

# St Francis of Assisi School

St Francis of Assisi School Newsletter

370 Innes Road, Christchurch 8052

Phone: (03) 595 0730

Email: [admin@stfrancischch.school.nz](mailto:admin@stfrancischch.school.nz)



Issue 1  
29<sup>th</sup> January 2016

## Events Covered in our Newsletter

*Blessing of the Buildings*

*Official Opening*

*Ash Wednesday Mass*

*A Special Day for Jacki*

*Timetable*

*Read and Feed*

*Managing Behaviour at St Francis of Assisi School – Restorative Practice*

*Fish n Chip Tea*

*Meet the Teacher Night*

*Parent Teacher Association / Parent and Friends Association*

*St Francis Netball Club*

## Dear Parents and Caregivers

### Kia ora koutou

The last couple of weeks at St Francis of Assisi school have been a hive of activity. There have been people everywhere preparing our school for its very first day with students.

It has been fabulous to have all the staff on board and I have been impressed with the hard work each and everyone is putting into ensuring that we have an awesome start to the year.

The Leadership team has been meeting and setting things in place and we are pleased to be able to report to you some updates.

### **Day One 4 February 2016 – Blessing of the Buildings**

We are so looking forward to opening the doors to our students and school community next week. I am sure you are all looking forward to coming in and having a look around the new buildings and you are most welcome to come in with your children to have a look around all the spaces. At 8.55am we will all gather in the quadrangle for the blessing of the buildings. After we have joined together in prayer Fr Simon will go with each team to their area of the school and bless the buildings before we begin working for the year. You are all most welcome to join us for this blessing.

### **Official Opening Friday 12 February 1.30pm**

Our official opening will be held on 12 February at 1.30pm. You are all most welcome to join us for this as well. More information to follow once details have been set. Students will need to be in correct formal school uniform for this event.

### **Ash Wednesday Mass Wednesday 10 February 12.00pm**

We will be holding a school Mass on Ash Wednesday at 12.00pm in the library – you all are all welcome to join us for this Mass – we would love to see you here.

### **A Special Day for Jacki**

This Sunday at the 9am parish Mass, Jacki Breuer is to be received into the Catholic Church. She will also receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and make her First Holy Communion. This day completes a long period of discernment, prayer and preparation for Jacki. We are so delighted for her. At the same

time, Jacki and her husband Richard's three children – Bryn, Ari and Torren Keown – will be baptised. Bryn and Ari are at our school.

### Staff Changes

We had a late resignation from Pax O'Dod last year as he had secured a position at St Patrick's Kaiapoi. This is much closer to home for him and we wish him well for his start there. We have employed Charlotte Parish to take his place for term one and we will advertise this position early in the year. Charlotte comes to us from St Joseph's at Fairlie. We welcome her to our school community.

### Timetable

We have put a lot of thought into ensuring our timetable meets the needs of the students and also provides balanced blocks of instructional time that will maximise classroom learning time.

We will now provide two short breaks and one shortened lunch time as follows:

8.55 - 10.15am	Roll call Prayer Numeracy
10.15am - 10.30am	Interval - students have this time to have a movement break outside and have something to eat. Three teachers will be on duty at this time and the students can be in any part of the playground within the boundary.
10.30am - 11.30am	Literacy (15 mins of fitness either in 1st or 2nd Literacy block)
11.30am - 11.45am	Read and Feed - This is a nutrition break - the students come together in teams with a healthy snack provided from home and listen to one of the team teachers reading aloud.
11.45am - 12.45pm	Literacy (15 mins of fitness either in 1st or 2nd Literacy block)
12.45pm - 1.30pm	Lunch time - sit and eat for 10 mins then 35 minutes for playground activities. Three teachers are on duty at this time.
1.30pm - 3pm	Inquiry (integrated topics) RE, PE, Sport, Art, Music,

We will trial this timetable for Term 1 and then using feedback from students and teachers to make any necessary changes or improvements to this structure.

### Read and Feed Initiative

The aim of this initiative is to promote literacy and the importance of Reading to our students and community however there are many benefits:

- Reading aloud supports developing readers.
- Reading aloud removes roadblocks to comprehension like unfamiliar vocabulary and places words that developing readers may not know in context.
- Listening to a fluent reader gives students a reading role model for their own oral reading skills, too.
- Listening comprehension is higher than reading comprehension, you can read books that are a higher reading level than your students can read alone.
- Reading aloud exposes children to books, authors, or genres they might not discover on their own.
- Reading aloud builds community. Shared experiences create memories that connect us to each other. Reading aloud books with children offers these unifying moments.

Here is a link to an excellent article where [Educator Jim Trelease](#) explains why reading aloud to your child, no matter what her age, is the magic bullet for creating a lifelong reader.

### **How can you support this initiative from home?**

- Please provide your child with a healthy snack (fruit and/ crackers and cheese) for this break. We don't want them to be slowed down by anything with a high sugar content so stick to the fruit and cracker theme please.
- Encourage a read aloud time or just a reading to yourself time at home as well. Check out the infographic later in the newsletter that shows you just how much an advantage your child will get if reading everyday becomes the norm in your household.

### **Managing Behaviour at St Francis of Assisi School – Restorative Practice**

From time to time small conflicts arise between children in the playground.

Conflict is a normal part of life and learning to deal with it helps children master the social skills they will need as adults. Bullying is not normal. In fact, there are some distinct differences between bullying and peer conflict. Being able to identify these differences helps us know how to respond.

#### **Conflict**

There are a number of ways to identify peer conflict. First, when a conflict occurs, both people involved have equal power in the relationship. And while both people are emotional and upset neither one is seeking power or attention. They just happen to disagree. Also, when people experience conflict they likely will feel remorse and take responsibility for what they did wrong. They just want to solve the problem so that they can start having fun again. Lastly, conflict happens occasionally and is usually not serious or emotionally damaging to either person.

#### **Bullying**

There are a number of ways that children can be hurtful to one another but not all of it is bullying. Sometimes it is simply unkind behaviour. The best way to identify bullying is to realise that it is a deliberate act with the intention to hurt, insult or threaten another person.

There's also an imbalance of power in the situation. Bullies usually exert control over other people either by intimidating them, insulting them or threatening them. Bullying also is repeated and purposeful and poses a threat of serious emotional or physical harm.

Typically, when bullying occurs, there is very little emotional reaction from the bully but the target is usually visibly upset. Additionally, bullies may even get satisfaction from hurting people because it gains attention. Lastly, there is usually no remorse from the bully and no attempt to resolve anything. Bullies are not interested in having a relationship with the intended target.

#### **How do we deal with this at our school?**

At St Francis of Assisi Catholic School our behaviour management procedures are based around Restorative Justice principles. We manage inappropriate behaviour, based on Gospel values and discipline processes that are just, reasonable, respectful and consistent.

Restorative justice demands that we think about what happens to the victim, and how the victim's needs might be met. It also requires us to consider the other stakeholders in the event and what their needs might be.

Our Year 7/8 children will be trained as peer mediators and this is the first step (and often the last step) for our children when things go wrong in the playground. Our peer mediators will wear Hi Viz jackets and wander around the playground during the breaks – making themselves available to the children who need help sorting small issues. The mediators facilitate a discussion and usually all parties agree to move forward positively.

Occasionally the children need adult help to restore the relationships that have been broken – in this case the peer mediators would find the duty teacher who would then take over facilitating the discussion.

When a teacher is helping facilitate the discussion we call this a mini-chat. The teacher will ensure that both sides of the story are listened to and will then ask both parties what needs to be done to restore the relationship. If this is a one off, this will possibly be all that needs to happen, the teacher on duty will ensure that the classroom teacher knows there has been a chat but we will ensure that everyday is a new day and that the issue is not dragged into another day.

If, in order to restore the relationship, a consequence is required, this will be negotiated by all of the stakeholders and will be appropriate to the harm done and the needs of the children concerned.

If the problem is recurring we will inform you and involve you in a restorative chat with your child so that you can support us from home – please be assured we will contact you when it is necessary. We encourage students to take responsibility for their own behaviour by making appropriate choices and learning from their mistakes and reconciliation is the aim of all conflict resolution.

### **Why use Restorative Practices at St Francis of Assisi Catholic School?**

- Restorative Justice is based on gospel values and has reconciliation at its core.
- It creates better relationships with young people and teaches our young people the importance of restoring relationships.
- It promotes greater engagement in learning.
- It creates greater development of important social and emotional competence in learners.

**A good Catholic school, over and above all, should help all its students to become saints.  
Pope Benedict XV1**

### **Fish n' Chip Tea and Parent Teacher Meetings Wednesday 24 February (3.15pm and repeated at 6.15pm)**

We are planning on holding Parent /Teacher meetings on Wednesday 24 February. These will be team meetings where you can meet all the teachers in the teams that are working with your children at the same time. They will give you information about the programmes we are running and expectations for the year. We will repeat the meetings at 6.15pm so that those who are unable to come straight after school get the chance to meet the teachers as well. We also thought that it would be a great chance for the community to get together for a fish n' chip tea in the school grounds.

So... bring along your fish 'n' chips from 5pm onwards, go to a class meeting to find out about life at St Francis of Assisi School then... send the family home and stay on for the next meeting to find about about our proposed new Parent/ Teacher Association or Parents and friends Association – information below.

### **Parent Teacher Association / Parent and Friends Association**

We are keen to establish a St Francis of Assisi PTA or PFA as soon as we can and we have a number of ideas for fundraising projects. I have scheduled an information evening for those who may be interested in being part of this group for Wednesday 24 February at 7pm in the staffroom. I will outline what the purpose of this group will be and some ideas about future projects that we need community support for at the meeting. You do not have to make a commitment to join the group just because you are at the meeting – there will be no pressure – it would be great to have a good turn out for this meeting so please consider coming along.

### **St Francis Netball Club**

With our new school comes a new netball club. If your son or daughter is interested in playing netball this season, please advise their interest by emailing [rania@aae.net.nz](mailto:rania@aae.net.nz) Please just state your child's name and school year. Club netball is available for children from Year 3 – Year 8 and the child does not need to be a student at St Francis of Assisi School. This is just an initial showing of interest, as more information will come available over the next few weeks. A meeting for the club will be held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm (location TBA) where committee positions, parent supporters, team structures and coaching positions will need to be filled. Please also reply to the email address above if you can make the meeting and if you are interested in being part of the committee. Thank you for your interest and we look forward to establishing a strong netball club.

I hope you all have a great weekend – we will send more information out next week. Keep an eye on facebook and the website. The staff page will be updated late next week with photos and we will add photos of the spaces now that the furniture has arrived.

Nga mihi nui  
Jo Earl

## Why Can't I Skip My 20 Minutes of Reading Tonight?

Student "A" reads <b>20 minutes</b> each day	Student "B" reads <b>5 minutes</b> each day	Student "C" reads <b>1 minute</b> each day
3600 minutes in a school year	900 minutes in a school year	180 minutes in a school year

**1,800,000 words**



*90<sup>th</sup> percentile*

**282,000 words**



*50<sup>th</sup> percentile*

**8,000 words**



*10<sup>th</sup> percentile*

By the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade Student "A" will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. Student "B" will have read only 12 school days. Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary? Which student would you expect to be more successful in school...and in life?

(Nagy & Herman, 1987)