

### **Coming Events:**

Thur 22 May (tomorrow) School councillors to National Young Leaders Day at Telstra Clear conference centre Manukau City.  
3.30pm Counties North rugby trials at Bruce Pulman Park.  
Thur 29 May Junior classes visit Papakura Fire Service station  
Mon 2 June Queens Birthday holiday.  
Tues 3 June Year 3 classes to Auckland Museum.  
Wed 4 June Year 4 classes to Auckland Museum  
Thur 5 June Year 7/8 Counties North Schools winter sports field day.

**Quiz:** Which animals know their 4 rules of Mathematics?

**Quote:** Having one child makes you a parent; having two or more makes you a referee. *Anonymous*

Best Wishes

Alana Cantley  
Deputy Principal

Answer to Quiz: rabbits can easily multiply, but only snakes are adders.

# OPAHEKE SCHOOL

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## “The Opaheke Way”

Dear Parents,

Greetings to all of you from a busy school. Already, teachers are thinking about what information will form the basis for the mid year reports.

**Safe at School:** As far as our School is concerned the safety of children is placed at a very high level. Our staff accept that the phrase ‘in loco parentis’ places a major responsibility on all teachers to ensure that children are safe during their time at School. Children **do not** get taken outside of the School grounds by specialist support teachers and all testing or assessment is carried out within the School environment. Class groups or sports teams or music groups may travel outside of the School but parents are always informed about such events. If any parent has a query, please contact the School rather than listen to uninformed comment.

Interestingly, the Education Review Office, when visiting the School at the end of February commented favourably on children’s safety within the School environment.

**Parent Interviews:** We are pleased to inform parents the 96% of all the School’s families have attended a parent interview with their child’s teacher. We would be delighted to reach 100%. Please contact your child’s teacher or the School office to set up a mutually acceptable time. Students from Room Two will be directly contacted by Miss Banks regarding setting up their three way conferences.

**Papakura Initiative:** Schools within the wider Papakura area have joined up to a local project aiming to raise student achievement especially in literacy. The two secondary schools and all of the primary schools are working with the Ministry of Education to develop strategies that will enhance teacher expertise, assist parents and provide professional development for principals and school assessment leaders. Opaheke School has been nominated as the lead school for the project and we are also the fund holder school on behalf of the Ministry of Education. This week I

will be in Wellington for two days on a training course to evaluate schools' progress in this initiative.

**Talking With Your Children:** All day and night television, stressed parents, the demise of the family meal time conversation, and even forward facing push chairs, are all killing the art of conversation between parents and children. These factors have alarming implications for child behaviour and the development of oral language in the first few years of primary school.

Research by Britains Basic Skills Agency, the education agency responsible for improving literacy and numeracy in England argues that the biggest problem for junior teachers is teaching children to speak and to listen. These are all skills that should have been learned before starting school. As parents, how can we avoid such problems and ensure that our children start school, as alert, well balanced focussed pupils?

- ✓ Talk with children rather than at them. A series of instructions is not a conversation.
- ✓ Turn television/DVDs off for a part of the evening to enjoy a story together or to talk or to play a game.
- ✓ Have evening meals at the dinner table rather than in the lounge in front of television.
- ✓ Ensure that your children get to bed on time to allow for 10 hours sleep each night.
- ✓ Enjoy play with your children. Play is an important form of learning especially for younger children.
- ✓ Be there for them when they need you. Time is the best four letter word after love that you can offer your children rather than work, food or cash.

**Arthur Sanderson's Bequest:** Arthur Sanderson, the School's former caretaker from 1985 – 1998 bequeathed to Opaheke School a sum of money - \$2,000 – to be used for some aspect of the school. Knowing of Arthur's love of gardening and his interest in the children, the Board and staff are considering how to best use the donation. Any suggestions are welcomed. The Board has written to the Sanderson family expressing the School's thanks for this very generous donation.

**Celebrating Successes:** Congratulations to the following students:

- ☺ Kyle Carstons 6 years old who won the ASB colouring in competition.
- ☺ Reef Vehi Vehi Tau Yr8 top table tennis player for Counties North.
- ☺ Jessica Tielemans Yr 8 Counties North girls soccer representative .
- ☺ Christian Chappell and Adam Wainwright Yr7 boys soccer representative for Counties North Schools.

- ☺ Madison Lunny, Charlotte Pritchard, Natasha Tulp, Maia Jean Watene all Yr7 girls representing Counties North Schools in soccer.

**Lucky Draws:** At next Monday's assembly there will be some lucky draws for all families who have paid the School amenity. Some great vouchers have been received from Snow Planet and The Bike Shop.

**Helpers Needed:** The PTA are looking for helpers to assist at the Auction Night to be held later in November. If you can help out in any way please contact Geraldine leaving a message on 296 7596 or Marilyn 2995634, or leave your name and phone number with the School office.

The PTA is looking for someone willing to organise the crossing roster. Please phone Geraldine on 296 7590 and leave a message.

Thankyou to all of those parent and teachers who helped with the disco last Friday evening.

**Numeracy For Parents:** All going to plan the staff are intending to hold a second meeting for parents about Numeracy sometime in Term Three. Many parents regretted that they were unable to attend the morning session last year. Mrs McFlinn and the Numeracy Team will aim to both repeat last year's information session, as well as go on to the next step.

**Safe Driving:** Now that winter is approaching parents are urged to practise safe driving habits especially around our School entrances. Parents, don't rush your child across Tasman Drive to save 10 seconds. It's better to arrive late rather than be 'dead on time'.

**Late for School!** It is disappointing to note the increase in children arriving late for class. School starts for the day at 8.25am. Children should be in class and ready to start their school day before the 8.25 morning bell rings. When children arrive to class late they disrupt the children already working, miss morning notices and instructions for the day. Parents please assist your children to arrive at school on time. This will help them in later life with good work habits.

**Community Notices:**

- Children's dancing lessons available for children 5 – 12 years old – ballroom, Latin, rock and roll, in Opaheke School Hall phone Leo Wolters 299 6198.