



# Birkdale Intermediate School

Newsletter of the Board of Trustees

Spring 2010

## BULLETIN

**GREAT EARTH  
SCIENCE  
RESULTS**

**SCHOOL  
EXCEEDS  
NUMERACY  
EXPECTATIONS**

**ERO REVIEW  
COMMENTS**

## Education Review Office Comments

Students are highly engaged in learning programmes and show particular interest and enthusiasm for the school's integrated curriculum units. Students understand their achievement levels and use indicators of progress to identify their next steps in learning.

School data indicate that school-wide students achievement is comparable to the range of national achievement expectations in reading and mathematics. Year 8 students are achieving above expectations in numeracy.

Students work within a positive, supportive climate that helps them to engage in learning. Respectful, affirming relationships with peers and with teachers are evident.

Birkdale Intermediate continues to promote challenging and relevant approaches to learning that enable students to become confident and successful learners. Senior managers gave high regard for educational research. They source professional readings, attend professional conferences, and use the information to develop teaching programmes. Selected teachers have opportunities to conduct reviews of the school's curriculum, guided by national and international research.

Birkdale Intermediate School is providing its international students with a positive learning environment where they are engaged in programmes that cater for their needs and interests. Students receive very good quality pastoral care and are well involved and integrated into the school community.

## Great Earth Science Results

As part of our science programmes students learn about the geology of the North Shore. We look closely at the volcanic and sedimentary rocks visible along the coastline. This year our assessment data shows that 85% of our students achieved at or above expectation.

The Quest scenario sets the scene for the inquiry, 'Your family is about to purchase a very expensive new home. The real estate agent has shown you homes in the Thorne Bay area, Takapuna and others on the cliff

top south of Takapuna Beach.

As it is so costly you decide to investigate everything possible about the two locations. Make sure you take a very close look at the geology of the area before making your choice. Using skilful

compare and contrast which house would you buy and how does your new knowledge of the geology of these two areas affect your decision?' Both places are great places to live so students are marked on the quality of their argument.



Students experimenting with the hardness of sedimentary rocks such as sandstone and mudstone..



Students searching the rock face for fossils of the forest that the lava flowed around approximately 140,000 years ago.

As part of this study all classes visit the lava flows and fossil forest at the Northern end of Takapuna Beach and the sedimentary cliffs at the southern end. It is a field trip full of exploration and discovery.

## Students Create a Mural with Mosaic Artist Gilly Fisher

We were invited to take part in the Takapuna Mosaic Gateway Project which is a legacy project from the Shore Youth Council.



A group of our high ability visual arts students were given a large cylindrical concrete planter to decorate with a mosaic design.



Working with mosaic artist Gilly Fisher has seen our students knowledge of this form of artistic expression grow considerably.



The planter is now at the entrance to the Lake House Arts Centre in Takapuna, along with others decorated by other North Shore schools.

## Great Mathematics Results from the Numeracy Project

Our assessment data shows our Year 8 students are performing well above the Numeracy Project's expectations.

The Numeracy Project is a New Zealand wide mathematics initiative that has been in place for a number of years now. Its primary purpose is to raise student achievement in mathematics by providing professional development support for teachers to make their teaching of mathematics more targeted and effective. Research on the efficacy of the project has confirmed its positive impact on student achievement levels across New Zealand as well as improved teaching practice.

We were invited to take part in a special contract last year which looked at the impact of a mentoring intervention on teaching practice and student achievement.

Achievement against national expectations shows that:

- 1) In 2009, 82% of our Year 7s were achieving at or above New Zealand Curriculum Level 3 in Number & Algebra. This is well above the Numeracy Project expectations of 68%.
- 2) In 2009, 64% of our Year 8s were achieving at or above New Zealand Curriculum Level 4 in Number & Algebra. This is well above the Numeracy Project expectations of 51%.
- 3) In 2008, 80% of our Year 7s were achieving at or above New Zealand Curriculum Level 3 in Number & Algebra. This is well above the Numeracy Project expectations of 68%.
- 4) In 2008, 60% of our Year 8s were achieving at or above New Zealand Curriculum Level 4 in Number & Algebra. This is well above the

Numeracy Project expectations of 51%.

Students are tested using a comprehensive collection of test items sourced from Assessment Resource Bank, New Zealand Council for Education Research and the numeracy project test items.



## Kapahaka

Congratulations to our Roopu Kapahaka who represented us at the Tamaki Makaurau Regional Kapahaka Competition and came 6th which has gained them an entry to the National Kapahaka Competition held in Whangarei.

## Music Lessons

This year some of our students were lucky to receive an instrument and free music lessons as part of a development programme organised by Birkenhead College. We are hoping projects like



this one will see an increase in the number of students in our area learning to play a musical instrument.

## Sundial Installed in Our Playground

For a number of years now we have been working on making our playground a more interesting and educational place. As part of this development an armillary sundial has been installed just outside our library at the main



entrance to our school. This sundial has been specially made for us by an Australian company Sundials Australia whose workshop is in Adelaide. It is an accurate time piece giving true solar time. The stone plinth on which the sundial is mounted has a plaque with a graph to assist our students to convert solar time to clock time. Apart from being a beautiful sculptural form it is a useful scientific instrument to start discussions on the movement of the Earth around the Sun and the need for international time zones. The sundial is dedicated to the Birkdale Fruit Growers Association who in 1968 donated our science cup which is awarded annually to the student who has shown an understanding of scientific thought and procedures. It also mentions the Beer



## Teacher Visits South Korea

Mrs Neubert had the privilege of visiting Korea for two weeks as part of a group of 10 New Zealand and 19 Australian educators, sponsored by Asia NZ and the Korean Government. The programme consisted of a series of lectures at Ewha Women's University on a range of subjects including the economy, the education system, changing values and religion as well as field trips to sites of historical and contemporary relevance to experience Korea first hand. A highlight was the opportunity to spend time with a Korean family in their home, and to talk with them personally about topics raised during lectures. It

is difficult to put into words just how challenging, rewarding and exciting the two weeks were. The opportunity to spend sustained, quality time being a 'learner' has enabled Mrs Neubert to reflect professionally on her role as a 'teacher'. Her understanding of Korean history and culture, the Korean people and the Korean education system was greatly enhanced. It also provided her with a unique opportunity to gather resources and conduct interviews with a range of Korean students and educators that will assist in the development of a unit of work aimed at deepening New Zealand students' 'Asia Awareness'. The Korean Studies Workshop was without a doubt a highlight of her career in education to date.



Family who had a vineyard on the site of our school and who grew pumpkins here to feed the American troops stationed in Auckland before moving to the battle grounds of the Pacific during World War II. This gives our students an understanding of the history of our local area which was once referred to as the 'Fruit bowl of Auckland.'

## Alice in Wonderland

Alice in Wonderland was a special event in the life of our school as it was our 45th year of productions. It all started in 1965 with 'Trial by Jury.' Alice in Wonderland was full of colour and fun. Our thanks to all the students, staff and parents who worked so hard to bring this wonderful show to our stage.