

# Thorndon School Newsletter

12/2008

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22 May 2008  
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Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them.

Dalai Lama:

## Action List

- |   |                          |  |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Have you sent in your email address for the newsletter? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you sent in your school donation? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you paid your activity contribution?               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you collected your apples?        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you returned your Health Curriculum Survey?        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you give some time for Reading?    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Dear Parents

Kia ora

This being budget day I had intended to begin by commenting on what the budget might mean for schools but I am going to start instead with something that I think is much more significant in terms of what schools are trying to do.

On Tuesday, as you know we sent off a team of about 50 children to take part in the Central Zone Cross Country Competition. I am happy to report that 11 of these children will be going on to the Inter-zone Competition, a wonderful result. Congratulations to all the children in the team named last week but in particular to these 11 children, Josh Wight, Tabitha Dombroski, Connall Deacon, Brittany Antipas, Aliyah de la Mare, Olly Chiaroni, Nathan Stirling, Ben Rampton, Anna Caudwell, Lydia Whiting and Mithunan Sathiyandra.

But that was not what I really wanted to talk about either. Our vision for the school as stated in the charter is *to develop independent and caring thinkers and learners*. Among the values we identify as important to the school is *supporting each other*. On Tuesday one of our boys competing in the cross country stopped to help another runner who was struggling to manage an asthma attack. In doing so he almost certainly denied himself the opportunity to go on to the next stage of the competition. I would like to congratulate and commend Matt Robilliard for his actions on Tuesday. Even if none of our children had placed, Matt's actions would make this a particularly successful outing. Well done Matt, you should feel proud of yourself.

Back to the money. I am writing this newsletter before the budget has been read but a number of initiatives have already been announced. I hasten to say thank you to Mr Carter, the Minister of Education, for the 5% increase in Operations Grants for schools – over 5 years. Mr Carter appears puzzled and a little wounded by the less than effusive response from the sector. While any increase in funding is something to celebrate the general feeling is one of some disappointment. It is considerably less than we had hoped for and will not address the difficulties that almost all schools face in managing their budgets. In a school like ours a 5% increase will make a difference of about \$14,000, well short of the amount we need to pay for the extra staff we employ and to meet ICT costs. By the time you read this it is possible that we will now have other initiatives in the budget which will have a positive impact on schools and I have my fingers firmly crossed.

Bill Sutton

## Parent Help

We have had two volunteers for a Parent Reading programme and would love to get a few more people willing to donate perhaps 45 minutes once a week to hear some of our younger children read. If we can get enough parents to donate enough time we will be able to get some continuity over the week. We would give you some training in how to go about this so you would not be going in blind. Please get in touch if you think you might be able to help.

## THORNDON SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

### **Term 2 Calendar**

As the term develops we are adding activities to the calendar. New items are written in red.

May 28	Chess Tournament St Marks School
May 29	Rooms 1 & 2 to Karori Wildlife Sanctuary
Jun 2	Queen's Birthday – school closed
Jun 3	Senior School to Te Papa for Matariki
Jun 5	Envirogroup to Macalister Park for Arbor Day
Jun 5	Storylines performance at school
Jun 5	Group to Te Papa for World Environment Day
Jun 10	Wellington Girls College – School in Action – Open Day
Jun 23	Room 7 to Te Papa
Jun 25	Class Act Opera at school
Jul 4	Term Ends – 3:00pm

### **New Pupils**

We have two new children this week. They are:

Milly Ware	Y1	Room 8 - Harakeke
Daphne Skagen	Y8	Room 5 - Koromiko

I would like to welcome both families to Thorndon School and hope that they enjoy and profit from their association with the school.

### **Blogs**

Thank you to all those people who are responding to the class blogs.

These responses make the effort that goes into creating and maintaining the blogs all worthwhile and children can see a point to the exercise.

If you haven't already had a look you should try to do so over the next week or so as all sites are being updated over that period.

You may find that you get a more accurate idea of what is happening in your child's room than your child reports. The "What are you doing in school?" "Nothing" conversation should vanish. You will know enough to be able to have a meaningful dialogue with your child.

### **School Fees/Money**

Everyone should have received an "invoice" by now and we can expect payment to begin flooding in!

Some of you will have paid between the time the invoice was prepared and the time you received it. Please just flick us an email with the details – date and amount – of the payments so we can make the adjustments.

### **Open Days**

I have already mentioned some open days being held by secondary schools in the area and yesterday we got notice of the Onslow College Open Evening.

These are a really good way for parents and children to get some feeling for what a school is like and what it might offer.

We will also be getting visits from staff at a number of secondary schools and your children will bring home prospectuses and information that will help you make a decision about the right secondary school for your child.

27 May	St Mary's College Open Morning.
10 June	Wellington Girls College Open Day
24 June	Onslow College – 6:30pm
24 June	Athena Montessori Open Morning
1 July	Wellington High School Open Evening.

### **Health Curriculum Consultation**

We are still receiving health surveys and are delighted to do so. Please don't feel that it is too late!

We have received about 11% of possible returns and a minimum of 20% would make us feel a lot more comfortable in making some decisions and generalisations about what our particular community feels is important in the Health and PE curriculum.

I know that sometimes these things get lost in the hurly burly of day to day living so we are sending home a copy of the survey with this newsletter for anyone who can't find the original.

If you get the newsletter electronically you can still access the survey on the website using the link for the newsletter before last.

<http://www.thorndon.school.nz/documents/newsletters/2008/newsletter1008.pdf>

## THORNDON SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

### **Cross Country**

On Tuesday Thorndon School took a bus over to Macalister Park for the Central Zone Cross Country. They did very well and they ran their best. The children represented the school very well. They also had lots of fun running and putting the pressure on other schools.

Matt Robilliard

### **Story Lines Festival**

The annual Storylines Festival gets underway shortly and there will be a Free Family Day on June 8<sup>th</sup> to kick it off.

This day will be held at Te Whaea National Dance and Drama Centre between 10:00am and 3:00pm. Children can listen to talks and interact with authors and illustrators such as Joy Cowley, Norman Bilborough, Leon Davidson, Scott Tulloch and Babette Cole.

There will be displays, storytelling and performances.

Brochures are available from the office.

### **Breakfast**

We do our best through the school's health programme, our involvement in Active Schools and in the Healthy Heroes programme to promote healthy living.

From time to time we hear from children that they are not eating breakfast and from a purely selfish point of view we would encourage everyone to make sure that their children have a decent breakfast before they arrive at school. It makes a significant difference to behaviour and learning.

### **Writer's Workshop**

On Tuesday five children went with Adele to the Museum of City and Sea for a writers' workshop to work with a New Zealand author. We did all kinds of writing about what we could feel, hear, see and smell in the Bond Store in the museum.

Everyone had a fantastic time.

The five children who went were:

Lakan, Cameron, Isadora, Sian and Julia.

Cameron Headifen

### **New Zealand Book Awards**

Tina Matthews is the author of the picture book, "Out of the Egg". We got to meet her in our school hall and ask her some questions. We learnt how she came up with the idea and how she made the pictures.

Tina showed us the drafts and told us about how she took five years to make the book and about how hard it was to get it published.

Her book is in the New Zealand Book Awards and we are hoping it will go further.

Datu Beech and Kenken Cameron



Tina Matthews – a first time published author shares the ideas and techniques she used to create her book – 'Out Of The Egg' which is part of the NZ Post Book Awards. Pupils were able to view her prints, learn about the techniques of book writing, enjoy listening to her read her story and ask many interesting questions.