Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences give you an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress and to build communication and understanding between home and school. If both you and the teachers are well-prepared, even a short conference can be productive and worthwhile.

- Keep a list of questions you want to discuss with the teacher. If you wish to discuss specific pieces of work, have them with you to take to the conference.
- If you want the teacher to discuss a specific matter, telephone in advance so the teacher can be prepared with the information you are seeking.
- Bring your child's most recent school report with you to the conference.
- Ask your child if there are matters they would like discussed.
- Take notes during the conference so you can recap the conference at home with your child.
- Try to begin on a positive note. Teachers, like everyone, appreciate positive feedback.
- Be ready to ask questions, or admit you do not understand.
- Share helpful information about your child or family circumstances. Teachers are appreciative of anything that helps them know their students better.
- If you are concerned about specific behaviour, be ready with examples.
- If you disagree with any judgements the teacher may have made about your child, listen carefully and ask for examples. Being apologetic or angry won't help fix the problem.
- Remember that the conference is a valuable time to discuss your child, not share your experiences at school or philosophies about modern education.
- If you are unhappy about the conference, speak with the principal.

Some questions
- How is my child progressing?
- Are there ways I can help at home?
- Does my child need special help?
- How does my child get on with other members of the class?
- Does my child participate in class activities?
- Does my child complete assignments and homework?
- What is my child's behaviour like at school?
- How well is my child doing in tests and assessments?

After the conference
- Discuss the conference with your child, including any points for action.
- Stress the good things that were said and be direct about any problems.
- Act on any suggestions made by the teacher.
- Keep working with the teacher by staying in touch.
- Children like the security of knowing the important adults in their life are working together. Whatever disagreements you have with the school should be discussed with the principal or teacher. Your child should see a united team.

Principals’ Digests 59 Filleul St Invercargill NZ Ph 03 214 2963 Fax 03 214 2964 brauns@xtra.co.nz
All or part of this Digest may be reproduced and used in the school community of the subscriber