

*Issue 165, 29 October 2009*

## **From the Principal...**

Dear All

First off a special welcome to new entrant Waverly Saindon. Waverly's big buddy is Jack Waterworth. It is also a pleasure to welcome Estelle Cowan who is working one day per week for the next seven weeks. Estelle has been employed to provide additional 1-1 literacy support for identified children that would benefit from such a programme.

### **National Standards:**

The speed in which the government has introduced this reform, and the motivation sitting behind it, has certainly hit the media and generated considerable comment from the various professional organisations.

Schools have been advised that they will receive information packs in early November. Until we receive this information it is difficult to make an informed comment. However, we expect that what will be required in terms assessment of student achievement will fairly well match with what we are currently doing i.e. describing achievement as being 'above,' 'at' or 'below' expected level. We assume there will be a high level of consistency between 'expected level' and 'national standard.' Our assessment processes are rigorous, in-line with all the best practice principles and are based on the existing Ministry of Education achievement levels.

Of more concern is what the reporting requirements might be. The draft consultation material used plunket graphs as the means to illustrate a student's achievement. On my invitation, someone from the Ministry came out to the school to look at our integrated reporting system - i.e. mid-year conferences, end of year reports and student self reports. He was highly impressed. In fact his comment was, "Your teachers must love you for this!" Meaning the thought, effort and time required by teachers to report so thoroughly mustn't go down too well! I receive a huge amount of positive feedback from parents on our reporting system, especially in terms of how well teachers know the children and the clarity of the information provided.

Media reports suggest that schools will be required to report to parents twice a year using the graphs. These graphs are highly simplistic and in our opinion have the potential to do much harm. It would be such a backward step to replace our current comprehensive system with what is being suggested.

We already focus strongly on the core curriculum areas of reading, writing and mathematics, and overall student achievement in these areas is strong, so nothing new here.

We are not flustered by the requirement for schools to work to the new standards from the start of next year, but the devil may be in the detail as to what this may actually mean. A couple of points I do feel sure about is that publishing league tables of individual school results has no benefit (countries such as England are now realising this and moving away from the practice); and having standards in themselves will not address the tail of underachievement that as a country we face. We already know who these students are, finding a long term solution is a complex problem that goes well beyond the school gate.

### Congratulations:

- **Australian Mathematics Competition.** This year 61 of our Y4-8 students participated and were awarded 3 High Distinction, 5 Distinction, 23 Credit and 30 Participation Certificates. Special congratulations to: Y4 Baxter Robb (High Distinction), Louis Davis, Matt Dench, Scott Withell and Grace Wynne (Distinctions); Y5 Nicholas Dalton (Distinction); Y7 Sabrina Kao and Risa Takahashi (High Distinctions).
- **Australian English Competition.** 57 students participated, and interestingly, were awarded 3 High Distinction, 5 Distinction, 23 Credit and 26 Participation Certificates. Y4 Baxter Robb (Distinction); Y7 Sheena Dunn and Risa Takahashi (High Distinctions), Sabrina Kao and Lily Dalton (Distinctions); Y8 Ella Jansen (High Distinction) and Lucy Marsland (Distinction).
- **Staff** - Once again the school featured in the **Education Gazette**, this time a two page spread on science teaching at our school. This came about as a result of our professional focus last year led by Ann Vandendungen. There was a lovely photo of junior students Isabella Hay and Eve Roper-Caldbeck and another of associate principal Marion Hair teaching in her classroom. The article covered how the school integrates the various curriculum areas and adopts an inquiry approach. One of the key purposes behind the article was to provide schools with ideas of how to introduce the newly revised National Curriculum.

### Caution:

A parent contacted me last week after observing someone in a 4 wheel drive vehicle backing over the footpath completely oblivious of children. Please take the upmost care when picking up and dropping off children outside the school.

### Looking towards 2010:

- **Personnel:** Hannah Steel will be leaving us at the end of the year to embark upon her OE. Hannah is a great teacher with a wicked sense of humour that we will greatly miss. Ms Miriam Gaynor has been appointed to the vacancy. For the last two years Miriam has been teaching a Y2 class at Pauatahanui School. She has particular strengths in art, music, dance and drama. She plays saxophone, piano, guitar and enjoys singing. She also performs and teaches a range of dance styles.

Sarah Cobbum, who for the last two terms has been working in a job share with Rebecca Power (Y0), will also not be with us next year. Sarah and her husband have purchased a property in Blue Mountains Road, Silverstream, and the commute is just too far, especially with a young family. It has been great having Sarah back with us after taking time out on maternity leave. She is a wonderful teacher and a kind, caring person. This job share vacancy has been picked up by Ms Louise Noble. Prior to having children Louise was Associate Principal Junior Team at Houghton Valley School.

- **Class Lists:** Just to reiterate my usual comment made this time of the year. Teachers think long and hard about student placement and aim to make the very best decision for each child within the many constraints and factors that must be taken into consideration.
- **Organisation:** As in previous years, teacher placement and the confirmed school will be published in the later part of November.

**Thanks:** to Susan Kliffen for organising another very successful Starting School @ 5 parent evening last week. Together with Rebecca Power, Ann Vandendungen and House Captains Charlotte Hewson, Nick Linney, Lee-Jean Kahui and Thomas Kimber, Susan gave parents a very clear and informative picture of starting at Seatoun School as a 5 year old.

**East-by -West Ferry:** The owners of the ferry are obviously keen to increase the number of Seatoun residents using the ferry to get to the city. It is certainly a less stressful trip than driving, especially on Friday afternoons which seem to be becoming increasingly congested! Inserted in your copy of Steeple Rock is a free 1 trip voucher. In return for this advertising our Y7 children will get a free trip to Soames/Matiu Island when they visit as part of their EOTC week.

**Hui:** Tomorrow it is the turn of the Y7&8 team to lead our full school assembly.

Take care



## From the PTA...

The PTA's main focus now is the planning for next year's school gala Sunday 21 March 2010. We are already receiving names of people keen to help on the day so if you have a favourite stall you like to help on then please get your name in early to secure your position! All names to Caroline Sarfati please.

We will continue to open the garages every Friday 2.30pm - 3.00pm - look out for the red OPEN sign! It's a great time of year to have a clean out so please keep all saleable items aside for us. If you have larger items that you can't bring to us we are happy to collect them from you. If so contact Annie Newell or Caroline Sarfati to arrange a pick up time.

We still need someone or even two people to co-ordinate the toy stall. This is a very popular stall and requires work (a lot of sorting and pricing) only in the week leading up to the big day. If you think this may be a job for you then please call or email Miriam Heycoop.

Any other queries or ideas for the school gala please contact Caroline or Miriam.

Names numbers and emails for reference  
Miriam [heycoop@xtra.co.nz](mailto:heycoop@xtra.co.nz) or 380-8005  
Caroline [caroline.sarfati@gmail.com](mailto:caroline.sarfati@gmail.com) or 388-1925  
Annie [jon.annie@paradise.net.nz](mailto:jon.annie@paradise.net.nz) or 934-6806

We look forward to another PTA school lunch on Friday. These lunches have proved really popular for the kids (and parents) and have been a good fundraiser also. Thanks to Isobel Findlay and her team for instigating and organising these.

## Health and Physical Education Consultation

At least once every two years, schools are required to consult their community about how the school will implement health education. Consultation involving staff, parents, and caregivers will:

- strengthen health education and physical education programmes
- assist in the development of related school guidelines
- contribute to school review and the evaluation of programmes
- provide opportunities for students, teachers, parents, and caregivers to enhance students' learning

Please see newsletter insert for information on the school's programmes & the health and physical education curriculum.

The survey is being conducted online and can be reached through a link on our school website. We are running the consultation for two weeks and will only take a few minutes of your time.

Sam Broadmore (Teacher in charge of Health and PE)

## From the Board...

Hello All

Thank you to all the Staff and community members who gave up their Saturday for the Seatoun School Planning Day. The first session of the day was an evaluation of the 2009 Annual Plan Goals under the headings of culture, communication, teaching and learning, our people, resourcing and property and sustainability. Groups had a hard look at the different areas and evaluated them against the objectives we had set. This highlighted that most goals were being met but we still have areas where we can improve.

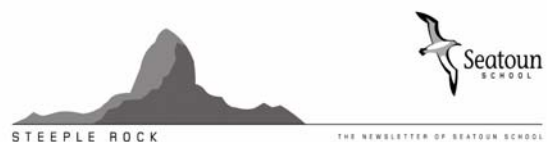
The next session was a talk, followed by a discussion, with Kathleen Atkins, the National Manager of the ERO Central Region. She covered the topics of Changes to School Reviews, the Revised National Curriculum, National Standards and her personal observations of changes in education. Kathleen Atkins pointed out that ERO new review format focuses strongly on effective self reviewing within schools. They are looking at how schools collect and analyse data and also how schools interpret and use this information to drive change.

The next session then looked at where Seatoun School sits with the revised National Curriculum.

The afternoon was spent looking at school organisation and ICT. This was followed by group discussions on how all we had covered over the day affects Seatoun School. We then made a plan for 2010.

The day was very well organised by Pete and a great deal of in depth discussion and planning went on. Please feel free to contact Board members if you would like to know more.

Our next BOT meeting is on Thursday 19 November at 7.30 in the Orca room. Cheers  
Letizea, Sandy, Simon, Suzie, Catherine, Pete, Jason & Helen



### SITUATION VACANT EDITOR OF STEEPLE ROCK

Who would like to kindly offer their services and edit the school newsletter?

Seatoun School needs someone to take on the role of editing Steeple Rock in the new year.

The newsletter is published fortnightly during the school terms—so it works out to be approximately 5 newsletters per term and 20 per year.

The newsletter is produced using Microsoft Publisher and the task requires someone who is familiar with Microsoft software to undertake the role.

If you are interested in getting involved and helping out the school, please contact Anne at the office by phone or email [admin@seatoun.school.nz](mailto:admin@seatoun.school.nz)

## Talent Quest

At the end of last term we held the Seatoun School Annual Talent Quest and it was FANTASTIC! All the participants worked really hard and did really well.

Thanks to:

the PTA for funding the prizes

- Miss Keeley , Miss Cowles and Mrs Billingsley for judging
- always a difficult job!
- all the parents that came to support all the amazing kids.

We would like to congratulate the following winners:

### Year 1 & 2

Best solo: Andreas Georgiakakis

Best Group: Luke Juriss, Jules Appleby, Matthew Teague, Daniel Moskovitz

### Year 3 & 4

Best solo: Ruby Linney

Best Group: Savannah Watson, Paris Lokotui, Gwendolyn Megow

### Best Year 1-4

Most original: Connie and Millie Newtown-Rencen, Sophia Tweddle, Ella Baigent-Brown

Most amusing: Aidan Boothby

Best instrument: Zuni Preece

### Year 5 & 6

Best solo: Georgia Linney

Best group: Penny Linton, Anna Riddle, Anna Milburn, Maia Whitaker, Abigail Eiloart, Lauren O'Hara

### Year 7 & 8

Best solo: Kate Cleaver

Best group: Ruben O'Hara and Nick Linney

### Best Year 5-8

Most original: Tara Young and Eloise Wu

Most amusing: Lily Dalton, Francesca Tate, Alice Linton, Kelly Humphries

Best instrumental: Sabrina Kao

**Overall Winner: Giorgious Katsanos**

Thanks

The House Captains

## Newsletter

Newsletter contributions and feedback to Joanna Simpson at josim@xtra.co.nz. Contributions for next issue by 2pm Tuesday, 10 Nov 09.

## Term 4: 27 October - 18 December

3	Oct 27-30	Tue-Fri	EZ Athletics Trials
	28	Wed	EZ Miniball
	29	Thu	Steeple Rock
	30	Fri	Hui Y7&8 PTA School Lunch
5	Nov 11	Wed	EZ Athletics
	12	Thu	Steeple Rock
	13	Fri	Hui
6	17	Tue	School Athletics Y3-8
	18	Wed	School Athletics pp date
	19	Thu	BOT meeting 7.30pm
7	23	Mon	Gardasil for Y8 girls
	25	Wed	Wgtn Athletics
	26	Thu	Steeple Rock
	27	Fri	Hui
8	30	Mon	Y5/6 EOTC Week
	Dec 2	Wed	Wn Athletics PP
9	7	Mon	Yr 7/8 EOTC Week
	9	Wed	Junior Athletics Y1-2
	10	Thu	Junior Athletics pp Steeple Rock
10	14	Mon	Reports Home
		Tue	Lost Property Display
	16	Wed	Y8 Formal
	17	Thu	Prizegiving 4.30pm.
10	18	Fri	Last Day of Term

## 2010 Term Dates

Wk1 Tue 2 Feb Meet the Teacher

Term 1 3 February - 1 April

Term 2 19 April - 02 July

Term 3 19 July - 24 September

Term 4 11 October - 17 December

## 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