

Thorndon School Newsletter

6/2010

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To live a creative life we must lose our fear of being wrong.

Joseph Chillons Pearce

Action List

Do we have your email address for the newsletter?

Have you sent in your child's internet agreement?

Have you ordered an entertainment book?

Does your child have an appropriate sunhat?

Dear Parents

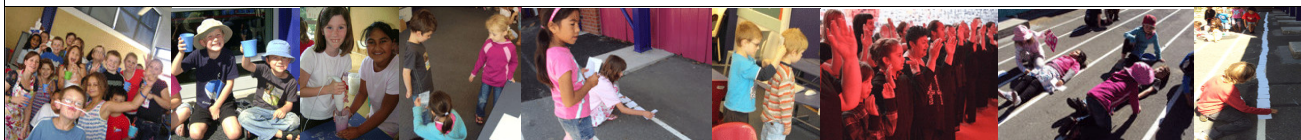
This term is shorter than usual and we are already glancing over our shoulders at a rapidly approaching last day. The school is buzzing with activity at the moment with classes and individuals focusing on fitness, healthy eating and healthy growing. The senior school has been on a couple of fairly strenuous walks in preparation for their camp in Term 2 with more to come before the end of term. Some individual pupils are also making great efforts to improve their fitness by training during lunchtimes and in weekends. The Year 3/4 classes are out walking every morning and really enjoying their trips up Tinakori Hill. Today though the junior school is hosting a group of producers who will talk about what they produce and how they do it, there is a demonstration of fish filleting and at the end of the morning Al Brown from Logan Brown will cook the children fish sandwiches for lunch. Staff are looking forward to sneaking into the line at lunchtime.

We have now finished all our initial testing using PAT Maths, Reading Comprehension, Reading Vocabulary, and Listening, as well as STAR reading tests and SSpA (a spelling test). This is a very comprehensive battery of assessment which gives teachers very good information about individual achievement. We can get a picture of individual strengths and weaknesses which, together with teacher knowledge, helps to plan the next steps for children. This information will be communicated to parents as part of the three way conferences that begin early in the new term. The assessments also provide us with very useful data about the performance of cohorts within the school and of the school as a whole giving the Board the information it needs to make decisions about Resourcing. Over the years we have consistently achieved very well in literacy and this year is no exception with 74% to 80% of children (depending on which particular test we are looking at) achieving at Stanine 5 or above. In Maths, which we achieve at an entirely satisfactory rate with 64% of children at Stanine 5 or above we do not appear to be quite as numerate as we are literate. There could be many reasons for the difference and we will explore this as a staff. I should add that these results have nothing to do with National Standards and until we have attended some workshops and have a lot more clarity about the alignment of these assessment tools with the standards we would hesitate to make any judgements about what this means for the school's performance and for the performance of individuals.

You may remember that I mentioned in an earlier newsletter that I hoped to attend a TED conference at Oxford University as part of my sabbatical in Term 3. I heard on Tuesday night that my application had been accepted and so I can really start to plan things now. While the programme has not yet been put together I am anticipating being immersed in a river of ideas over a wide range of disciplines from people who are at the top of their fields. Past speakers have included Stephen Hawking, Richard Dawkins, Isabel Allende, Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, Gordon Brown, James Cameron, Bill Clinton – the list goes on through to the x's, y's and z's. I am enormously excited at the prospect of spending four days listening to speakers of this calibre and talking about ideas with the other people attending. While little of it will be directly about education I know that I will come back buzzing with ideas and in danger of boring everyone to death. Staff might not be quite so excited – there is sometimes in schools an "Oh, God, he's been to another conference" reaction when principals come back from conferences and start talking about trying something new. It's probably a good thing for everyone else that it all happens early on in my time away. For anyone who is interested the link to TED Talks is <http://www.ted.com/talks>

Another glorious day in Wellington. It's a pity the Phoenix are not playing here but we will keep our fingers crossed for another thrilling performance.

Bill Sutton



Internet Agreements

We are down to 11 children without signed Internet agreements and I would really like to get these all back by the end of this week, **tomorrow**.

All these children got a reminder and a copy of the agreement last week but if you have lost it you can get one by using the links below.

<http://www.thorndon.school.nz/documents/JuniorInternetAgreement.pdf> for Years 1 - 4

<http://www.thorndon.school.nz/documents/SeniorInternetAgreement.pdf> for Years 5 - 8.

Entertainment Books are coming to Thorndon School



Thorndon School is pleased to be offering the new edition of the Entertainment book to members as part of our fundraising campaign for this year.

Entertainment Books contain hundreds of 25-50% off and two-for-one offers from popular restaurants,

cinemas, hotels, the arts, and leisure activities. The sale of each book will **raise \$12 for Thorndon School** and contribute much needed funds to our fundraising targets for this year. The books will be available from the end of March, but we will be taking pre-orders from the end of February. We have a limited amount of presale bonus offers worth over \$150 including offers from



- Lone Star (Tory St)
- Reading Cinemas
 - Sierra Café
- Mondo Espresso
- La Marche Francois
- The Hurricanes

Please contact Hela at the School Office to place your order and snap up these bonus offers!
Email office@thorndon.school.nz or Ph; 04 472 4267

New Children

We have one new pupil to welcome this week. She is:

Eva Taumata-Te Runa	Y 1	Room 2 - Harakeke
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Eva is already reasonably familiar with the school as her mother, Kahu, has been coming in with Whaea Lisa for the past year to teach Te Reo and Tikanga Maori.

We welcome them both to the school community.

Extension and Enrichment

My apologies to *Amy Turner* whose name was missed off the Young Leaders list last week. She must have been a little bit puzzled having been told she was in and then to find her name was not on the list. Congratulations to Amy.

The mental efforts of the Sports Squad obviously paid off last week with the Phoenix through after another extended and heart-stopping game. They may have to wish even harder this weekend.

Parent Help

We have had a couple of parents contact Leris Everitt already about helping with Reading. Thank you.

We have room for more if you can free yourself for an hour or so during the week. We do not want you to teach but to read to children. Regular reading to children can have a positive effect on improving comprehension skills and developing an appreciation for literature. Leris, the Resource Teacher: Literacy, will help select books and talk to parents about what is needed. Please get in touch with either Leris at leris@thorndon.school.nz or let your child's classroom teacher know.

As I mentioned last week junior and middle school classes involved with Discovery Learning each week need as many adults to help as we can get. Children cook, garden, paint, construct, build – they do all sorts of things. If you think you could help please get in touch with the classroom teacher.

We are still looking for a gardener to help with a gardening group maybe once a week.

On a related topic – discovery and learning in real contexts - I am after an old motor mower engine. It doesn't have to be working – in fact it is probably better if it doesn't, and it doesn't matter if it is still attached to a mower. Two stroke or four stroke and we wouldn't be unhappy if we got more than one.

Water

There is still plenty of water available if any of you are interested in buying a case.

There are 24 500 ml bottles in each case and we are selling these at \$30 per case which works out at \$1:25 per bottle.

If you are interested please give Hela a call

The Other Game

NZRL and Wellington Rugby League Is bring a Roots Camp to Wellington, hosted by Ruben Wiki and Tony Kemp, teo of New Zealand's Rugby League legends.

March 21
Pelorus Trust Sports House
Hutt Park Road
Seaview

The Kids programme starts at 2:00pm and will involve a skills session followed by a League Touch Tournament.

For adults there are opportunities to do the free "Mini-Mod Certificate" and the First Aid Officers Training Course at a cost of \$55.

For more information phone 560 0361 or email wrl@wrl.org.nz or visit the website at www.wrl.org.nz

Term 1 Calendar

Mar 11	Sausage Sizzle – middle and senior
Mar 11	Adopt-a-Producer visit to Junior School
Mar 12	Nominations close
Mar 12	Y 5/6 to Arts Festival
Mar 12	Board elections – nominations close
Mar 16	Central Zone Cricket
Mar 18	Market Day – camp fund-raiser.
Mar 19	Year 5/6 to Arts Festival
Mar 22	Stadium Sports – Year 5/6
Mar 23	School Swimming Sports
Mar 25	BoT Meeting - 6:30 staff room.
Mar 26	Voting closes for BoT elections
Mar 30	Junior School to Wairarapa. (R 1-4)
Apr 1	Election results declared.
Apr 1	Term ends – 3:00
Apr 19	Term 2 begins

From next week I will begin putting in a few of the known activities for Term 2.

More about the Other Game.

Harbour City Rugby League
Registration and Open Day
Sunday 14 March

Martin Luckie Park.

Registration 1:00 – 1:30
Games and competitions 1:30 – 2:30
Sausage sizzle to follow.

The juniors have had a fantastic day. They have seen fish scaled, gutted and filleted, they know all about baking bread, they have planted seeds, tried some cheeses, learned about olives, prepared the filleted fish for cooking by Al Brown of Logan-Brown, and finished off by eating a fish sandwich that they have helped prepare. I would really like to thank Jo Freeman, mother of two of our children, who organised a lot of what happened today as well as Al Brown and the various producers who gave up their time to come in and make this such a wonderfully successful day. All about learning in real contexts.

Fish Filleting

Getting in among the scales, guts and gore of real fresh fish.



Sunhats

We are almost – but not quite – winning the sunhat battle - and it is a battle.

The children are generally co-operative about wearing hats when they go outside and this is great. The problem arises when they don't have a hat. Most of the time this is not a great problem as classrooms are open all day most days.

From time to time though teachers decide, for a range of reasons, that rooms will be closed at lunchtime. Our classes frequently go outside during the school day and we are often out and about in the city, walking here and there. That is when we find that some children do not have a hat at school.

I am sure that in most cases it is not because the children don't have hats but because they have left it at home. We want the children developing the key competency "Managing Self" which is where this fits in the curriculum but there needs to be some scaffolding from home and school.

Your help is appreciated.

School Holidays

These are rushing up on us and here is the first of what will no doubt be many notices about programmes.

School Holiday Computer Classes

Wellington and Lower Hutt 1 to 5 day holiday computer classes for students aged 5-15. From essential computer skills to advanced classes in game creation, animations, graphics, web design, filmmaking and video editing, program or build and upgrade computers. For further information call Ed Brown on 499 2211 or www.grandtraining.co.nz.

Thorndon Holiday Programme

Some of the ASC workers will be providing a holiday programme but it will run out of the pavilion at Wellington Girls' College rather than from our school hall.

Details from ASC.

Producers' Visit

Seed planting, Learning about olives, Bread making.



Job done



Another celebrity chef



Ready to sprout