



Principal's Pen

Every year at this time of the year, I like to share my views on homework.

Research shows that doing homework makes absolutely no difference to student achievement at primary school. All homework does, is cause stress within the family.

I do not see any merit in children having to sit down and complete a generic homework sheet. In class, teachers differentiate the curriculum in order that individual children have work that suits their needs. Why would we then give a 'one size fits all' homework sheet to the class, when it goes against sound educational practice?

The 'homework' that should be done is reading, reading, reading. It doesn't hurt to have some fun practising of basic facts. Individual teachers may ask children to complete something or find something out, but it will be relevant to the class programme.

However, we are nothing if not responsive to parents and this year we are taking a slightly different stance with our intermediate students. Parents worry that not having set homework at Years 7, 8 will not prepare their child for secondary school. We have listened to parent concerns and our intermediate students are therefore expected to do homework each day: Year 6 - 20-30 minutes each night-Mon-Thurs, Years 7, 8 - 30-45 minutes each night-Mon-Thurs. I would rather children played outside or went to other fun activities. Learning is not always about books or spelling; sometimes children's most important learning is done through play.

Board of Trustees

Tony Sayle has stepped down as Board Chair. He has been on the Board for 3 1/2 years, 3 of those years as Board Chair. Tony has done an outstanding job leading the Board. Under his tenure we have introduced uniforms, undertaken significant landscaping and drainage and started the planning process for the Learning resource Centre. I would like to thank Tony on behalf of the school community for his wonderful contribution to ensuring St Thomas's is such a great school. I have also appreciated Tony's support and advice.

Family Picnic

The vagaries of Auckland weather! Fine and hot for weeks on end and then lots of rain on the day of the picnic. It has been postponed until next Thursday 4 March, and it will still be lots of fun.

PTA AGM

To be held at 7pm, Wednesday 3 March in the staffroom. All welcome.

SCHOOL DONATIONS REFUND

Pay your donations by
31 March
and go into the draw
to get a refund!!



If you pay your school donation by March 31st 2010, you will be entered into the draw to have your school donation refunded.

For your convenience we also take Eftpos, Auto Payment, and Direct Credit:
ASB Bank, St Heliers
123027 0303718 00

Assembly

Thanks to Room 23 and Sarah Junge for their lovely Assembly item, the Tortoise and the Hare, performed last week. It is always difficult being the first class to run Assembly and they were all wonderful.

Congratulations to the following children for receiving a Principal's Award at today's Assembly: Stephanie Su, Julia Tan, Sam Crabtree, Harley Casey, Pierre Gartenbach, Melissa McNaughtan, Nuuausala Smith, Konnah Bowen-Eaton, Oscar Barrett-Garnier, Bryttany Skedgwell, Mia Mclvor, James Morgan, Rosemary Brown, Nikhil Kant, George Tana, Ben Dibley, Zachary Chan, Tehaupaura Pohue, Emily Ball, Jake Howard, Jason Hatton, Nadav Amir, Max Davies, Joshua Saafi, Jenna Whiteman, Bella McNabb, Rosa Elliott, Charlotte Parke, Olivia Rodger, Skye Ratumu, Sarah Brooks, Jack Pearson, Stephanie Li, Wenlong An, Eden Nelson, Frankie Pastiroff, Trey Lepper.

Schoolwide Testing

This begins on Monday. Years 3 – 8 have reading, spelling, PATs, and aTTle writing. Years 1, 2 have reading and writing.

The way you can help your children prepare for these tests is to ensure they get sufficient sleep each night, have a good breakfast and get to school well before the bell goes. We have also found that well hydrated children are generally more alert, so a water bottle is a good idea.

The results will be shared with parents at the parent interviews coming up on 30, 31st March.

Crossing the Road

I know many parents drop their children off on the other side of Allum St and watch them cross the road without using the crossing. Are you aware that in the morning as you drive up Allum St with so many cars parked outside the school, it is a blind curve as you approach the school? On a number of occasions I have had to brake heavily (and I always travel at less than 50 as I approach the school) because a parent has let their children cross in 'dribs and drabs' and I don't see them until I am almost on top of them. Please, for the safety of your children, insist that they walk the few metres to the crossing.

The same goes for after school, if you are crossing the road and your children are trailing behind you how can you be sure they aren't in the path of an oncoming car?

Coming Up Next Week

Mon	New parents morning tea
Wed	Bible in School begins for Years 3 – 5
	Years 5, 6 Bay Suburbs softball tournament
	PTA AGM
Friday	Assembly Room 22

New Parents Morning Tea

Just in case you missed the invitation, if your child is new to St Thomas's this year we would love to see you for morning tea on Monday 1 March 9.15 in the staffroom. This is great opportunity to meet with other new parents as well as some of the PTA members.

Janice Adamson
jadamson@stthomas.school.nz

PTA UPDATES

Top Schools:

Thank you to everyone who got their form and money back to the office so quickly. We were overwhelmed by the response and filled our 40 places very quickly! Unfortunately quite a few children have missed out and Rotary were unable to allow us extra team entries as it is such a popular event. We hope that even if you didn't make it into a team this year you might still be able to come and support your school at Glover Park from 10.30am—3pm on Sunday 7 March. For those who are in teams further information will be out to you shortly.

Any queries, please email Lisa: lisa@nelsons.co.nz.

Entertainment Books:

We are selling entertainment books again this year. Pre-order and pay by 20 March and receive some extra bonus vouchers. Last year we sold a total of 105 books and made \$1365 for the school, so please support us. The books have amazing vouchers in them and are a bargain at only \$65. A copy will be available at the school office from Monday 29 March if you would like to see it before you buy. Last year, one mum sold 14 books to her work colleagues, so why not take orders from your workmates or friends and family and support the school at the same time. Every book sold earns \$13 for the school. Any queries, contact Andrea Hawes 5215851 or andrea.hawes@xtra.co.nz.

Parent Class Rep

Thanks to those who have offered to be your child's class parent rep. We are still needing volunteers for the following rooms: Rooms 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 24. It's not a hard job—sending out some email PTA notices to the other parents and organizing the occasional class get together.

Any queries please contact Andrea: 5215851 or andrea.hawes@xtra.co.nz.

Those who have already volunteered will receive more info from me next week.



Travelwise Week Mon 1st—Fri 5th March

As part of the ARTA Walking School Bus programme, next week is Travelwise Week. Schools across the region will be participating, aiming to get children and parents out of their cars and onto their FEET, BIKES or SCOOTERS.

St Thomas's operates two Wakawaewae School Buses (details of routes available at the office). We would welcome children

and parents joining these runs, or you may like to join with a group of friends to WALK, BIKE or SCOOTER your way to school. Classroom teachers will be keeping a daily record of how many children come to school on foot. The class with the highest tally will win a prize to be announced the following week.

INLINE ROLLER HOCKEY

Learn to play at

Skateland

66 Mountain Rd, Panmure

All gear provided!

Only \$7

Fridays 4.30—6.00pm

Call Richard 021 2527600

Therapeutic Massage Pregnancy Massage Hypnotherapy

For an appointment phone:

Karin Hulme – 521 2757

Dip. Ther. Mass. Dip. Clin. Hyp.

Clinic: 2/134 Norman Lesser Drive,
St Johns Park

Friday 26th February 2010

Newsletter

Term 1 Week 4

Camp Carey Photo Reflection



Kiska on the climbing wall. **Candid**



Our group being taught to belay. **Posed**

Our group on the climbing wall. **Candid**



Zach on the climbing wall. **Posed**

Oscar

Me abseiling. **Candid**



My activity group doing archery. **Candid**

Preparation for the flying fox. **Posed**

Shooting rifles. **Posed**

