



# Birralee News



Newsletter No. 3 October 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As you might have seen from the newspapers, it has again been proposed that Kalvskinnet Primary School should close from August 2010. The Board of Birralee International School will address the situation and stay in contact with *Trondheim Kommune*. We appreciate that the situation is difficult for the Kalvskinnet parents and children and for the Kalvskinnet staff. Whatever the final result may be, both Kalvskinnet and Birralee are committed to the children in both schools and we will make sure that all children have a great school year this year. We will continue to cooperate through projects and assemblies throughout the year.

It was lovely to meet so many of you at our Parents' Evenings in September. The teachers were pleased to be able to present the educational programme and to show you examples of the children's work. We hope that you all enjoyed the evening and found it useful. We were pleased that many parents volunteered to sit on the Parents' Committee. We thank you for your commitment to the children and to the school. The Parents' Committee's first meeting unfortunately had to be postponed due to sickness, however some of the Parents' Committee members have already started preparing for our events in December. The next meeting will be on October 20<sup>th</sup> and we hope to have the whole committee present.

We celebrated our traditional Harvest Festival on Friday September 18<sup>th</sup>. The children in Year 8 set up and decorated a lovely harvest table. After our assembly all your contributions were taken to the Salvation Army to be distributed to families who might be going through difficult times. We thank you all for your support.

October is an exciting month at Birralee. We have two special events to look forward to: our International Week and Halloween. The children are looking forward to working together to prepare for many different learning opportunities.

Our International Week is a joint celebration of the cultural diversity of both Birralee and Kalvskinnet. Together we represent more than 60 nationalities. The children will work together on a variety of projects leading up to our International Week. They will be exploring the world, learning map skills and gaining new knowledge about different continents, countries and cultures. We will have guest speakers visiting the school and the children will be involved in many activities ranging from making presentations, posters and displays, to enjoying music, art and food from around the world. This year we are paying particular attention to Holland, India, China, England, Turkey, Africa. We are looking forward to sharing the work through visits, assemblies and exhibitions. Please look for pictures from our celebration on the web site.

Charity work and raising awareness of global issues around the world is an important element of our UN week. All the children will be involved in charity work in support of our SOS Village in India and other charities.

Halloween will be celebrated in the traditional Birralee way with a costume party in school on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup>. For more information on Halloween, please see below.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs. Farstad  
and the Birralee Staff

### News and information:

#### Thank you to Mrs Talbot

We are very grateful to Mrs Talbot for her outstanding service and her unfaltering commitment to Birralee International School for 35 years.



Mrs Talbot joined the school soon after it was established in 1973. Together with Principal Mrs Tønseth, she built the very foundations that have made our school such a success. Mrs Talbot played an instrumental role in the development of the school, always interested and keen to implement the latest developments in education. She set up the Infant Department and worked closely with Principal Mrs Tønseth as her deputy for more than 25 years. She then took over as the Principal of the school before going back to the classroom to do what she enjoys the most; teaching young children and helping them to grow and learn.



Mrs Talbot is an exceptional teacher who has made a difference in the lives of many children. She has always been an inspirational teacher with a keen interest and strong belief in the abilities of each and every child. Nobody

is prouder to see Birralee children perform on stage in assemblies and performances.

We will all miss Mrs Talbot greatly. She has always been a supportive, knowledgeable and helpful colleague. We have had lots of fun together and have many fond memories to look back on. It is an honour to continue her outstanding work at Birralee and to maintain her commitment to provide quality education to international children in Trondheim.

On behalf of all the Birralee family: children, parents and staff, we would like to wish Mrs Talbot all the very best for the future.

#### Staff

A new teacher has been appointed to take over Mrs Talbot's class. Ms Stene has already been working in the class together with Mrs Talbot to make the transition easier for the children. Ms Stene has previously taught in a Primary School in Tromsø and she spent last year working in a Primary School in Newcastle, England. She is excited to be able to continue working in a English speaking environment. Ms Stene is musical, plays several instruments and enjoys arts and crafts. We look forward to working with her.

#### Parents' Committee

We would like to thank the parents who volunteered to sit on the Parent Committee this year for the good of us all.

#### Joint Assembly

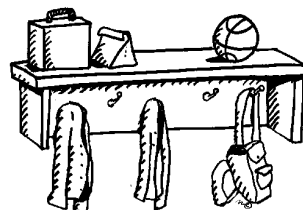
Last Wednesday we were able to enjoy a joint Birralee-Kalvskinnet Assembly. This time it was Year 4 who were responsible for the assembly together with 3. trinn. We thank the children for creating such a good assembly. The other children had lots of fun seeing their friends perform.

#### Sick children

Thank you for phoning the school in the morning to notify us about sick children. Please also note that you can send an e-mail to [admin@birralee.no](mailto:admin@birralee.no) and the teachers will be informed.

#### Tidiness in school

It is getting colder and children will need to bring more clothes to school. Please make sure you help them bring



cubby.

home wet and dirty clothing so that they can be washed. Please also help your child to keep his/her cubby tidy and to bring home the homework folder and any other work posted in the

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### Art materials welcome

As you know, we have very many artistic children in this school. We are in constant need of art materials and usable "junk". We will receive any donations with thanks. We are looking for items like coloured paper and card, wool and yarn, pieces of fabric, buttons, aluminium foil, wrapping paper, colourful magazines, wallpaper glue, beads, paper cups, straws, paper plates, tissue paper etc.



### Science Days – Competition Winner!

Year 7 and Year 8 visited the Science Days in Trondheim in September. They also entered a competition. The students had to define "Evolution" and Camilla Steen's entry: "Evolution: The idea that living things have changed over time." won! Camilla will receive an I-pod Touch from the organisation behind *Forskningsdagene*. Congratulations!

### International Week

All the children will be studying a continent and in particular a country and its culture during the weeks leading up to our International Week in week 43. The children will show their work and share what they have learned with each other during this week.

### Halloween at Birralee

Birralee always had a tradition of recognising Halloween. Halloween is a fun and entertaining time for the children, but also a day that has its roots embedded in European history. It originated in Great Britain and Irish and Scottish immigrants brought their traditions with them to North America during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Halloween is a tradition of greeting the dark quarter of the year in the northern hemisphere (ie Sep 21<sup>st</sup> till December 21<sup>st</sup> when the nights start to get shorter). The religious and cultural implications of Halloween vary greatly from religion to religion and country to country. If you are interested in more information, there are many good websites dedicated to the history of this holiday.

During the past 20 years, Halloween has become increasingly commercialised in America and now is growing in popularity in Europe too. Norway has seen a dramatic increase in the popularity of Halloween during the last five years.

Our school makes deliberate efforts to minimise this commercialised aspect. Birralee celebrations are, above all else, *fun* and include:

- A costume party with home made costumes (**No full-face shop bought masks allowed**)
- songs about dark nights, nocturnal animals, witches and ghosts accompanied by suitable mimed movements

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- reading, story telling and story writing illustrated by paintings and drawings
- some simple discussion of "good" and "bad" and how we cope with the latter.
- a closely supervised "spooky tunnel" designed by the older children for the younger ones to try if they would like.

Please don't hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions or concerns about Halloween. We wish this to be the exciting and engaging autumn event that the children have come to appreciate and anticipate each year. Parents are welcome to take part in the Halloween parties. Invitations will be sent out later this month.

### News from the Middle School

Students in the Middle School are looking forward to enjoying upcoming events. They will be having a Halloween celebration which will include traditional games.

During International Week they will be focusing on the theme of 'One World, One Future', and will be exploring environmental issues, conflicts around the world and globalisation. They will be fundraising for an environmental charity, decided by the Student Council. The students will be communicating and interacting with other schools around the world as part of the Cambridge International Global Perspectives online workshop.

The students will also have an active time in Science, as Year 10 will be taking part in the Biology Activity Day at NTNU, where they will explore DNA, photosynthesis and evolution. Later in October students will be visiting *Skolelab* for workshops on humidity and hot air balloons.

### Interesting web sites to explore with your child:

[www.learningplanet.com](http://www.learningplanet.com)  
[www.coolmath-games.com](http://www.coolmath-games.com)  
[www.lbl.gov/wonder/](http://www.lbl.gov/wonder/)

### We are looking forward to:

#### October Calendar:

Week 42	Autumn Holiday – School closed.
October 19 <sup>th</sup>	First Day after Autumn Holiday
Week 43	International Week
October 20 <sup>th</sup>	Parents' Committee Meeting at 1930
October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Joint UN Day celebration
October 30 <sup>th</sup>	Halloween Parties