

### Community Notices:

1. Watties Cans film festival –Free Entry with donated can of food visit [www.readingcinemas.co.nz](http://www.readingcinemas.co.nz)
2. Dance Open Day – Ballet, Jazz and Hip Hop ph 272 3409
3. Cheerleading classes – learn American style cheerleading ph 0800CHEERLEADER
4. House for sale 3 bdrm home Cliff Road, excellent location. On Trade Me, ph 2989857 for more details.

### Coming Events:

Wed. 31 Oct	Junior classes trip to zoo
Thurs. 1 Nov	Kapa Haka whanau meeting 8.30 a.m. Papakura Initiative hui, Park Estate School, 7 p.m.
Tues. 6 Nov	APPA choir Auckland Town Hall
Wed. 7 Nov	Dress up morning, Book week Year 8 Rosehill College testing 9.00 – 11.20 a.m.
Mon. 12 Nov	Year 8 water survival, Massey Park, 11-12 p.m.
Tues. 13 Nov.	B.O.T. meeting

**Quiz:** Which planet is always seen during early morning or twilight?

**Quote:** “Never trust a computer you can’t throw out a window”*Steve Wozniak*

Best Wishes

Alana Cantley  
Acting Principal

Answer to Quiz: Mercury

# OPAHEKE SCHOOL

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## “The Opaheke Way”

Dear Parents,

Greetings to all of you. The weeks are certainly disappearing fast and already the shops are advertising their Christmas goods. It is encouraging to see the weather warming up and improving.

Homework: Do Our Children Have Too Much? Recent research in the U.S.A. is casting doubt on the value of homework apart from reading on a daily basis. The family conflict, stress and lost time for other activities means that many of the benefits are outweighed by the negatives, argues Alfie Kohn, a well regarded author and educational researcher. He claims, further, that there is no research that suggests that homework promotes good work habits, self discipline or independence. Further, today’s children lead busier lives with sport, music, drama, learning support programmes and family activities all taking an increasing amount of what we used to call spare time.

Homework in New Zealand primary schools, however, is designed to support class programmes and reinforce skills and knowledge learnt in class. It also aims to develop the routines of completing work in students’ own time and preparing students for the demands of high school. In particular, it aims to develop time management skills, which are essential in today’s busy and fast-paced world.

As a parent, if you are concerned about the amount of time your child is spending on homework, check the following points:

- Talk with your child’s class teacher. They may be unaware that your child is finding it difficult to complete all of the set work.
- Make sure your children have a good balance of extra-curricular activities to ensure a sound work-life quality.
- Don’t become overly anxious about homework. Set a time limit for the homework and if it is not done within that time frame, leave it. Enforcing the finishing of homework is not worth the family strife or conflict.

Travel Wise Launch: A very successful launch of the Travel Wise programme was held on 17 October. The weather remained kind and the whole school was able to complete a walk around the streets surrounding the school and an assembly in the school hall. Dignitaries and local personalities attended and the school was presented with a framed certificate marking our official entry into the programme. The co-ordinators are now working hard to develop walking school buses to promote safe walking to and from school. Please return your surveys sent out last week.

Kapa Haka: To date, two kapa haka sessions have been held, with a total of approximately 80 children attending. The children have been introduced to games, songs and actions by a group of dedicated parents and friends led by Te Aroha Rountree and Tyla Gurnick. There will be a whanau meeting to discuss progress to date and finalise details in the school staffroom at 8.30 a.m. on Thursday 1 Nov.

The Great Spring Clean: At the end of last term, students and teachers at Opaheke School participated in the 2007 Papakura Great Spring Clean. All classes removed rubbish from around the school or from nearby streets as a way to keep our environment clean and take pride in our area. Participating schools were entered into a lucky draw and Opaheke School were the winners of the \$500 prize. We look forward to spending this money to assist with a school beautification project.

Yummy Sticker: Our school has received further funding from our participation in the Yummy Stickers competition. Thanks go, once again, to Mrs Owen for organising the collection of the Yummy stickers from fruit. This year the school raised \$1020 which will go towards more sports gear. A superb effort, and our best yet! Special thanks to all those who supported the school.

Enrichment: The George Parkyn Centre for Gifted Education is currently looking at establishing a One Day School in Papakura. This means that one day a week students who have been assessed as gifted would be able to attend this school in place of their regular school. There would be a cost to parents. On Thursday 1 Nov at 7.00 p.m. in our school hall, there will be a meeting of interested parents and caregivers to explore this option. For further information at this stage, parents are also invited to look at the website [www.georgeparkyncentre.org](http://www.georgeparkyncentre.org)

Papakura Achievement Initiative: Opaheke School is one of a cluster of Papakura schools that are involved in a Ministry of Education initiative to develop programmes that will raise the achievement of students in literacy. Over the past months these schools have gathered data to establish the achievement levels of students and are now involved in consultation meetings to develop a draft plan to

implement the programme. Parents, guardians and caregivers of Maori tamariki are invited to attend a special hui on Thursday 1 Nov at Park Estate School, Park Estate Road, Papakura from 7.00 – 8.30 p.m. Dr Alison Davis, the educational consultant working with the Papakura schools, will speak at the hui with discussion focused on ways to improve overall achievement and Maori student achievement in particular.

Book Week: Book Week will be held from 5 – 9 Nov this term, with an exciting programme of classroom and library activities that promote books and reading. On Wednesday 7 Nov, students are asked to dress up as a favourite book character and join in the parade held in the hall. Throughout the week there will be book readings, colouring competitions, book quizzes, buddy reading and sharing of books by teachers and students. Thanks to Mr Young for organising this week.

Attendance at School: A reminder that our school starts at **8.25 a.m.** every morning, and that students are required to be in class and ready to begin the day's programme at this time. There are significant numbers of children arriving after the morning bell which means they are missing out on valuable organisational and learning time by being late. Please ensure that your child is consistently on time and ready to start their day with all the necessary gear.



Bus pupils: A reminder, too, that if your child is an afternoon bus pupil and leaves school during the day for any reason, the office must be notified so their name can be taken off the list for that afternoon. Also, when ringing the school in the morning to notify the office of their absence, please ask that their name is taken off the bus list that day. If names are not removed there is much confusion and time lost in the afternoons as teachers search for missing bus pupils.

#### P.T.A. Events:

- Thank you to those parents who have returned raffle tickets, please return these tomorrow if you still have them.
- The auction has been a huge effort by our dedicated group of PTA helpers. We hope all our parents will support this effort. There are great auction items and all proceeds go towards improving your children's learning environment. Tickets available from the office.
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Term & Dates for 2008: Term 1 – 5 February – 18 April. Term 2 – 5 May – 4 July. Term 3 21 July – 26 September. Term 4 – 13 October – 19 December. (These dates are set by the Ministry of Education and may be subject to change)