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Welcome changes

The Education Minister has recently announced that schools who are performing consistently well will be reviewed every four to five years, rather than the current three. On the other hand, schools that are not performing will be reviewed more frequently. This is a welcome change as we all are aware that the majority of schools are performing well, and changes to the review cycle will let them get on with the good job they are already doing. Elmwood's most recent ERO report of September 2007 clearly confirms that the school provides a high quality teaching and learning environment. Strong statements are made about the quality of the priority learning areas of literacy, numeracy, science and the arts. The rigorous teacher performance appraisal procedure was identified as a key contributor to the high quality learning experiences on offer. The report also makes strong mention of the school's good relationships between teachers, students and the community. The school's determination to celebrate success through a range of community events helps in keeping parents informed.

Parents can be assured that pies and chips are not back on the menu for our school lunch sales after Education Minister announces the scrapping of rules forcing schools to offer only healthy food options through their tuck shops. Without doubt the most important decider of what children eat for lunch is their parents as it is they who pack the daily lunch boxes. Of course, parents are astute enough to know how important their influence is and are very conscious about the health and well being of their own children. For the large majority of children at Elmwood Normal School the school lunch ordering services is used only occasionally as a treat, and we offer the service primarily for that reason only. We have to be concerned about aligning the responsibility we have for promoting good eating habits and what we make available to the children through the school lunch orders.

Most of our children are provided with a lunch box on most days by their parents and are rich in the essential nutritious goodies. Further, we are now asking the children to take back home in their lunch boxes the wrappings and uneaten food to assist us with litter control. This will also help parents note what is "not eaten".

This Friday is the first of our fortnightly "Celebration Assemblies". This year the school is going to do its best to start the Celebration Assemblies at 9.05am. We have noted in the past there have been delays in getting the Celebration Assembly started on time. We believe this has been due to the assembling of the children, especially our junior children.

To help us achieve this, the school is introducing an Assembly Bell that will be rung at 8.50am on the Friday of a Celebration Assembly. This is to encourage children to enter their classrooms to prepare for the Celebration Assembly. Please note that the official start time of the school is unchanged at 8.55am.

I hope you all take the opportunity to meet the teachers this week, and also attend the school's family picnic that is being held this Friday evening in the school grounds.

Kevin Gooch, Principal