff Changes: Welcome back to Miss Nicola Johnston who is teaching in Room 12 this term while Mrs Lopez is on maternity leave. Welcome also to Mrs Margaret Gane who is working in Room 17 with Mrs Brak. Both teachers have recently returned from teaching service overseas.

Hingaia School Provision: Interested parents can view a copy of the Hingaia Schooling Provision Consultation Report in the school office. This outlines the proposed options for schooling in the new suburb of Hingaia and invites submissions from school communities. Submissions close on 26 October.

PTA Events: A reminder the Calendar orders close this **Friday 19th**. Thank you for your efforts in selling the raffle tickets, the final date for money and tickets to be returned is **Thursday 25th**. Tickets are available for our BIG Auction night on **2nd November**, we hope you will all support this great fundraiser.