

## **Term Four Newsletter from Your Board of Trustees**

**17 December 2008**

***Kia ora koutou, greetings to everyone,***

*It has been a great year for Paekakariki School with a lot of things happening in the classrooms with adventures galore combined with fun and some hard work. Schools cannot run well unless it has the support of everyone. So a big thank you to our school community and wider community for all the time and effort they have provided this year*

### **School News**

Our assembly tomorrow begins at 11:15 and we will finish school for the year at 12:30.

Please check the lost property before the students leave for the year as all the clothing will be disposed of in the recycling bins.

Our start date for 2009 is Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

If you have lost your booklist, Coastlands Paper Plus have copies there so as long as you know which class your child is in then it shouldn't be a problem.

### **GREAT RESULTS FROM LITERACY REVIEW**

In-depth reading, writing and spelling tests carried out this year show that our children are performing well above the national average.

#### **Reading**

All children from Year 3 to Year 8 were tested on the Star Test, a nationally normed test which enables us to compare our students' scores with others across the country. We found that our children are performing very well, with 92% achieving at their age level or above. This compares with the national norms in which 77% of children are expected to perform at their age level or above.

Nationally 23% of children would be expected to score below their age level in these tests. Our results showed that only 7.7% scored below.

#### **Writing**

All children from Year 4 up wrote an

'explanation' on the same day which teachers assessed against a set of exemplars (pieces of writing at a level that we can compare ours to). We fed this data into Asttle, a programme which enabled us to compare our writing to national norms and again found that our children are performing above expectations for their age level.

### **Staffing 2009**

One of the strengths of Paekakariki School is the quality of its staff and we have been fortunate again in 2008 to have a skilled group of teachers and support staff to keep the school performing well.

We were lucky to welcome Chris Harrison as our new entrant teacher at the start of 2008 and unlucky to have to farewell her as the year ends, with Paekakariki unable to compete with the call to return to Auckland. Thank you Chris; you have given our five-year-olds an excellent start to their school life. Good luck on your return to the big smoke.

Filling new entrant positions is often tricky as it demands a certain kind of person. We are delighted that Lisa Malones was passionate about stepping into this role in 2009. Lisa has been impressive this year in Room 1 teaching Year 4 and 5s and the new entrants will benefit from her skill and enthusiasm.

Paekakariki School was fortunate to contract Christina Andersen to teach in Room 2 after the departure of Grant Reid earlier in the year. We are very pleased Christina has now accepted the fixed term position as the Room 2 teacher. Welcome aboard Christina!

Katy Hoyland has been appointed as a permanent teacher to fill the vacancy in Room 1 with Lisa's departure to the new entrants. Katy has had a long career in teaching middle school in the Kapiti area and we are delighted to have tempted her to join the Paekakariki School whanau.

The above changes plus our experienced Paekakariki School teachers in Sue Johnston in Room 7, Debbie Evans in Room 6, Alayna Flighty in Room 5, Allan Marsden and Chrissy Adams in Room 3, and Rana Te Maro as our 'roving teacher' completes the line up of teaching staff for 2008.

A big thank you to all those teachers and to our dedicated team of support staff - teacher aides Carolyn Hamilton and Jill Mazey, Te Reo support Phillippa Watson, Donna Barr in the library, Moira Romeril in the office and Tracey Corry our caretaker.

### **THE CAMPING EXPERIENCE**

This year saw a variety of end of year camps which gave our children a great learning experience outside the classroom.

Room 2 went to Forest Lakes for three days in November where they did lots of activities such as abseiling, horse riding and the infamous mud slide. By all accounts they were unrecognisable when they emerged from the mud. Great teamwork from all the children made for a highly enjoyable camp.

Room 3 headed off to Makahika Outdoor Pursuits Centre for four days in early December. Some of the activities put the kids right out of their comfort zone, ie walking the high beam up around the height of a power pole. A highlight was the amazing flying fox which started up in the bush, flew out over the trees and river and across a field, with the 'passenger' held on by a harness attached to their waist. Our Year 7 and 8s proved themselves to be an impressive bunch of kids.

Last, but by no means least, Rooms 1 and 5 headed off to Queen Elizabeth Park for an overnight camp on 4 December where they did a range of activities, including bush bingo, making rafts and chimes from things they found on the beach, relays and sand sculptures.

Thank you to everyone who organised and ran these very successful camps.

### **SCHOOL FAIR**

A chance to be with friends, for juniors to visit the senior block and to buy things cheaply. Just some of the reasons why our children love the annual school fair. With around \$14,000 raised from this year's fair, that's also a whole lot more reasons. That is money over and above our annual school budget to spend on things like more books for the library, extra IT equipment and outdoor gear, and subsidising trips and good choice days so the school and parents/caregivers don't have to pay so much for buses and entrance fees.

A big bouquet to everyone involved in making this year's fair such as great success – Helen Keivom who directed proceedings, Holly Ewens who was responsible for the fantastic entertainment, all the parents and caregivers who gave their time to support the school.

### **PROPERTY**

It hasn't been a huge year for property upgrades at Paekakariki School. We have done some minor painting in the pool area, minor maintenance work on the buildings and continue to maintain the grounds so our school is a great place to work in. Thanks to Tracey Corry for all her hard work in maintaining the grounds.

In 2009 we are looking at replacing the boiler. This is a major undertaking but we believe that our coal boiler is not heating the school efficiently nor does it do the environment much good. We are in the process of looking at alternative and cost effective ways to heat the school and plan to have that system in place for winter 2009.

***Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful festive season and a happy, safe holiday. From Board of Trustees and School Staff***