

Thursday 7 February 2008

Newsletter 1/08

Dear parents

Welcome all of you to the new school year at Botany Downs, with a very special welcome to the many new children joining our community today. We hope your school days with us will be very happy and rewarding ones.

Our school newsletters come home at the start of *every* school week, with the eldest or only child. Newsletters are easily our most important way of communicating with you, so please look out for them. Newsletters are also posted on our school website (www.botanydowns.school.nz) Our **new website** is up and running, and parents are encouraged to check it regularly.

Staff

There are no new teachers to introduce you to. We had a most successful series of planning meetings last week, and two full professional development days, one based around ICT, the other focused upon the “inquiry approach” to teaching and learning. We are all very much looking forward to a busy, exciting and successful year.

Congratulations to **Kylee Smith**, one of our teachers in Room 3. Kylee got married over the holidays to Luke and is now Kylee Elliott.

The Building Programme

As you’ve probably seen, a major building programme is underway. The staffroom is being completely upgraded, and the administration block is being demolished and a new one built.

To locate our temporary *school office, principal’s office and sickbay*-situated in Room 1-come up the driveway and follow the fencing around to Room 1. Alternatively, we can be found by coming down the corridor from the Room 3 end.

To access the *classrooms* from the front of the school, there are two options. The **main access** is still past the hall. Just come up the path and follow the fencing to your right. The other option is to come up the driveway, but as this is also a vehicle access and staff car park please exercise caution if coming from this direction with your children.

Staff will be using the library as our temporary staff room for the next few months.

Lost property is still in the hall at this stage.

School Uniform

It is essential that all children wear our official summer school uniform please, including *black flat sandals*. Sneakers are **not** permitted. Please name all clothing.

Sun Safety: All children must wear our *school sunhat* whenever they are outside. While classes do have sunscreen lotion, parents are welcome to pop a small tube of sunscreen in their child’s bag.

Swimming Pool

Our swimming programme starts tomorrow, and as swimming is part of our curriculum *all children* need to bring their togs. Teachers will let your children know which are their class swimming days. It is a school expectation that, unless there is a genuine reason for not taking part, all children will participate in swimming. A note is required if your child is not swimming. Thank you.

School Hours

Our classes begin at 8.55am, and finish at 3.00pm. We ask that children be collected promptly after school, and no later than 3.15pm.

Unless special arrangements have been made, children should not arrive before 8.30am please, as teachers are busy in their classrooms and there is no-one to supervise them.

PTA Meeting

Our first PTA meeting is on **Monday 11th February** at 7.30pm, in the library. ALL WELCOME.

Phones

A new phone system was installed during the last week of the school year, and has been playing up. We wondered why it was so quiet here! Apologies to all who have been trying to contact us and have been unable to get through.

School Assemblies

Our assemblies are a time for the whole school to get together and to celebrate our achievements. Parents are *very welcome* to attend. Our weekly assemblies are held in the hall at **2.15pm** on Wednesdays.

School Stationery

Stationery is being sold in packs from **today**. Children should bring the **correct** amount of money, or a cheque made out to Botany Downs Primary School, in a clearly labelled envelope, and give it to their class teacher. We have eftpos facilities in the office. A reminder that the prices of packs are:

Year 0/1	\$26
Year 2	\$27
Year 3	\$29
Year 4	\$29
Year 5/6	\$29

Every effort has been made by class teachers to keep prices down, as we are aware that this is a particularly expensive time of the year for everyone.

Bought Lunches

These will resume on **Monday 11 February**. The menu choices are on our new website. Please note that there are no bought lunches on Tuesdays. All items available have been reviewed to ensure they meet the Ministry's new healthy eating recommendations.

School Donations

The BOT has set the school donations at **\$180 per child** for the year. There will be an increased discount of **\$30** if donations are paid by the end of term 1 (reducing the amount to \$150 per child). Eftpos and credit card facilities are available at the school office.

Reflection Time

Last year we introduced a brief "reflection time" at 2.45pm each afternoon, utilised to give the opportunity for every class to talk with their teacher about the current "Value" being emphasised, and also to talk about the positive things that have happened in class that day, and the learning goals covered. We are continuing with reflection time again this year.

Kind regards

Bruce Trezise (Mr T)
Principal