

Newsletter March 31st 2009

Dear parents and caregivers

The end of March is upon us and Easter is just around the corner. School finishes on Thursday April 9 and term 2 starts on Monday April 27.

Last night we had our BOT meeting and shared school wide data about student achievement in the recent testing we have undertaken. You will get individual assessments next week and with that information you will be able to make appointments to see the staff about your child's results. The assessments have been collated using diagnostic tools that test your child's ability at that certain point in time and progress is expected.

The report indicates your child's achievement and effort. Achievement is recorded using the following criteria:

Working Towards	Working Within	Working Competently	Working Beyond
Children in this area need extra support to grasp concepts. They are operating below expected levels for their age.	Steady cautious progress that requires teacher support. Operating at the lower end of the expected level of achievement.	At the middle or slightly higher end of their expected level of achievement. Confident	Operating one year or more above their expected level of achievement. Excellent progress. Quick to master new concepts. Requiring extension.

If your child has assessments that indicate they are working towards their expected level then it is very important to make a time with the teacher to discuss their progress.

Initial School data

At this point in time we tested 81 children with the Year 3-8 STAR test of reading and this test indicated that 22 children are below average, 44 average and 15 above average. The 22 identified children are grouped accordingly in class and some are getting teacher aide support at this point in time. Our special needs register is constantly updated and the teacher aide timetable is changed per term or as need arises.

Spelling Data

	2008	2009
Above	37.5%	30% Working Competently and Working Beyond
At	50%	49.1% Working Within
Below	12.5%	20.5% Working towards

Maths information for the Year 4-6 children indicated some concerns due to the fact that 60% of the children in that group do not have the Basic Facts recall to match their Numeracy Strategy



level. This means they may be working at the appropriate level however their recall is below expectation.

It is becoming very clear that children at Rakaia School need to be sharper with their basic facts recall. This means that we need to practice and practice until it is known. Knowledge means that it is almost instantaneous. We would actively encourage parents to test basic facts at home. This means addition and subtraction facts as well as multiplication and division. This should be basic homework for our children as well as reading.

Please read to your children as often as you can. Discuss books and texts. Ask about their "Duffy" books and how they are going with the story. Who are the characters and what is happening?

I can assure you we are trying new things at school and will be looking carefully at the Basic Facts and how this is practiced at school.

Music Festival Practice for Rooms 1 and 2

Room 1 and 2 are taking part in the Music festival this year and they will be