

Issue 176 20 May 2010

From the Principal...

Dear All

What a great couple of weeks on the sports front. Our netball teams played so well and achieved great results at the recent Eastern Zone netball tournament. Well done players, coaches and supporters you certainly showcased much of what is so special about our school. Speaking of showcase, last week's school cross country was an awesome event. Once again the attitude, determination and effort displayed by virtually every child was fabulous. On behalf of the children and teachers, a big thank you to all the parents that were able to come along and support.

We have had a number of new entrant children start school since the last Steeple Rock. A very special welcome to, Dimitri Economou, Toby Stanford-Dikvert, Louie Beverley, Madeleine Pickering and Oscar Cranshaw. The big buddies are, Ruby Linney, Katerina Somerville, William Bowler and Louis Davis.

Congratulations:

1. Principal Awards

The following children were awarded Principal Certificates at our last hui.

Rm	Yr		Rm	Yr	
1	7 & 8	Lucy Robertson - wonderful self-management, being a reliable friend and Junior Associate	10	3 & 4	Jasmine Kemp- best effort and great focus
2	7 & 8	Jette Bowler - meeting all deadlines, striving to improve	11	3 & 4	Sol Fenwick-Croft: Perseverance and effort in cross country training
3	7 & 8	Georgia Cutfield - enthusiasm for learning, great self-management	12	3 & 4	Zuni Preece- perseverance and self motivation in cross country training
4	2	Dannielle Kan - responsible, hardworking, kind class member	13	3 & 4	Emma Hull - excellent work in reading
5	2	Cody Lokotui - setting a clear writing goal then working hard to achieve it	14	5 & 6	Rosie Dossor - calm and positive under pressure
6	1	Ella Court- hard work in writing	15	5 & 6	Jessica Mellsop - being a determined, self-motivated learner
7	0	No class yet	16	5 & 6	Oliver Malthus - working hard to stay on task to produce some great writing
8	1	Davide Lubich - following through on his plan Josh McRae - hard work and great progress in maths	17	5 & 6	Jasmine Bhula—Always giving her best.
9	1	William Parsons - Writing and attempting new words			

2. **Netball:** Congratulations to the following girls that have made the Motu Kairangi Representative teams.

Year 8 Development: Alice Walker, Kellie Humphries, Ngaere Down-Jenkins, Bridgette Midgley

Year 7 Rep: Paris Fitisemanu

Year 7 Development: Kayla Gyde, Lily Tew, Jesse Moore

In addition the following girls that made the second round of trials: Erana James, Brearna Sandri, Kate Nota, Phoebe Baigent and Olive White-Yule.

Well done everyone.

Seatoun School is really cool!

Home Learning & Homework:

Some of you may have heard the Insight programme about homework on National Radio last Sunday morning or Monday evening. The programme aimed to inform listeners about the value of homework and then the pros and cons of 'traditional' homework against home learning challenge type programmes such as our TRUMP Challenge. Firstly I would like to acknowledge how well students Phoebe Baigent, Crosby Millar and Baxter Robb and parent Karen Millar spoke. Overall I think the programme provided a balanced view. A couple of points about our school that weren't made, or were incorrectly reported are:

- We have a combination of compulsory homework and the optional TRUMP Challenge.
- We have not lost any children as a result of the TRUMP Challenge. However in the past there have been a couple of occasions when parents have told me that they were taking their child/ren to another school because we didn't set enough homework and consequences were not strictly enforced for children that did not complete their homework.
- If you would like to listen to this programme there is a link from the school website.

Leaving School Early for After School Activities:

This year we have had an increasing number of children deciding to leave school early to attend after school sports, cultural and other activities. One of our biggest struggles is trying to fit an ever bigger curriculum into the school day. It is not acceptable for children to dismiss themselves, sometimes 20 minutes before the end of the day, so that they can get to the next activity- this certainly gives the message that school isn't really that important. Once we looked deeper into this matter it appeared that most children will 'make their next appointment' if they catch the 2.58pm bus. Parents are required to inform the school in writing (email ok) if their child needs to catch this bus and we will ensure they are dismissed in time to do so. We have also contacted the bus company to remind drivers not to depart from the school stop prior to 2.58pm.

Social Networking - Facebook, Bebo, Cell phone, YouTube

Recently we have had a few cases of bullying and inappropriate use of these social network tools. In the Dominion Post on Wednesday 19 May there was a good article, "Experts to grapple with teen traumas," that described teenagers living on a 'powderkeg' created by complex social networks and physical development outpacing mental development. This article talked about how difficult it must be for a 15 year old nowadays. Our experience tells us that most of our Y7&8 children are using these social networks, sometimes inappropriately and this is starting to have some negative repercussions at school. Given some of the content, I am fairly sure most parents would be completely unaware of what their daughters and sons may be 'saying' or being exposed to. The current situation is unacceptable; it is disruptive to learning, it creates uncertainty and an unsafe environment and it is incredibly time consuming for staff and myself to sort out.

It is critical that all parents are fully aware of what is happening and that clear ground rules are set. I want to remind all parents that if they want their son or daughter to bring a cell phone to school then a letter informing the teacher is required. The phone must be handed in to the teacher on arrival at school and then collected prior to going home at the end of the day.

Some suggested actions, please:

- Think carefully as to why you think your child now requires bringing a phone to school, it hasn't been necessary until a few years ago- what has changed?
- Reserve the right to randomly check cell phones, facebook pages, etc, and do this regularly.
- Connect your child's facebook page to your email address. You can then see any messages being sent to them via facebook.
- Monitor computer use, including regularly checking the history of sites visited.
- Set rules as to when children can have access to these things e.g. no use of the computer when you are not home, no using cell phones after a certain time at night.
- Be aware of how much time your children are involved in social networking and set 'reasonable' limits.
- Monitor the types of television programmes and computer games your children are exposed to.
- Monitor your child's moods and behaviours - are they looking, acting differently? Why?
- Don't be afraid to say 'no' or to follow-up on agreed consequences if ground rules are not adhered to.

These children are growing up in a vastly different world. Often they are not able to comprehend the full consequences of what they say or do. They need support, guidance and boundaries - it isn't always easy, but without them the results can be disastrous.

Finally, a reminder that Y5&6 take the spotlight in tomorrow's hui. It is also Open Morning for our Y5&6 Rotations and Y7&8 Rongotai Enrichment programmes.



From the Board...

Change of Watch

As we, the retiring Board members (Letizea, Sandie, Helen, Simon and Cath) step down from our responsibilities, we would like to congratulate and welcome our newly elected Board members:

Richard ABBOTT, Sarah BACON, Mark BATES, Suzie BOGNOR (re-elected) and Justine BONNER.

We would like to thank all candidates for putting their names forward. We appreciate your continued passion and enthusiasm for Seatoun School.

A comprehensive formal induction process is planned for the new Board which will include both in-house and STA (School Trustees Association) workshops. As Marion Hair and Susan Kliffen will be acting as co-principals later in the year, they will also be attending training with the new Board and attending all forthcoming Board meetings.

AGM and Meeting Held Tuesday 18th May

On Tuesday evening, members of both the new and old Board attended the AGM, immediately followed by the bi-termly Board meeting. The AGM formally presents the Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2009. The content of this Annual Report has already been discussed and agreed upon at earlier meetings and this is more a formality before sending to the Department of Education. A copy of the Annual report is available from the office.

The meeting following the AGM included regular agenda items such as the Principals report, strategic plan and property. The library, food technology, PE/Health, Integration and ICT provided the focus for the curriculum reports. For this Steeple Rock we have chosen to focus on ICT.

As leader of the ICT team, Tim Kong gave a comprehensive update on where the school is at with regards to ICT and indication of where things are heading in the future. A key message was, that expenditure on ICT has and will continue to be teaching and learning focus i.e. to meet specific needs rather than to have the "latest and greatest" for the sake of it.

- The recently introduced formal contract with Silicon Systems has meant a more structured approach to our hardware maintenance. The improved service delivery has significantly reduced the pressure on the ICT team allowing them more energy to focus on their teaching responsibilities. 6 new workstations have been purchased. The old

additional workstations were also purchased in 2009, and a further 8 will be replaced in 2011. The computing requirements for the relocatable classrooms have also been planned and are being catered for. Software has been purchased for both MACs and PCs where possible so that the user has a similar experience on both. The children's experience of using computers across the school range from publishing their work at years 1/2, basic computer skills at years 3/4, using the computer for research at years 5 to 8 and hardware problem solving issues at years 7/8.

During this term a decision will be made about purchasing a new student management software system which will allow the teachers to maximise the assessment data they collect in a "once-in, many ways out" context. The website is running well with parent and teacher feedback being very positive. A particular bonus has been the reduced overhead to teachers to supply and re-supply notices.

Helen, Simon, Suzie, Sandie and Cath would like to say a few special "thank you"s:

- To Letizea, for being an excellent chairperson for 6 years. We understand how many hours you have put into your role and how important your level headed approach has been as chair.
- To Pete and all the staff at school. For managing the school so well and making our job so much easier.
- To Jason, for being a great staff rep and always with a sense of humour.
- To Anne, for keeping us all organised.
- To you, the parents, for creating such wonderful children in the first place!



Library News

Before I begin I'd like to extend a number of thank you's to the following people: firstly I'd like to congratulate the two teams of children who took part in the Kids' Lit Quiz this term. All ten students worked very hard during term 1 to prepare for the day and I thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm. Well done on such fantastic results! Secondly I'd like to thank the current librarians who have simply stepped up to the job at hand and kept the library looking lovely. They are so efficient I believe they must be taking night classes in librarianship to amaze me. Thirdly thank you to those wonderful helpers (parents and staff) who give their time to assist me in the library and resource room. Without you I'd possibly be lost in a sea of du-rased and readers! Finally many thanks to all the families who donated beautifully conditioned books to the library during the gala build-up - these have been processed and are now integrated into the library selection.

Favourite Titles:

During the first Term I purchased a few books within the series 'Zac Power'. The books are great for boys and range in level from Year 1 to Year 5. I was interested to note some scrabbling for them to begin with and received some positive parent feedback on the easier levels (yellow dots) regarding reading at home. Literally within a week I believe I had the entire Year 1 - 4 population of boys stalking me in the hope I had a Zac Power book hidden in my pocket. I watched these boys talk excitedly during their class library time about the series, the characters, which ones they had read, organising to swap the books in the weeks to come. So I purchased more, many more. And do you think I have seen one of them since they hit the shelves? I felt it necessary to spread the enthusiasm for this series into your homes because if you haven't been hit with the fever, you should check these books out. You are welcome to see me and I can show off a couple of the different levels ... that's if I can locate one. The following titles/series of books are also worth checking out:

***Daisy Meadows: Rainbow Magic Series (fairies)** - There must be thousands of these in the series. Billions even. And every girl from Year 1 - 4 covet them as I covet liquorice.

***Jeanne Betancourt: Pony Pals Series** - Appropriate for Year 1 - 4 girls. Every book I have in the series is currently on issue and are traded weekly between the girls. I actually found a pile of these books hidden under a set of shelves in the Non Fiction section some weeks into Term 1. I'm not joking. I left them there for a while and every now and then the titles would alter depending on which ones were issued, and which new titles were added to the secret pile of joy.

***Various Authors: Star Wars Readers (DK)**

***Enid Blyton: The Naughtiest Girl Series** - Another series I am mobbed for. Great for Year 3 girls upwards. Especially well read amongst the Year 5 girls at the moment.

***Andy Stanton: Mr Gum Series** - This series of books are currently being enjoyed in Room 4 - as a result the children in that class are desperate to get their hands on a copy for themselves. I saw the same fever with the Nanny Pigger's Books last year, and the Jeremy James books being read in Year 5/6.

***Various Authors: The 39 Clues Series** - These come with cards and cool things to solve and are popular with both boys and girls, from about Year 5 upwards.

***Rick Riordan: Percy Jackson Series** - Every copy I have is on loan, and has been all year. Half the boys from Year 4 upwards storm the returns shelf searching for a glimpse of Percy Jackson. Utter chaos, fabulous to watch. Please feel free to chat with me about any of the above titles, or any other book requirements.

Star Books:

A number of fiction books within the library collection are labelled with stars on the spines. These books are deemed suitable for older readers due to content, rather than reading ability. I do accept notes from Year 6 parents which give permission to access these books, as I'm aware many of the titles are issued from the public library and read at home. Some of them are also books within a series which do not necessarily start as star books, depending on the age of the character/s. Although there are no inappropriate or offensive books available to the students in the library, I prefer to err on the side of conservatism when issuing. If your child wants to issue star books at Year 6 please feel free to come in and discuss the options with me.

Finally:

I thought I'd put out a call for a couple more parent helpers to help with book covering, mending and resources. Just a couple of lovely parents would be superb. Call in and see me in the library if this sounds like you.

Laurina

From the PTA...

"The next PTA meeting will be held on Monday 31 May at 7.30pm in the staffroom - all welcome."

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As you know, every year the House Captains have an annual fundraiser to support a charity. This year we have chosen Arthritis New Zealand.

On the 27th of May we are holding an International Day where your child/children can dress up in any form of cultural dress.

To come dressed up you need to make a gold coin donation (this is a good way for your child to achieve a TRUMP challenge). 100% of your donations will go to Arthritis NZ to help this charity help people deal with arthritis.

Then on the 6th June an Arthritis Foundation representative of Arthritis NZ will come and speak about what the charity does and we will then present them with the money fundraised.

We hope to see you there, thanks,
The House Captains.

Netball Update

How to contact us

Answerphone

School Absences 388 7600 extn 1

Bulletin Board 388 7600 extn 2

Principal

Pete Pointon 388 7600 peter.pointon@seatoun.school.nz

P. T. A.

Miriam Heycoop 380 8005 heycoop@xtra.co.nz

Board of Trustees

Helen Taylor 970 0000 helen.taylor@paradise.net.nz

Letizea Ord 388 1531 letizea@ordlillico.co.nz

Sandy Baigent 973 7234 sandy@capitalchambers.co.nz

Simon Novak 976 8648 simon@novakmiddleton.co.nz

Suzie Bognar 388 5953 bognargreen@xtra.co.nz

Catherine Tate 938 6320 the.tates@paradise.net.nz

Jason Cowan 388 7600 jason.cowan@seatoun.school.nz