

### Community Notices Continued:

- Franklin Riding School – after school pick up. 2 ½ hour lessons as well as weekend classes and Holiday courses. You do not need to own a horse. Ph Erin 09 239 1173 or [www.franklinridingschool.co.nz](http://www.franklinridingschool.co.nz)
- Drury Junior Rugby Club Registrations and weigh in Wed 25 4 – 5.30pm or Sat 28 9.00-10.30am boys and girls welcome Ph Tony 2947294.

### Coming Events

Today	Counties North Yr7/8 swimming sports a.m. at Massey Park Pools for selected students
Tonight	Netball parents meet in School staffroom
Fri 27 Feb	10.30am Yr8 girls HPV talks
Tues 3 March	Counties Zone Yr7/8 swimming sports at Pukekohe
Wed 5 March	Counties North Yr5/6 swimming sports at Massey Park Pools
Thur 6 March	6.30pm George Keown interschool swimming relay races at Massey Park Pools
Tues 10 March	Board of Trustees Meeting
Tues 17 March	PTA Annual General Meeting 7.30pm in staffroom.
Fri 20 March	Counties North Summer Sports Field Day Yr7/8 Evening: School Carnival

**Travel Wise Tip:** When children are riding skateboards, scooters or in line skates, is it important that they wear a safety helmet.

**Quote:** Age doesn't always bring wisdom, sometimes age comes alone!

Best Wishes

Murray Wratt  
Principal

# OPAHEKE SCHOOL

*Sharing Caring Learning And Achieving*

[office@opaheke.school.nz](mailto:office@opaheke.school.nz)  
Web Site: [www.opaheke.school.nz](http://www.opaheke.school.nz)

Tasman Drive  
PAPAKURA  
298 5410 Ph  
298 0739 Fax

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## “The Opaheke Way”

Dear Parents,  
Greetings to all of you as we approach the official end of summer.

**What Worries Our Children Most?** Put aside child abuse, eating disorders, parents long work days; bullying and friendship woes are the biggest worries for New Zealand youngsters, a helpline informs us. ‘Whats Up’, a free counselling phone line for children and young people, received more than 500,000 calls last year. However 145,000 only were able to be answered. Callers were 50 times more worried about friendships than about child abuse. Feelings of loneliness had increased, more young people wanted to quit smoking and more than 100 callers expressed suicidal thoughts or fears. The 2008 summary of calls about peer relationships and bullying showed callers aged 12 and 13 were helplines biggest users. While not downgrading other topics, it does indicate that as parents and teachers all responsible adults need to know who a child's friends are and be alert to possible difficulties when friends ‘fall out’. Interestingly – and of concern – was that bullying was the leading problem for boys and for children aged nine to eleven.

**What's New At School For 2009?** There are some interesting developments at School for this year.

- ☺ A perceptual motor programme for our junior children will begin this year. Based in Room 18 the PMP is a programme designed to improve younger childrens motor co-ordination, spatial awareness, physical agility.
- ☺ Rainbow Reading – this year there will be two groups of pupils at risk in reading who will receive extra reading tuition during the mornings.
- ☺ New Zealand Curriculum 2007. This will become compulsory next year and staff will continue writing curriculum plans that relate to the Key Competencies.
- ☺ The Papakura Achievement Initiative which will aim to lift students achievement in all of our local schools, both primary and secondary. Class

teachers will be observed with their teaching in literacy and receive specialised help from skilled advisers to enhance children's learning.

**School Amenity:** Thankyou very much to all of our parents who have paid their school amenity. Accounts were sent out earlier in the term. This year, with locally raised contributions our Board of Trustees will fund 80% of one additional teacher in a major move to lower the pupil teacher ratio especially in the junior classes. By lowering a class size, the teacher is able to provide more intensive assistance to pupils in their class. The School values and appreciates this essential contribution. A discount is offered to all families who pay before or on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. A number of parents have enquired as to whether it is alright to direct credit so much per week or fortnight. This is 'absolutely' OK please call at the office to arrange this.

**Language Programmes For Yr7/8 Students:** This year the options will be Spanish, Japanese, German and Maori. Parents of students involved will have received information about the languages programme at the 'Meet The Teacher' evening.

**Bible In School:** The programme for Year 4 to 6 students has just started for 2009. Going from 10.30 – 11.00am each Wednesday morning, the programme is based from 'Religion In Life' a non sectarian Christian programme used throughout many schools in New Zealand. Parents who do not wish their child to take part are simply to write a note for the class teacher. No reason is required. Children not taking part in the programme will be supervised in a classroom during those 30 minutes.

**School Banking:** Yes it will be starting with the first day being tomorrow 26<sup>th</sup> February. School banking will operate each Thursday morning. This facility is with the National Bank. Registration forms are available from the office.

**Saturday Morning Netball:** Yes we will be entering teams from the School in the Papakura Netball Associations Saturday morning competition. A further reminder that there is a meeting tonight in the staffroom for all parents who have daughters interested in playing netball for a school team. Time 7.30pm. A special thankyou to Wendy Beever and Lisa Ross for their time and willingness to co-ordinate the teams along with Miss Hamlin and Miss Banks who are also attending.

**New Zealand Curriculum:** Enclosed with this newsletter is a questionnaire asking parents some questions about what is important in their opinions as to what students should learn while at school. The School is genuinely interested in obtaining feedback from parents. These responses will be collated and later this

term we are planning a parents' workshop to explore further these responses. From this, a vision for the school will be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

**PTA News:** Last evening our PTA had a planning meeting to consider ideas and form a plan for events over the year. The first larger event will be the Carnival on Friday 20 March. It would be good to see a large turn out of parents at this evening to help support our PTA. This is an occasion for children but it will require lots of parent assistance. It's also a good fun evening. Included with this newsletter is a survey from the PTA seeking feedback from parents as to ways in which they can help bring about a close home school partnership as well as fundraise for some 'extras' for children at this School.

**HPV Talks:** For Year 8 girls, there will be an information time on Friday morning at 10.30am 27 February. Because the Ministry of Health staff did not attend the planned parent information session, parents will be invited to attend this time to find out more about this Cervical Cancer immunisation programme.

**Hanging Baskets:** These are now looking great after the re-potting and re-planting. These are at present in the junior quad between Rooms 6, 7, 10 and 11. Special thanks to Mrs Wratt and Mr Chester who did the necessary work.

**Yummy Stickers:** We are again collecting the 'yummy' stickers from New Zealand grown fruit. Classes have a competition to collect the most stickers which are exchanged for new sports equipment.

#### **Congratulations:**

- To all of our Year 8 students who took part in an excellent 4 day outdoor education camp at Hunua. A special thanks to Mrs Paewai, Mrs Stride, Mrs Cantley and Team Leader Miss Banks.
- Dylan Grant who won the 5-7 age category with his intergalactic robot star in Mercury Energy Stars For Starship competition in December.

#### **Community Notices:**

- Soccer – Papakura City Football Club – registrations are on until the end of February for junior and youth boys and girls pf 2996348
- Asher Dance & Shabach are community performing arts programs available at very low rates. Dance, Music and Drama available to all ages after school hours contact Jessie 0273310666.
- CAR BOOT SALE Saturday 14 March 8 – 12pm Papakura Playcentre 15 Opaheke Road. Ph Karyn 2991601 to book a space.