

No. 25

Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter

June 2019

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Changes at DCS in 2020

Margaret Grant began the work at DCS in the year 2000, initially working with 9 children in the garage of her home. The school grew over the next few years and moved several times to accommodate the increasing number of children. It is now established at Saron Farm, Clarens, and has a maximum number of 180 students from Grade RR to Grade 7. The school has been Margaret's passion for these last 20 years and she has led the staff and children faithfully and with great wisdom and courage. She now feels the time is right to pass on the responsibility of the day-to-day management and leadership of the school to



Andrew Woodage who has worked at the school and been on the school's leadership team for over four years. Whilst she is stepping back from her role as Principal, she will still be involved. She has always had a desire to be involved with and assist other schools with a similar vision to hers. She shared the following with us,

"From January 2020, I am looking forward to developing the wider vision of Dihlabeng Christian School, which is to come alongside and encourage other Christian schools serving the poor. DCS has a wealth of people with expertise and when, as a whole school staff, we discussed working together as a team, to share our passion and belief in the incredible power of Christian education as a vehicle to change the lives of the poor across the continent of Africa and beyond, everyone was excited and eager to be involved. I am also hoping to get more involved in the therapy work we do with horses with some of the children at the school and to develop the Special Needs aspect of school-life further. I am delighted that Andy has agreed to take on the role of head at the school and am fully confident that he is more than able to lead it on to even greater and better things. What a privilege and honour that God has provided such an amazing person, with a burning passion for the poor and a deep, tested love for Jesus, for me to hand the baton over to at the end of 2019. I am thrilled that I can continue to work with him, Carolyn Revill, who is our deputy head, and the DCS staff team as we move forward together into the wider work God has prepared for us to do."



Andy and Becky Woodage and their three children, Matthew, Keryn and Lucy, came to Dihlabeng Christian School as volunteers in January 2015. Andy and Becky, both qualified teachers, work at the school with Andy teaching Grade 4 and leading the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 7) and Becky teaching part time in the Foundation Phase in Grade 2. Keryn and Lucy attend the school and Matthew has now moved on to High School at Witteberg, in Bethlehem having completed Grade 7 at DCS last year. As of January 2020 Andy will be taking over the role of Principal, still as a volunteer. Andy says,

"I feel honoured to be given the chance to lead DCS. It is an absolutely amazing school, with wonderful children and a superb staff team. I love the vision of the school, which I intend to affirm as we go forward. We will continue to serve our community, giving the best education to all children, whatever their background, within a wide-ranging curriculum, whilst making sure that Jesus is the centre of all we do."

Margaret and Andy's Visit to the UK. By Carol Goodson.

Margaret and Andy visited the UK for 3 weeks in June. They travelled to various centres across the south of England where we have supporting churches, sponsors and friends of DCS. We were able to invite some of the sponsors and friends who live in each geographic location to a series of events and presentations which were aimed at meeting with and thanking our sponsors, and communicating the plans for changes at DCS in 2020. Margaret and Andy were also able to forge new links with two schools in the Exmouth area, Marpool Primary School and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, which we hope will develop in the future. Alan and I were able to accompany them during several stages of their trip and it was lovely to meet so many friends and put names to faces of some of the people we have corresponded with over the years. Thank you to those people who hosted Margaret and Andy and who helped us organise this successful trip.



Left - Margaret and Andy with some of the pupils of Marpool Primary School.



Left - City Church Gloucester. Margaret speaking at an evening meal and presentation. Thank you for enabling us to visit.



Above - Andy with Rosemary and John Cleverly who hosted them in Gloucester. John and Rosemary have visited DCS many times.

Right - Christchurch Downend, Bristol, have been long term sponsors of DCS through our dear friends Sheila and Bill Robbins.



Peter and Sue Lyndon, originally from Brighton and now in Bristol, have been sponsors for many years. It was lovely to meet them and so many others who support the children at DCS.



Community Club and Blankets

Part of the timetable at DCS is given over to various clubs that provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities for the children to get involved in. These include arts and crafts, music, sports and community-related activities. Community Club was run in Term 1 by our



Grade RR teacher, Elmarie Cameron (right). She supervised a group of 18 mixed aged children to visit the Itumelang Centre, in the Kgubetswana township location, once a week.



The centre provides day care and a safe haven for children and young adults with physical and mental disabilities. The DCS Community Club provided a time of music, songs, dancing and craft activities for the members at the centre. This was a challenging commitment for young children and we are very proud of their involvement.

Some members of Community Club also helped to identify needy people in their neighbourhood to whom we were able to give some beautiful blankets that had been knitted by members of the 'Connect' group who meet together at New Life Church, Biggin Hill, in the UK. More blankets were also given out through Dihlabeng Church. It was lovely to be able to involve the children in thinking about others in their community who are in need.

Top Left - The DCS Community Club with members of the Itumelang Centre



Community Club members giving bright colourful blankets to people in their neighbourhood.

Graduation Day for Lizzie Mbele May 2019



Congratulations Lizzie!

Many, many congratulations to Lizzie Mbele on her graduation! Lizzie studied at the University of the Free State and has now been awarded her National Professional Diploma in Education.

Lizzie has worked at DCS since 2001 and began her studies in 2007. She has overcome many difficulties and setbacks in order to gain her qualification and we are all extremely proud of her.



Lizzie at her Graduation Day with Margaret, Carolyn Revill and Yolanda Van den Broek.



Staff changes - Violah Muviyi and Tsitsi Musango

We were extremely sorry to say goodbye to our long term school secretary and dear friend, Violah Muviyi, who left us at the end of Term 1. Violah and her husband Anyway, who previously taught at DCS, are in the long process of relocating to the UK. Violah has worked at the school since 2007 and has been a very valuable part of the DCS team. We are so very grateful for her skills, her hard work, loyalty and calm manner. We wish her and all her family God's blessing in this new chapter of their lives.

In Violah's place we have been very fortunate to be able to employ Tsitsi Musango who is, in fact, Violah's niece. Like Violah, Tsitsi is from Zimbabwe where she worked at the Standard Bank in Harare. She is studying towards an accounting qualification (ACCA). About working at DCS she says, *"It is very different to the corporate environment in the way that people communicate what they want me to do. There it was very strict but here it is not so strict and not so stressful! However, I'm not used to dealing with children - you can reason with an adult but if a child's crying, it's not so easy!"*

New Teacher - Bohlokwa Mofokeng

New to our teaching staff this year is Bohlokwa Mofokeng. She comes from Kestell, Free State. Bohlokwa studied at the University of the North West, Mafakeng Campus and gained her BA in Psychology, then a PGCE. At DCS she teaches Sesotho in Grade 3 and 6, Social Science for Grade 5, 6 and 7, English Grammar with Grade 4 and 7, PSWB and Life Skills with Grade 6 and Life Orientation with Grade 7. We are very pleased to welcome her to DCS.



Maintenance



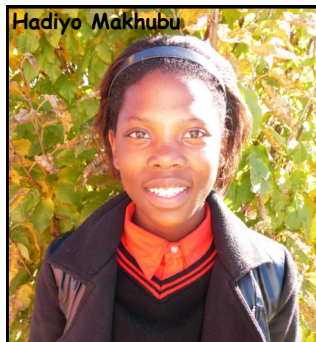
Following the sad death of our maintenance man, Thembisio, in December 2018, we have been able to employ John Matjhitja Mosia to help keep our school and grounds in good working order. John lives locally and his daughter Mamotsekuwa is currently in Grade 5. His elder daughter, Nthabiseng, left DCS in Dec 2017. John is proving to be a real asset to the school, taking initiative for the many and varied tasks that need to be done around the site. His good command of English and his willingness to work have helped him quickly become a part of the DCS team. He says, *"It is fantastic and I enjoy my work. I am very happy here!"*

Conquesta Maths Competition 2018

Each year Grades 3 to 7 at DCS take part in the Conquesta National Mathematics competition which is held in Term 3 (July/August). The results and certificates of the 2018 competition came through early in Term 1 of 2019 and we were able to award the children their certificates. We had some excellent results.

Matthew Woodage from last year's Grade 7 achieved 98%, Hadiyo Makhubu, also from Grade 7 2018, achieved 84%. In Grade 5, Keryn Woodage achieved 78% and Tshiu Mokoena 64%. In Grade 3 (front row of photo - right to left) we had a fantastic result from Thomas Roos who scored 92%, Alan Tshabalala 88% and Daniel Oosthuyzen 84%.

Well done, we celebrate your achievements!



Our Top Achievers in the 2018 Conquesta Maths Competition

Pre-Primary Fundraiser - The Teddy Triathlon

In May, during Term 2, our Caterpillars and Butterflies classes, Grade RR and Grade R, held their annual fundraising event to raise money for school resources. This year the event was a "Teddy Triathlon". The children brought their favourite teddies or soft toys to school and each teddy (and child!) took part in 3 events - a teddy bear jump, a teddy bear slide and a teddy bear drive. At the end each child received a certificate for taking part and a Barni teddy bear cake as a prize. It was a whole lot of fun on a cold but sunny day! Thank you to Carolyn Revill and all the staff and parents who helped to organise this and who contributed to the cause.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

