

No. 13

# Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter

June 2013

Produced by New Life Church Biggin Hill. UK. Tel: 01959 571667 Email: [admin@newlifebh.org.uk](mailto:admin@newlifebh.org.uk)

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## FROM BIGGIN HILL, KENT, TO CLARENS

In March we were thrilled to have a visit from Gareth and Lesley Wales. Gareth is the lead elder at New Life Church, Biggin Hill, the church that plays such a crucial role in the sponsorship programme for DCS. Gareth has visited Clarens many times before but this was the first time that Lesley, one of our long term sponsors and herself a school teacher, has visited the school. They came, not only to visit the school but also to attend Dihlabeng Church's 'Master Builders' Conference.

New Life Church has had strong links with both Dihlabeng Church (since 1999) and DCS since it began 14 years ago with 9 children in a garage.

Over the years they have sent teams of people to help with the practical building work, of both the school and church, teaching and outreach, and it is through New Life Church that the present financial support of the Sponsorship Programme operates. It was lovely to have them with us, albeit for a short time. Lesley was able to come into school, do some teaching, take assembly and see for herself first hand what the school is like. She was also able to meet the little girl she sponsors.

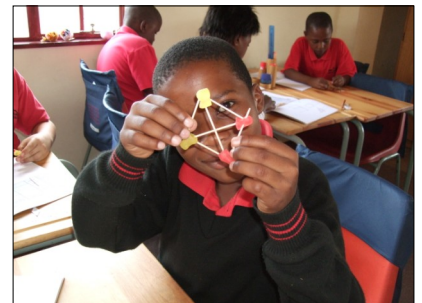
We would like to thank them both, on behalf of the school and the children, for their support and interest and hope very much that they will visit again.



Gareth and Lesley Wales with some of the DCS children

## NEW TEACHER FOR 2014

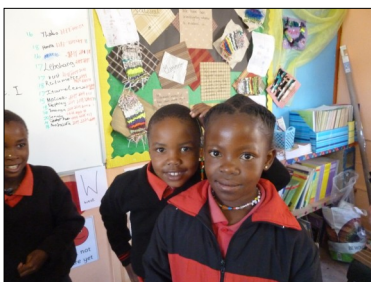
Dihlabeng Christian School is in need of a new teacher for January 2014 for our Intermediate Phase (age 9 - 13 years), Grades 4 to 7. This is a volunteer post, requiring a volunteer's visa to South Africa, with a minimum commitment of two years. Ideally, we would like an experienced Junior School teacher who is able to provide financial support for themselves, although some funding towards expenses may be possible.



He/she should be a committed Christian who is able to uphold and work towards the school's aim of bringing 'Hope to the Hopeless' and provide a high standard of education to children who may come from very impoverished backgrounds.

If you are such a teacher and are looking for a life changing opportunity and a challenge, or you know someone who may be interested in working with us at Dihlabeng, we invite you to contact the school direct by email at:

[dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za](mailto:dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za) or contact New Life Church, Biggin Hill, as above. We will be happy to give you more information.



## Pre-School One Year On

Last year we opened the doors of our new Pre-School unit, built and resourced by amazing donations and fund raising. We thought you might like to see how it has grown and developed over the last year.



The two classes together sharing singing time

### Caterpillars and Butterflies



The two classrooms now house both *Grade RR (Caterpillars)* and *Grade R (Butterflies)*. Having the two classes next door to each other with inter-connecting doors, means that they can share resources and join together for activities and learning. This makes the transition for the younger children much easier when they move from *Grade RR* to *Grade R*.

Grade RR, 'Caterpillars' has 21 children aged 3½ to 5 years. Some of the children attend part time, one or two days a week. This class is taught by Gill Friend, assisted by Jeanett Mokoena. Grade R, Butterflies, has 20 full time children and is taught by Carolyn Revill, our Foundation Phase leader and Deputy Head, assisted by Anna Mokoena. Most of the children entering the school at this stage have English as their second language, being either Sotho or Afrikaans speaking. The teachers and assistants use Makaton sign language to help them communicate across the languages and the assistants also translate instructions. We already have a healthy waiting list of 14 children for next year, 2014, and we are very pleased that we have been able to attract families from the English and Afrikaans community of Clarens, in keeping with the school's aim of being multi-cultural.



We have been given some amazing donations to buy equipment, resulting in a well resourced attractive environment in which the children learn. The children enjoy many activities designed to stimulate their imaginations and challenge their thinking. Most important is the focus on teaching English at an age when language acquisition is at its optimum. They also develop socially, learn good manners and self discipline, all of which are so important for the years of schooling ahead.

Thank you to those of you who have contributed to this aspect of our school, in whatever way, and to the amazing staff of the Pre-School who work with dedication, care and professionalism.



## Fund Raisers and Donations to DCS

### JOAN TAAFE

Joan is a cheerful and very industrious great-grandmother, who lives in Tonbridge, Kent. She loves to knit and has been making batches of dollies for DCS for over 3 years. Joan makes a new set of Dollies for each new intake of children. Our Pre-school children (seen below) received theirs earlier this year. The dollies, which are soft and washable, form an important part of the children's play activities and are extremely popular with the children, as you can see.

Thank you Joan, for your hard work and generous heart to the children.



### OUR NEW MEDIA ROOM

We have converted what used to be the school's toilet cubicles into a very useful teaching and media room. The toilets were removed and pipes sealed off, the partition walls were knocked down and the room painted. With floor tiles and carpet, a table and chairs, we have been able to accommodate small groups for teaching and have a room that can be used to watch TV, whether for educational purposes or recreational. The room is used every morning for maths groups, and language teaching later in the day. A whole class can now sit and watch TV together - this is very popular at the end of term!

All this has been made possible by a very generous donation given by members of the Summerton family last Christmas. We have been able to replace our broken, obsolete VCR tape recorder/player with a new DVD player and have purchased a lovely flat screen TV, which is securely fixed to the wall.

We would like to thank Liz and John Summerton, Tania and Brian Potter, Katrina and Danny Johnston, plus their children and other members of the family for making this possible.

### JACOB JARDINE

We would like to thank Jacob Jardine for his donation to DCS.

Jacob, who lives in Keswick, Cumbria, is the 10 year old son of Jo and Matthew Jardine, friends of one of our sponsors. His father is a cabinet maker. Jacob received a woodcarving set for his birthday and set about learning to carve. He made some beautiful wooden plaques, which he sold to raise money for DCS. In March we received a donation of £100.00 from him. This money went towards a new set of reading books for Grade 7 and some new netball bibs for our netball teams.



Jacob's woodwork is beautiful!

Well done for being such a good example to other young people.



Our new media/study room



### DONATE A DVD

Getting rid of our old VCR player has meant that we have also had to get rid of our collection of tapes and we are therefore very short of TV programmes/films etc. that we can show the children.

If anyone has a suitable DVD that they no longer use or want, or would like to donate a new DVD to us we would be very grateful.

Maybe your children have out-grown some TV programmes or films. We are looking for children's films (certificate U only please), wildlife/nature programmes, educational programmes etc.

Using a large letter stamp (UK only) and an A5 envelope, please post any donated DVDs to: New Life Church, Main Road, Biggin Hill, Kent. TN16 3BB. Carol and Alan will be able to collect them from here and organise getting them to DCS.

## NEW SPONSORS NEEDED FOR MANY CHILDREN

Dihlabeng Christian School offers a high standard of education to many of the most needy children within the community of Clarens. The school fees payable this year are R700.00 per month, which converted at approximately R13.00 to the pound is just under £54.00 per month. The families of all children who attend the school are required to pay something towards this cost, apart from those that are complete orphans. We now have just over 75 regular sponsors mainly in the UK, but also in South Africa, Dubai and Germany, who donate each month to help a designated child. We also receive other regular donations to support our feeding scheme, teacher training and general school fund. As a rough guide to the children's needs a full sponsorship could be any amount upwards to £50.00 per month, or a partial sponsorship up to £25.00 per month. It does not have to be the full amount - every little helps. Many of our sponsors contribute individually, but others do so as a group. Whichever way our sponsorship money comes, please be assured that every penny possible goes directly towards the children, the only expenses claimed are for printing and postage to keep in touch with the sponsors.



At present we have 14 children who need full sponsorship, most between Grade R and Grade 3, and 9 children who need partial sponsorship. If you would like to contribute to the school in this way please contact either Carol and Alan Goodson, through New Life Church, Biggin Hill (contact details on the top front page) or email the school direct at:

dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za We will be very happy to send you more details. The photos of the children needing sponsorship can also be seen on our Facebook page.

## NETBALL EXPERTISE

Earlier this year we received a donation from 'Daughters of Grace', a group of ladies in Dubai, led by Heather Oliver. It was decided to use this money to give our Under 13 A and B netball teams some professional tuition from Celeste Schoeman, who lives in Clarens and is an ex-South Africa netball player. She has come to DCS on four afternoons a week to coach the girls throughout this term. Not only has she trained the girls superbly but she has lifted their game to enable them to win the local school's league, achieving a convincing win against their main rivals, Clarens Primary. The girls have grown in confidence and skill and we are immensely proud of their success. A big 'thank you' to the ladies in Dubai for their donation, and to Celeste for her hard work. We hope she continues to be associated with our school in the future.

Our Under 13 A and B Netball Teams who trained hard this term with Celeste to win the Claren's Schools Netball League.



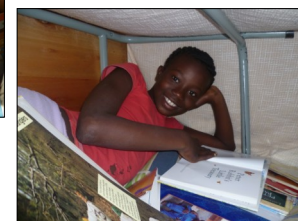
## GRADE 3 CELEBRATE 'WORLD BOOK DAY'

On 23rd April Grade 3 celebrated 'World Book Day' by holding a Pyjama Day. The class, including staff, came to school in pyjamas and spent the day involved in all kinds of activities relating to reading



Fun making story tents and reading

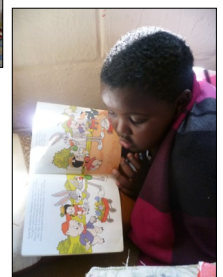
and books. They made front cover designs of their favourite books, turned their tables into 'Story Tents' and even had a story read by



Margaret, dressed in her pyjamas too!

Grade 3 teacher, Yolanda, sponsored the children for a time of 'ERIC' - Everyone Reading In Class'.

The money they raised for every 5 minutes of quiet reading has gone towards some lovely new bright cushions for the pupils to use, whilst sitting on the floor during reading time.



Lerato, cosy and warm with a good book.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

