



No. 9

Dihlabeng Christian School

Newsletter

June 2011

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We would like to say a huge 'THANK YOU' to all of you who have taken part in fund raising events and made donations towards the new Pre-school unit. A special mention goes to the children who have taken part; Jack and Ned Potter organised a wonderful cake sale and the girls from Bromley High Junior School initiated and took part in a sponsored swim, which raised a very large sum! Thank you so much for your enthusiasm. We have now raised approximately half of the cost and we expect to start work on the building of the new Pre-school unit during the long school break, from the end of June, through July. The plans have been drawn up and the company we have engaged to do the construction has agreed a contract which allows the main outer shell of the building to be constructed with the funds raised so far. The money raised in the UK has now been transferred to SA, making use of a very reasonable exchange rate.



Jack and Ned Potter with their splendid display of cakes which they sold to raise money for the new Pre-school.

Thank You!

Our New Pre-School

We are very excited about this progress as the dream starts to become a reality. We are hoping and praying that, as the building gets underway it will urge us on and encourage the rest of the funds to be raised. If there are any individuals or church groups who would like to host a fund raising event, especially during the summer months, we have many ideas and suggestions.



The girls of Bromley High Junior school, where Carol used to teach, who organised a sponsored swim in aid of the Pre-school.

Thank You!

Please contact by email: Carolyn Revill, csrevill@hotmail.com or Liz Summerton, lizjohn.summerton@btinternet.com Alternatively, contact New Life Church (details above).

We still have a way to go and need your support to bring this project to completion.



DCS on Facebook



We now have a new Facebook page. If you are a user of Facebook and would like to keep up with day to day news and photos of the school you can access this by searching for Dihlabeng Christian School or following: www.facebook.com/pages/Dihlabeng-Christian-School

Click on the 'Like' button to receive regular updates.

Our thanks to Katy McKay for setting this up.

New Staff

Katy McKay has come from the UK to teach Grade 5 this year. She is a primary school teacher, formerly from Wymondham, in Norfolk but has also taught for the last 3 years in Dubai. She has already brought many new skills and ideas to the school.



Matendela Nhlapo is a member of Dihlabeng Church who has joined the staff this year as an assistant in Grade 4, working with Yolanda Van Den Broek. He is a married man with two children. His ambition is to be a qualified teacher one day.





Grade 7 guitarists with Anyway Muviyi

Assistant Jeannett praying with some young pupils



Monday morning's assembly: "It was an eye opener to experience all learners from Grade R to Grade 7 worship with such sincerity, as well as sing their hearts out tunefully to the accompaniment of guitars - played by both teachers and children."



Makwaza and Mangese, Grade 4 learning to swim



"The school recognises that teaching and learning is infinite. Life skills beyond the curriculum are taught from an early age due to home background being mainly impoverished."

Tansy Van Den Dolder, one of our parents, teaching the boys how to cook in preparation for a Cake Sale.



Lerato (Grade 5) with the knitted rabbit toy she made.

The IQAA Evaluation

In the middle of April the school underwent an evaluation by IQAA (Independent Quality Assurance Agency). In preparation for this the school had to produce a very detailed and comprehensive report covering all areas of school life, highlighting strengths, plans for progress and areas of weakness. The school was then assessed against this report over a 3 day period of intensive evaluation. The process was similar to the OFSTED inspections carried out in UK schools.

The staff team was led by Carolyn Revill, head of the Foundation Phase and teachers, Yolanda Van Den Broek (Grade 4), Anyway Muviyi (Grade 3) and Pontsho Koti (Grade R). These four people worked incredibly hard during Term 1, attending a training workshop in Johannesburg, carrying out surveys amongst pupils, parents, staff and Governors, gathering and collating evidence and writing a superb report covering every aspect of teaching at Dihlabeng School.

We would like to bring you some quotes from the final IQAA report written by the evaluator to celebrate the achievement of our very special school.

The children are, "truly privileged in that they receive the best possible education that dedicated teachers are capable of providing."

Dihlabeng Assistants and Support Staff. Left to right. Front Row: Pauline Mlangeni, housekeeper. Aletta Tsiana, cook. Violah Muviyi, school secretary. Anna Mofokeng, Gd 2 assistant. Back row: Pusetso Nkomo, Gd 5 student teacher. Evelyn Mokoena, Gd 3 assistant. Matendela Nhlapo, Gd 4 assistant. Nthabiseng Tshabalala, Gd R assistant. Jeannett Mokoena, Gd 1 assistant.



Grade 2

"At Dihlabeng Christian School it is certainly not material wealth that makes the difference. The school is blessed with amazing people who provide the energy, the passion, the creativity and the drive to make the school what it is today."



Grade 1



Grade 4

Dihlabeng Teaching Staff. Left to right. Front Row: Pontsho Koti, Gd R. Katy McKay, Gd 5. Margaret Grant, Principal and Gd 6. Lizzie Mbele, Gd 1. Back Row: Adriani Basson, Gd 6/7. Kobus Basson, Sports and Gd 6/7. Anyway Muviyi, Gd 3. Yolanda Van Den Broek, Gd 4.

(Carolyn Revill Gd 2 absent from photo)



IQAA Evaluation

The evaluation itself was mentored by Mrs Bridget Walton a very experienced teacher and head who met several times with staff during the preparation period. She then came and spent 3 days observing, monitoring and evaluating the learning and life of DCS. Her final report which followed was a realistic and extremely positive affirmation of the fantastic work that Dihlabeng Christian School is doing. She was full of praise for the children, the staff and the level and quality of learning at the school, as well as agreeing with and endorsing the areas that need to be improved.

"School support for disadvantaged children knows no bounds and yet no child's expectation of such help is visible to a person visiting the school."



Mongadi Mafisa Grade R

"Children interviewed all commented on the care and good teaching enjoyed at school."

"Where necessary, even small classes are subdivided so that children obtain the best benefit from individual teaching."

Student teacher Pusetso Nkomo with one of the two 'Booster' groups he teaches studying English



Grade 2 members enjoying
a session of free play

"An innovative teacher placed a photo of an empty bookshelf on Facebook with an appeal for help. During the Intensive Evaluation week, an 8th box of donated books was received from supporters in England. Imagine the joy experienced as children are allowed to open each parcel as it arrives!"



The bookshelf before (above) with
very few books . . .

Grade 5 pupils with some of the new books for their classroom.



... and after.

The shelf had to be modified to take all the new books!

"If one looks at what the school achieves in terms of finance, it is quite remarkable and due entirely to human endeavour - good teachers, willing learners and the added contribution of others from outside."

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This last comment refers to the amazing contribution made to the school by our regular child sponsors and others who contribute each month to the school.

Our sincere thanks to you all.

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Feeding Scheme News

The Dihlabeng Feeding Scheme now feeds 22 children, from Grade R to Grade 7. Each child has been allocated a lunch box, so they can collect their food in the mornings and return their box to the kitchen before they go home. Aletta, a member of the staff team, is employed to do the cooking for the feeding scheme.



Our Cook Aletta

Many of the children we feed come from homes where there is not always enough food to go around. All the children receive a meal at lunch time and some are also given breakfast.

We would like to thank those who have contributed towards this feeding scheme, as without the donations we would not be able to do what we are doing.

Yolanda Van Den Broek
(Feeding Scheme Coordinator)



The children cared for by the Feeding Scheme

Adult Literacy

English has been taught this term to two groups of adults, the ladies of People of Hope (one of the church projects) and the Sotho speaking members of the school staff. Each group receives an hour long lesson once a week and they are encouraged to use and practise their English on a daily basis.

These classes have been run by Alan Goodson assisted by Carol. It is a pleasure to see adults becoming more confident and skilled in their use of English.

We hope to run a class for members of the wider community in the spring (October).

Carol and Alan with the 'People of Hope' ladies. This is one of the groups learning English this term.



Staff Training

Members of staff following specific courses and qualifications this year are:

Margaret Grant: A one year UNISA diploma in 'Counselling Traumatized Children'.

Pusetso Nkomo and Pontsho Koti: They are both studying modules in Early Childhood Development. They will complete four modules, which cover Literacy, Numeracy, Arts, Life Skills, Health and Safety and Management, as well as practical teaching skills.

A special thank you to those of you who support our staff training programme.

Sports Fixtures

This term our Under 13 and Under 11 football and netball teams have taken part in a Inter Schools league of fixtures with other local schools. This was initiated and organised by DCS teacher Anyway Muyivi, who has founded the Clarens Schools Sports Association. The children all played with determination and enthusiasm. Congratulations to the DCS U13 Girls Netball team who are top of the league.



DCS football and netball players



Rob and Hilary Ferns

Rob Ferns is a qualified GP from Lewes, Sussex. He is also registered as a doctor in South Africa. He has been regularly visiting Clarens over the last year, working with People of Hope and, in Lesotho, helping with the HIV clinics and general health care. He has kindly offered to act as an unofficial 'school doctor' for the children and staff of the school. Hilary, his wife, who often travels with him, also brings her expertise as a physiotherapist and ex-teacher in helping children on a one to one basis. We are very grateful to them for their help and support.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

