

# Thorndon School Newsletter

7/2009

[www.thorndon.school.nz](http://www.thorndon.school.nz)  
[office@thorndon.school.nz](mailto:office@thorndon.school.nz)

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[principal@thorndon.school.nz](mailto:principal@thorndon.school.nz)

Winning isn't everything, but the will to win is everything

Vince Lombardi

## Action List

- |   |                          |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Do you want to buy some bottled water?            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you sent in your donation?                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can you help with our wish list?                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you sent in the signed Internet agreement? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have a sewing machine you can let us have? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you help with the art auction?              | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Dear Parents

Kia ora

Bullying, and violence in schools, have been the subject of some scrutiny in recent days with the release of a report by Cindy Kiro, the Children's Commissioner, and the Behaviour Summit held in Wellington this week.

Bullying is an ongoing issue for schools and, in common with most, we like to think that we do not have a problem. This does not mean that from time to time there will not be incidents but we are confident that it is not part of the culture of the school. We are satisfied that our processes are sufficiently robust and that we deal with incidents effectively. There was however one statement which resonated and that was that a great deal of the bullying that goes on occurs "beneath the teachers' radar". This is true not only for bullying but for many other activities that go on in schools. There is an interesting book called "The Hidden Lives of Learners" by Graeme Nuttall which discusses just this.

If schools are to manage the issue of bullying successfully the relationship between pupils and staff needs to be one of trust so that children feel confident in approaching teachers, confident that they will be taken seriously and confident that the school will deal with the problem. Again, we like to think that these relationships exist. The corollary to this is that when children approach teachers about bullying they need to have a genuine concern. We quite often talk about resilience and sometimes children identify behaviours as bullying which really are not and their response may be more a reflection of their own lack of resilience than of bullying.

A few years ago we surveyed children about bullying and it was a useful exercise as it enabled us to identify a few individuals who were causing problems for other children – one or two of them beneath our radar. We plan to repeat this exercise shortly.

The Behaviour Summit was looking at a range of issues and bullying was just one. There seems to be little doubt that the incidence of violence in schools has increased over the last few years. While I don't think we have major problems with behaviour we have experienced a change in attitude with intimidatory language and behaviour becoming more common. Most staff over the past 10 years will have been sworn at and sometimes hit or kicked by children at school. These behaviours are seen in children as young as 5 and while we seem to have some success in moderating the behaviour as they get older, it can be wearing! Society tends to excuse behaviours and language from young children which would not be acceptable from adolescents or adults and might even result in a complaint being laid with police. We probably do children a disservice when we do this and lay up later trouble for ourselves.

We will wait with interest to see what strategies and recommendations come from the summit.

Bill Sutton

## Donations

If your school donation is paid before March 31<sup>st</sup>, the end of the tax year, you will be able to claim it as a deduction.

**Art Auction**

Thorndon has a name as a school which places a high value on the Arts and we often hear teachers from other schools refer to us as “the Art School”. This is something we are proud of and is a point of difference for us.

We are the same as other schools however in the need to raise money to help fund programmes, resources and staff. We have our major fund raising activity, the Thorndon Fair, in December and over terms 1 and 2 we ask parents to sell the Entertainment Book. Other, smaller, fund raising activities crop up from time to time and we try to take advantage of them.

This year we would like to do something which links both – the visual arts and the need to raise money – by holding an art auction in Term 3. We have pencilled in this for Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August.

We would like to get a piece of art from each family for this auction - paintings, sculpture, jewellery, photographs. This need not be something you actually own yourself. We are sure that at least some of our community must have contacts with people in the art world who might be able to provide a piece for this auction. Maybe the PM could sign something for us! Or maybe not! We will approach others who have a connection to the school or our community. Sir Michael Fowler has a gallery in Thorndon, Michael Tuffery was once a pupil here, Dennis Berdinner, the initiator of Wellingtons Sculpture Symposium had a daughter here, Neal Palmer has been our artist in residence for years now. There are sure to be others. We will also include some original work by children produced especially for the auction.

We would like to get a group of interested parents together to plan and put this evening together. If you are interested please get in touch with Bex Brown – [rebecca@thorndon.school.nz](mailto:rebecca@thorndon.school.nz) . We could have a great social evening and, if it is done well, raise a considerable amount of money. It has worked well in other communities.



**Soccer**

**Girls-only Football Leagues.**

Thorndon School has four parent volunteers who are willing to coach and manage a girls’ only football team, but we are short on numbers. If you would like your daughter to play please let me know as soon as possible.

Possible teams: Under 6s, U8, U10, U12.

When: Every Sunday morning from 26 April until the end of August.

Where: On the brand new artificial pitch at Nairnville Park in Ngaio.

Jane Stocker

[jane@thorndon.school.nz](mailto:jane@thorndon.school.nz)

**Term 1 Calendar**

Mar 23	30 Year 5/6 children to Westpac Sports
Mar 23	Trainee teachers start in the school.
Mar 25	In school soccer tournament
Mar 27	Earth Hour for Schools.
Apr 1	New Curriculum Information Evening.
Apr 3	Inquiry Learning Display
Apr 7	BoT Meeting – 6:00 staff room
Apr 7	Central Zone Swimming
Apr 8	Kids Lit Quiz
Apr 8	Term ends – 3:00pm
Apr 9	Teacher only day
Apr 27	Term 2 begins

Next term’s calendar is beginning to fill already and I will start to put it in the newsletter from next week.

***New Staff***

I would like to welcome **Kate Minto** as a teacher aide. Kate, who is taking over from Regina Singh for the next 7 weeks was due to start last Monday but has been laid low by a viral infection since the weekend. We hope she will be able to start work on Monday so I will welcome her now in anticipation!

Regina, currently working as a teacher aide in Room 2, will change hats on Monday and become a teacher trainee working in Room 5. Regina is doing a teacher training course online and as part of her course needs to spend time in classrooms. Her next teaching practice later in the year will be in another school.

I would also like to welcome **Clare Lee** who will start work as a teacher aide in a week or two. Having 2, and sometimes 3 teacher aides will allow us to offer support to a wider group of children, and we look forward to using the skills, interests and experiences Kate and Clare will bring to their positions.

***Envirogroup***

Last week I mentioned the envirogroup as one of our enrichment activities but didn't publish the list because at the time of writing I didn't have it. The names were announced at the assembly last Thursday and the full group is:

- |                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Sarah Hale             | Lakan Beech     |
| Renwick Sinclair       | Olivia Yeo      |
| Aimee Rudkin           | Asia Brownlie   |
| Riley Tiata            | Olive Brown     |
| Georgina Lomax-Sawyers | Tom Self        |
| Connor Smith           | Charquera Cribb |
| Harry Lomax-Sawyers    | Angela Singh    |
| Amy Turner             | Jacob Alexander |
| Hannah Hall            | Meg Gleadow.    |

Each room is represented and all these children had to write applications to be in the group. Some of these applications were fantastic and made for some very difficult decisions. Congratulations to all of them.

***Discovery Time***

We have already mentioned Discovery time and asked for various bits and pieces. Thank you to those people who have been able to send something in to help.

Another request. The middle school would love to have a sewing machine – in working order. Maybe someone has an old machine sitting around home, maybe someone has access to a machine that we could get cheaply.

Please let us know if you can help.

***Dental Clinic***

As most of you will be aware, the School Dental Service parks a caravan at the school each year and children are examined and treated here at school.

The caravan will be here from June 8 until August 28.

***School Banking***

Forms for school banking went home a fortnight ago and we have had a number of them back. These children's accounts will be opened shortly. If you haven't sent one back don't worry -it is never too late.

If you have any questions about school banking with ASB please give Julie, our accounts manager, a call.



***Entertainment Book***

There has been a fantastic response to the chance to order early and get some extra coupons which can be used immediately.

This offer is still open. \$55 per book

***Water***

Just a reminder that we have cartons of water available for sale.

This Springfresh Water can be bought from the school at \$30 for a 24 bottle carton or \$1:50 per bottle for fewer than 24 bottles.

***Internet Forms***

Only about half the school has returned the signed internet agreements and without these children will not be allowed to access the school's ICT resources including classroom computers and laptops.

The forms can be downloaded from the website at:

- <http://www.thorndon.school.nz/documents/JuniorInternetAgreement.pdf> for Y 1 - 4 and
- <http://www.thorndon.school.nz/documents/SeniorInternetAgreement.pdf> for Y 5 - 8

**Kia Ora Khalid**

Yesterday my class went to the Capital E Festival. Of all the shows we saw, the opera “Kia Ora Khalid” in the Opera House was my favourite. It all started with a game of Touch. The girls Titiana and Tre were winning 3 to 1 to Tom. Just then, Khalid, the new boy, came over and asked if he could play. Tom said he couldn’t play and the girls said he could. Finally, Tom gave in and said Khalid could play if he told them why he came to New Zealand. Khalid told them of the bombs that killed all his beloved ones. Tom said it was just a sob story, but Tre believed him. Titiana asked why she believed the sad story, so Tre told them of beautiful Cambodia where her grandfather had almost died. This reminded Titiana of her favourite uncle, Sio, who was killed by a suicide terrorist. Then Tom remembers that his grandfather was a refugee, just like Khalid, and they realise they are all the same. This was an educational, well-acted play and I loved it.

By Megan Steen, Room 8

**Swimming Sports**

Yesterday I reluctantly missed the swimming sports for the second year in a row with a meeting at the Ministry getting in the way! I am not sure that staff believe the reluctance but I would like to have been there to see them take the Hind Cup by what was apparently the narrowest of margins!



It will be properly engraved, polished up and pointed to when the occasion demands! The students are still ahead with 5 wins in 9 years. We will have to change our recruitment strategy to take more account of this event!

**Cricket Tournament**

Excitement filled the air on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>, as a Year 5 / 6 cricket tournament was held at MacAlister Park. The children representing Thorndon School included Connall, Joshua W, Shaun, Datu, Oliver, Lakan, Arvalan and Samuel.

Games were played with a super soft ball and plastic bats. This made it a lot easier and took the nerves off some of the players. An enormous sun poured down on the field relieving us of the dew we would have otherwise slipped on. Smashing the ball at every chance, we wasted our first team, (The Smelly Armpits) 56 – 22. Coming first equal in the tournament we had to play the best team in our second game. Tension filled our heads as we played the game. We gave it our best, striking and throwing as hard as we could but they proved too good in the end.

The team really enjoyed the tournament and they’re anxious to go back next year.

Reported by Datu Beech

**Capital E**

The bus pulled in and waited for Room 2 and other classes to jump on. The trip wasn’t really long or boring. It was quite fast. Once we arrived a Capital E member came to guide us. The first show was called Luminous Edge. It had juggling, lots of patterns, a wizard and lots of strange language that the juggling man said throughout the show.

Next up was Petting Zoo. Not the type with cute little rabbits and lambs but dinosaur puppets that were large and life like. After that was a musical called Kia Ora Khalid. It was about a group of people playing touch rugby with someone from a different country wanting to play, but one person doesn’t let him because he is a refugee from Afghanistan. Then they all ended up talking about their families in the wars.

My favourite show was Kia Ora Khalid. It really showed the characters personality and some parts were funny.

Reported by Ana Kovalenko

