



### June 2010 at DCS

We have much pleasure in compiling this Newsletter first hand, here in South Africa. We have now been here for 6 months, arriving in Clarens in the New Year, a week before the school year started. It has been wonderful to be a part of the school and to get to know the staff and children. First hand experience has made us much more aware of the challenges the school faces daily.

The school got off to a good start this year. There are 120 children on role. The Foundation Stage classes of Grade R, 1, 2 and 3 are almost at capacity and Grades 4 and 7 have 18 and 16 pupils respectively. Only Grades 5/6 remains a vertically grouped mixed age class of 20 pupils. The school is well staffed too this year with both teachers and assistants.



Our new Reception Class with their teacher Pontsho (Left) and Assistant Nthabising (Right)

### School Fees from Child Sponsors

At the beginning of the year, in agreement with the school, we decided not to increase the sponsorship amount for 2010, because of the general financial climate. However, the full sponsorship amount of £40.00 per month now no longer covers uniform and stationery. The rising cost of living in South Africa, plus the weak Pound presents a real challenge for funds. We maintain a consistent amount transferred to the school each month, but this means that the money does not go as far. It is looking likely, therefore that we may have to increase the sponsorship amount, both full and partial for 2011. We will keep you informed.

We still have a number of children needing sponsorship, both full and partial. We would love to hear from anyone who is interested in contributing to the education and lives of any of these children.

**Carol and Alan Goodson - Sponsorship Co-ordinators.**

### Exciting Plans for 2011!

**A New Pre-School unit for DCS.** Plans are underway to build and open a new Pre-school unit for children aged 4 to 5 years at the beginning of 2011. The new unit will consist of 2 classrooms, which will accommodate the Reception and Pre-school children. It will be purpose built with a large porch and play area, toilets and storage facilities. After much discussion and consultation it has been decided to use a company that erects pre-fabricated buildings on a pre-prepared foundation. This can be done in a relatively short space of time but the funding needs to be available before work can commence. The project is being managed by Carolyn Revill who is currently head of the Foundation Phase (Grades R to 3). So, we have some considerable fund raising to do! The overall cost of building and partly equipping the unit will be around R 400 000.00, approximately £36 000.00.

The school's heart is to give children the best possible start at school. Many very needy children in the locality are denied this type of care because of poverty. There is also a need amongst the white community for suitable Pre-school education. The school's vision is to be multi-cultural and to bring the two communities together. We hope to provide a Pre-school facility for about 15 children.

During the 5 week school holiday Carolyn will be going back to the UK and is hoping to get the chance to present the funding needs of the project to as many people as possible. This is a step of faith, in which we are trusting God for the provision of:

- Funding for the building - approximately R400 000.00.
- Funding for furniture and equipment.
- Teaching staff and assistants for Pre-school aged children.

If you feel you would like to give to this very worthwhile project, please contact via email direct to Carolyn: [csrevill@hotmail.com](mailto:csrevill@hotmail.com) or: [dhlabengschool@intekom.co.za](mailto:dhlabengschool@intekom.co.za) or contact New Life Church, Biggin Hill, details above.

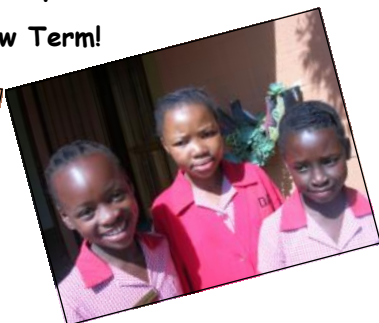
Carolyn Revill with two possible new Pre-school pupils on the site of the new classrooms.







**New Hairstyles for  
a New Term!**



**Vusimuzi looking  
extremely smart!**



**Lomile (left) and Sibongile  
(right) in their pretty  
dresses.**

## Events in the First Term



**Margaret's Family Group**

### Family Groups

All the children in the school are divided into 12 mixed age Family Groups. Once a fortnight we have an extended break and share a picnic and fun and games together. These pictures were taken on Valentine's Day, which was also an 'Own Clothes' Day.



**Lizzie and Carol's Family Group**



**Grade 7's Cake Stall**

### Fund Raising Events

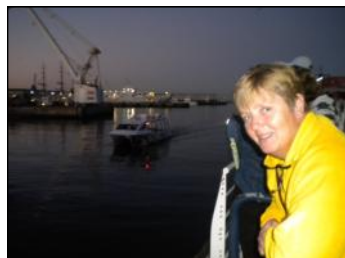
The children and staff have been busy raising money for the school and other causes. The Sponsored Spell and Entrepreneurs Day, which teaches the children how to cost and budget a small business venture, raised money towards new computers and end of year outings. They also gave 10% of the money to Clarens Combined School.



**Grade 5 - More Cakes!**

### The Cadiz Freedom Swim

Two of our teachers, Yolanda and Katie, joined with Cheryl Clark (Katie's mum) and Marius van den Heever (Katie's husband) to form a relay team to swim in the annual Cadiz Freedom Swim, on May 2nd from Robben Island to the main Cape Town shore. A distance of 11km in very cold water with a reputation for sharks!



They raised money for various children's projects in Dihlabeng Church and Lesotho, including the school. This was a huge achievement for them all and something they have trained very hard for, assisted by Loretta Dickerson an experienced Channel swimmer.

**From Top Left: Loretta (Team Trainer), Cheryl swimming, Relay Change Over, The Team After Their Amazing Achievement.**





The athletes who competed in the Municipality Athletics Championships, with Kobus Basson their Sports teacher.

### Athletics Championships

A team of our athletes, trained and supervised by Kobus, represented DCS at the Municipality Athletics Championships. After several rounds of meetings, Zandile and Thapelo, both in Grade 5, competed at the Eastern Free State Championships. This is the first year any of the DCS pupils have got this far in the competition.

Congratulations to both of them and to all who competed.



Zandile (top) competed in the 100m and long jump, Thapelo (bottom) competed in the 1200m long distance race

## Visitors to DCS



Sheila Robbins sharing a story with the Grade 7 class.

In February a team of five people, including Bill and Sheila Robbins came to visit Clarens and DCS. They brought with them some wonderful 'Story Sacks', which are a lovely resource for the children across all ages. They spent time presenting the stories and activities to the children, using toys, dressing up clothes and model animals, all designed to involve the children in the stories.



Gill reading to the Grade 1 class. The children all wore animal masks and took part in the story.

### School Exchange Team from Red Oaks, Swindon

Also in the February half term, Terri and Steve Menham visited with a team of 4 music specialist teachers. The visit was planned to bring together traditional music from both UK and SA. In preparation for their visit all the children at DCS made their own instruments, which they used in developing songs, dance and rhythm. This culminated in a wonderful concert presented to parents at the end of the week. The team brought out the very best in the children, who had a wonderful time. Red Oaks also presented the school with some beautiful banners made from pictures drawn by the pupils at DCS earlier in the term. The banners focused on all the positive attributes of the children and the ethos of the school.

Thank you Red Oaks from all of us, it was a wonderful week.



Tshepo with his home-made drum



A clever instrument made from a milk bottle and some bottle tops.



Performing the Concert with the Red Oaks team.



Homemade instruments for rhythm and dances created by the children.



School's Feeding Programme

Increased sponsorship specifically for the Feeding Scheme has allowed the school to expand this valuable service. A number of vulnerable children have been highlighted as needing breakfast, which is now provided and the menu for the midday meal provision has been revised to give a good varied diet. Katie has planned and managed this really well, assisted by Aletta, who cooks for the children. This is the daily menu now on offer for 24 children.

	Breakfast	Lunch
Mon	Porridge Oats	Pap and Milk
Tues	Bread and Scrambled Egg	Macaroni, Mince and Carrots
Wed	Pap and Milk	Chicken, Rice and Spinach
Thurs	Bread and Scrambled Egg	Pap and Beans
Fri	Porridge Oats	Chips and Fish Fingers

(Pap is a maize cereal which forms the staple diet of most of the children)



Katie, who organises the Feeding Programme and Aletta our cook, with some of the children Ernie, Dimpho and Ndaba.



Three boys enjoying their lunch.

DCS School Council



School Council members from the left: Doris, Zandile, Max, Matsoeute, Yolanda, Liam and Tinaye.

The school council is led by Yolanda Van Den Broek. The group consists of children representing Grades 4 to 7. They meet every week to discuss issues in school that affect the children. They give suggestions for change and organise activities. Recently they ran a very good ANTI LITTER campaign. The school site has been divided into sections and each class has been given responsibility for keeping their area clean and free from litter. They also ran a 'design a poster' competition on the theme of preventing litter.

Visit to UK

On May 12th Margaret, Pusetso Nkomo, Zandile Mani and Ineke Basson left Dihlabeng for a 2 week trip to the UK. They spent the first week visiting Red Oaks School Swindon, Bristol and Bath, staying with host families. They had a day trip to London and then moved on to Kent for the second week, visiting Biggin Hill and having time to relax and enjoy the beautiful spring weather. Pusetso, Zandile and Ineke had not flown before nor been outside South Africa, so this was a huge adventure for them.

Margaret, Ineke and Zandile enjoying the sun on Hastings beach.



Pusetso, Ineke and Zandile in Trafalgar Square.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

