



No. 11

Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter

June 2012

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Our Fabulous New Pre-School

In January, at the beginning of the new school year, we opened our new Pre-School unit. We now have 18 children attending each morning. The class has the title 'Caterpillars' growing into 'Butterflies' in Grade R next year. The unit is run by Pontsho Koti our qualified teacher from Clarens and Gill Friend a volunteer Pre-School teacher from the UK.

The children enjoy all the usual Pre-School activities of learning through play, art and craft activities, developing motor skills using large play equipment, as well as learning the basics including numbers, letters and colours. To help all the children communicate, many of whom do not speak English, we are using the Makaton system of sign language.

We cannot thank enough those of you who helped fundraise to make this possible. It is a superb achievement and will give the children a very good start in their education.



A Pyjama Day for children and Staff alike
(above and below)



Role Play in the Home Corner



Playing with the Parachute (above)
and
Decorating Cakes (right)



Dressing Up as Super Heroes
And
A Couple of Snappy Dressers!



Threading Cotton Reels
(Fine Motor Skills)





Evariste and his wife Annick

Burundi Trip February 2012

In February Margaret and a small group of people took a trip to Burundi to visit a small remote community, Ryarusera, near Bujumbura. A man called Evariste, who grew up in Ryarusera, and his wife Annick, survived the genocide that swept across this country in 1994. His vision for the village is to find ways of empowering the people by providing income through small scale dairy farming. Eventually the village would like to start a school.

As part of our outreach to other communities, DCS has decided to fundraise to buy the village a cow, which will cost around R8,000 (£700 approx).



Margaret and some of the children from Ryarusera



Children with passports waiting to 'board' the plane to Burundi

Burundi Day

To launch our fund raising we held a 'Burundi Day' on 16th May. Everyone went on a pretend 'Trip to Burundi'. To contribute towards the funds, the children were allowed to wear non-school uniform, for a small fee. We set out the church hall to resemble an aircraft. All the children were issued with a passport and had to come through security to board the plane. Once seated, assisted by cabin crew, they were shown a safety video, served with refreshments and entertained through the flight. Once the plane had 'landed' the children took part in various activities, as shown in the photos. They learnt a huge amount about Burundi and what it is like to live there, they also had a lot of fun.



Going through security, all luggage had to go through the 'Xray' machine.



Pin the Tail on the Cow (above)
Learning Burundi Songs (left)



Seated on the 'plane' listening to a safety announcement and refreshments being served by Flight Attendant Mathendela



Learning to 'milk' a cow!



Teaching the children Greetings in Burundi



A lunch of Rice and Beans - cooked and served by Pauline and Aletta

Fund Raising - Kick Kent



Keir Wilson (on the left above), a long term friend of DCS, is the founder of a charity called Kick Kent. His charity aims to help young people reach their potential and to teach them life skills through sports. Keir recently ran 66 miles across Kent to raise money for his charity, the children of DCS and another project he supports in Papua New Guinea. With the money Keir raised we have had new goal posts made for football and netball and bought new netball kit and bibs for both netball and football. If you would like to know more about his charity check out, www.kickkent.org.uk

Kidzone

Aileen Scorer, one of our regular sponsors, attends Kings Church, Keswick. She has motivated the children of her Sunday group 'Kidzone' to raise money to buy equipment and toys for the new Pre-School. The children have been praying for the Pre-School and collecting money through fun raising events and donations from their pocket money. They raised £90.00, which was then added to by the elders of the church. Thank you 'Kidzone', Aileen and all the members of Kings Church who contributed to this, we are very grateful. Your funds have helped us to provide storage units, a variety of toys and art and craft equipment.



**The Children of Kidzone,
Kings Church Keswick**

Visitors to DCS

Bill and Sheila Robbins from Bristol, plus two friends Jean and Wendy, came to visit Clarens in February. Bill and Sheila have been many times before and always contribute greatly to the life of DCS with their creativity, generosity and sense of fun. This time they set about painting beautiful murals on the walls of the new Pre-School building, using the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', just right for our Caterpillars (Pre-School) and Butterflies (Grade R).

Sheila, who is experienced in the use of Makaton sign language, led a workshop for DCS staff, which has helped us launch the system in the Foundation Phase classes. They also brought gifts of equipment, such as the play parachute and other lovely things. We are always blessed in so many practical ways by their visits and we are extremely grateful for their contribution to the school community.



**Gd 7 (right)
with Caroline
and their work**

**Gd 4 Displays
of work done
with Caroline**



Caroline Cole, a Year 6 teacher from Red Oaks Primary School in Swindon, also came to visit in April. DCS has had a long term connection with Red Oaks, originally through the Global Partnership but now through friendship links. Caroline, who is now our link co-ordinator, came to work mainly with Grade 4 and Grade 7 producing some stunning work in textiles and art, but also linking with maths work on shape and science work on materials. The Grade 7s produced a lovely wall hanging, which now has pride of place on the wall in Margaret's office. In June Margaret and Carol Goodson returned the visit to Red Oaks working together with Year 6 on a maths investigation.

New Staff at DCS



In January we welcomed two new members of staff to DCS. Naomi Harris (left) is a qualified volunteer teacher from Lincoln, UK. Naomi originally trained as a social worker but retrained as a teacher 3 years ago. She is now teaching Grade 2.

John Mokoena grew up on a farm just outside Clarens and now lives with his wife and 2 young sons in the town. John speaks excellent English and has already proved a real asset to the school. He is working as an assistant with Grade 6. His eldest son, Katleho is in Grade 1.



Sports Achievement

This year DCS took part in the annual athletics meetings held for all schools in the area. Whilst a number of children were successful in the preliminary rounds, one boy, Mohapi Mokoena went all the way to the Free State Championships, running in the 1200 metres. This is the first time DCS has had an athlete get this far in the schools' athletics championships. Well done Mohapi!

Feeding Scheme News

A special 'thank you' to those of you who regularly support our school's Feeding Scheme. With these funds we are able to provide for over twenty of the school's most needy pupils. Some of them receive breakfast and lunch, whilst others just have lunch. The meals are prepared and cooked by Aletta, our cook and each child is responsible for his/her own lunch box. We are also able to use some of these funds to help provide uniform and other items for school for the very disadvantaged. Yolanda Van Den Broek oversees the scheme, she plans the menus, shops for the food and balances the books. The staff and the children are very grateful to her for her hard work and commitment.



DCS Children's Feeding Scheme

Posting Parcels and Letters to DCS



Whilst we encourage our sponsors to communicate with the children, we cannot always guarantee that post will arrive safely. The majority of parcels and letters get through with no problem, but we have had some that have never arrived and some that have even been returned! We apologise for this but it is completely beyond our control. Christmas seems to be a particularly risky time for parcels to go astray and please also bear in mind that the school closes from mid December to early January. If you would like to send something out to the school, might we suggest that you contact New Life Church Biggin Hill to see if someone is travelling out and can bring it with them. Contact details are at the top of the Newsletter.

Teacher Needed in January 2013

DCS will be needing a new teacher in 2013 for our Intermediate Phase (KS2 approx). We are seeking a full time, Christian teacher to join the team. This is a volunteer post and requires a minimum 2 year commitment. Despite advertising both in UK and South Africa, we have not yet had any response. If there is anyone out there who is interested in embarking on a new challenge that will prove to be a life changing experience, please contact us. For further information please email:

Margaret Grant: margaretg@intekom.co.za



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

