

February 2 2016

Newsletter 1

Welcome back to the first term of 2016. We are all excited to see the students again and the learning has begun. There are no staff changes for the year and that is tremendous for the continuity of the school. Our classes started well this morning with 5 new enrolments and some children not returning however the roll sits at 193 with a predicted roll of 216 this year.



I met with the whole school yesterday to remind them all of the Spirit of our School that centres around the three values of Partnership, Quality and Respect. All of the children were reminded of how we expect them to behave at school and conduct themselves. Our aim with these values is to grow students who can contribute to the community and society with teamwork, entrepreneurship, problem solving skills and emotional intelligence. It is our clear aim to have students who work well together ,respecting each other and doing their very best.

The building is going well and we are set to move into the new collaborative environment in term 2. This term the year 5-6 children are all together in the library with Mr Burford and Mrs Jenkins and Mrs Markham and the Year 7-8 pupils are in Room 6 with Mrs Paul.

Our congratulations to Mrs Breen who was married in the school holidays and is now known as Mrs Breen-Davis. Margy had a quiet family wedding and we are thrilled for her and send our best wishes.

As we head into another academic year our focus centres around reporting to you in an informative and easy-to-understand format. This starts with interviews in week four this term on February 24th and 25th. These interviews are held to plan what your goals are for your child in 2016. It is planned as a three way conference so your children are invited to attend so they are fully aware of what goals are being set for them.

A calendar of events is attached to this newsletter and we will keep you up to speed on the facebook page as well as the app. We currently have over 300 using the school app and remind you to download this for free using your smart phone. If you also text 8987 on you phone and write the words "Follow Rakaia School" you will also receive the messages by text.

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School donations and School fees:



This year we have had to lift school donations and contributions towards activities to \$15 per pupil per term. This equates to \$60 donation and \$60 contribution. The contribution supports the school to be able to provide resources above and beyond what the MOE fund us for and the donation is purely just that, a donation which is voluntary.

The contribution towards activities pays for internet access, visiting performers, science alive visits and the such.

Other extra curricula activities are invoiced at the time and these may include swimming, camps and visits away from Rakaia.

In 2016 the two weeks swimming tuition will be invoiced at \$30 per week. This pays for the transport to and from the pool in Ashburton and a small contribution towards entry fee. The tuition is covered and the school picks up the excess costs with donations.

We are currently exploring options for the Mathletics and Reading eggs programmes and will advise you in the very near future of what percentage the school can cover and what percentage you will need to pay for this additional programme for learning. Last year mathletics was \$28 per child for the year and Reading eggs was \$21. The school covered the full amount last year and cannot do this in the future, so it is likely this will become a user pays option for you.

For the Year 7-8 pupils who attend technology in Ashburton the fee for the year is \$65 and the School BOT pay the other half of this account to the Hinds School who run the centre in Ashburton.

So sorry to dampen the day with money worries but I am sure you are well aware money is required to run a school and we have had to review our contributions to provide the best we can for your children. Invoices will be sent home in due course.

Stationery

Thank you to all who have purchased stationery through the school office. The teachers have named books with the children today and pooled together some of the materials so they can be used in class and the excuse of "I don't have a pencil" cannot be used because the teachers will have some available for use.

It has been a busy few days and we are thrilled to be back.