

Thorndon School Newsletter

3/2008

www.thorndon.school.nz
office@thorndon.school.nz

28 February 2008
principal@thorndon.school.nz

Without consultation, plans are frustrated

Action List

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Have you sent in your email address for the newsletter? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your child have an appropriate sunhat? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you want to be on the phone list? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you paid your school donation? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you paid your activity fee? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you ordered an Entertainment Book? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Dear Parents

Kia ora,

The other night at our Meet the Teacher evening I talked briefly about the new curriculum which must be implemented in schools by 2010. Two years is a very short time in which to familiarise ourselves with what is in many ways a radical departure from what we have been using for the past 15 years. Schools and teachers are going to find it a challenging exercise.

The previous curriculum consisting of a framework and a series of curriculum statements was a large, complex and prescriptive document which was very much outcomes focussed. The new curriculum, which is much less prescriptive, represents a significant shift in approach being a slim document which, through statements of principles, values, key competencies, and content 'essence statements' guides schools towards creating their own local curriculum. While this represents a significant change in approach it also looks back at a period when schools were guided by brief syllabus documents, using these as guidelines for writing their own school schemes of work.

In order to write these local curricula schools will be consulting with their communities and gathering ideas. We will use a range of methods to ensure that we get as much knowledge as possible. We will use short questionnaires through the newsletter, meet with parents, talk with children, and use web based surveys if we can arrange it. There will, inevitably, be disagreements and compromises but we hope that in the end we will arrive at a solution, an approach and a curriculum that will meet the needs of our community and, in particular, our children. Change is always a difficult process and when there is uncertainty there can be resistance. We will do our best to provide as much certainty as we can.

It is almost as inevitable that teachers will guide and lead much of the change because they have the most intimate knowledge of the curriculum and a deeper understanding of it because their work revolves around it. We may propose ideas for you to comment on, put forward suggestions for you to consider. We will listen and consider the responses and, with the board, will do our best over the next two years, to make sure that we write a local curriculum that answers the requirements of the New Zealand Curriculum, the Ministry of Education, the Education Review Office, our community and meets the needs of our children in a rapidly changing world. We all, teachers and parents, want our children to be successful, and to do this we will need to come to some sort of shared understanding over the next two years.

I will begin this week by putting in the newsletter the values that have been identified in the curriculum and the values that the school has in its charter, values that were arrived at through a period of consultation with parents over a number of years. These are towards the end of this newsletter.

Bill Sutton



THORNDON SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Term 1 Calendar

Feb 29	Year 5-8 to Festival performance.
Mar 3	Senior School on camp.
Mar 4	Year 5/6 – Ripa Rugby Tournament
Mar 6	Year 1-4 to Festival performance.
Mar 19	School swimming sports
Mar 21	Good Friday – school closed
Mar 24	Easter Monday – school closed
Mar 25	Easter Tuesday – school closed
Apr 8	Years 4-6 Soccer Tournament
Apr 15	Young Leaders' Day
Apr 15	BoT Meeting
Apr 18	Term ends – 3:00pm
May 5	Term 2 begins

Entertainment Books

I mentioned these in last week's newsletter and I emphasise that this source of fundraising is important to the school. The money we raise from this is enough, for example, to cover the cost of our PE equipment for the year.

We aim to sell one book per child, a target which would raise about \$2,500. We know that not everyone wants one of these books and we know that it is unrealistic to expect families with three children to take 3 books. This is why we ask you to try to interest friends and colleagues. You may be able to put up a poster at work and generate a few sales this way.

We also know that some people don't want the book and are reluctant to try to sell to friends. Some families, rather than buy a book they don't want, or try to sell it to someone else, have offered to donate to the school the \$11:00 we make from each \$55 book we sell. This is perhaps a cheaper and easier approach that some of you might like to consider.

Please let us know if you would prefer to do this. Order forms will come today and books will go out on April 3.

Library Books

There are still 14 children with books overdue from last year.

Please ask your child if he or she has an overdue slip and look for these books. If they can't be found please send a note or an email to the office or the library.

These children will not be able to borrow further books until the overdues are returned or we have heard from parents.

Thank you.

Jenny Potaka

Phone List

I mentioned in last week's newsletter that we intended to send home a phone list for each class and to include everyone in the class **unless we had a specific request not to do this.**

The deadline for getting these requests back to school is this Friday – **tomorrow** – and the lists will go out at the start of next week.

So far we have had two people ask that their number not be included. If you want to add your name to this list please let us know in the morning.

Warning

Some of you may have heard on the radio, seen on TV or read in the paper, that a known paedophile is in Wellington.

There is no suggestion that he has been anywhere near Thorndon School, and there is no immediate cause for alarm.

This might be a good time however, to think about reviewing, with your children, what they need to do when they encounter a situation that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe and how they can keep themselves safe.

This is something the school does as part of its Health programme and most children will know these things well.

There are a number of small things that can help to make things safer for children. They all know, for example, that they are not to leave school without express permission and when any children do leave the school grounds they do so with others, not on their own. Children walk to and from the bus depot and the station, and again, we would hope that they do this in groups or at least in pairs. It is worth noting that the greatest danger to children is not from strangers but safe and sensible practices can do no harm.

It would be a shame to allow something like this to deprive our children of some of the sense of trust and responsibility that they feel when they are allowed to walk to and from school, the bus or the train without their parents. With the right approach this should not happen.

Free Diving Lessons

Are available at Kilbirnie Pool with some top NZ divers.

This takes place on Sunday 9th March between 3:00pm and 5:00pm.

Anyone interested can get registration forms from Natasha Jackson.

These must be filled out and sent off **tomorrow.**

Sports Squad

We have chosen our squad of 12 and it was not easy. There are a small number of children who came very close and they have been told what it is we expect from them between now and the start of next term. If they manage to demonstrate the changes we have asked for then there is every possibility that they will join the squad in Term 2.

There were a large number of Year 7 children who applied and for many of these children we feel it is a little too early. We will meet with this group and talk about what we want to see over the rest of this year so that they can try again in 2009.

The squad has already started work with a session on Tuesday with Ben Christophers, a triathlete who not only took them through a training session but gave them some really good advice about how to train and how to race. With events such as the Weetbix Triathlon on at this time of the year this was a very timely session. A report from one of the squad appears below.

Congratulations to the following children:

Tailah Love	Zach Boyle
Lilliana Wiles	Lydia Whiting
Rebekah Curtis-Gunn	Chris Andrews
Harrison Clark	Zoe Poppelwell-Lukkien
Charlotte Edwards	Mithunan Sathiyandra
Alex Garvie	Alex Bremner

Our commiserations to those who were unsuccessful. With hard work they may have better luck next time.

Ben Christophers – Triathlete

On Tuesday 28th February, Ben Christophers, a professional triathlete came and talked to the Sports Squad about competing in triathlons. He gave us heaps of tips like how to transfer fast off your bike and onto your bike. He took us out for a practise run around some cones with the bike and we learnt how to turn it and control it with one hand.

It was really fun and we learnt heaps about competing in triathlons. It was great practise for the triathlons coming up. He gave us good training tips about how to balance good food and bad food, and fun and training.

Lydia Whiting

Successes

One of our children, Chris Andrews, competed at the New Zealand Junior National Swimming championships recently and had a very successful weekend.

Chris received 5 regional ribbons for coming 2nd in the 50m Freestyle and 100m backstroke as well as finishing 3rd in 3 other events. He achieved a top 10 overall finish nationally and is ranked 5th in the country in the 50m Freestyle.

Well done Chris, these are wonderful results.

Two other pupils from Thorndon also competed at the Nationals – Lilliana Wiles and Jonathan Rogers, and they too should be congratulated.

Milo Cricket Competition

Yesterday at 9:00am the Thorndon School cricket team headed to Ian-Galloway Park. It was a great location and a great day for cricket. We were facing Northland School. We lost the toss and were batting first. Team captain Zach Boyle had already decided the batting order. Jack and Ngawhera were opening. Our overall team batting score was over 100 (sorry but I can not confirm score). Our fielding was fantastic! Mithunan and Jackson took 3 wickets each, Natana took 2 wickets, Mikey and Zach took 1 each. Zach said he was very pleased with his team's performance. At the end of the day we were the winning team. Overall the team played 110%.

The team was very thankful to everybody who gave their time to help.

Natana Parata



Values – Thorndon School Charter Statement

Values
we share

Our values are used to guide the School in **all** its activities.

At Thorndon School we believe in:

- Achievement
- Respect for diversity
- Open communication
- Motivating students
- Supporting each other
- The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
- Inclusion

Values – New Zealand Curriculum

Students will be encouraged to value:

- **excellence**, by aiming high and by persevering in the face of difficulties;
- **innovation, inquiry, and curiosity**, by thinking critically, creatively, and reflectively;
- **diversity**, as found in our different cultures, languages, and heritages;
- **equity**, through fairness and social justice;
- **community and participation** for the common good;
- **ecological sustainability** which includes care for the environment;
- **integrity**, which involves being honest, responsible, and accountable and acting ethically;

and to **respect** themselves, others, and human rights.

You may like to comment on the similarities and differences between these two lists and make suggestions about the school's own identified values. You may want to make suggestions as to what should be in and what should be out. You may feel that we don't need anything other than the values identified in the curriculum. You may want to rate these values in what you see as an order of importance. Any response you care to give will help form our thinking as we move towards our own local curriculum.

At this early stage of what is likely to be a long consultation process I am happy to use whatever means we have available – currently paper and email.

Phone List

Please **DO NOT** put my/our phone number on the class phone list.

Name

Child's Name

Room Number

Email Newsletter

Please put me on the email list for the newsletter.

Name

Child's Name

Email address