

Year End 2020

Hi everyone. I am sitting here in Clarens at the end of 2020, a year that has felt challenging and complicated. The effects of the virus have been most keenly felt in the economic hardship it has caused. Yes, we have had a number of sicknesses and deaths in the town but, so far, not as many as we had expected. Indeed, DCS has been open since the end of May and we have not had a single confirmed case of COVID-19 amongst children or staff! However, our town relies almost exclusively on tourism, leaving many households struggling to make ends meet.

In this context, we have striven to make DCS a haven of normality as far as possible. Of course, there have been changes, such as mask wearing and sanitising everything that moves, and many things that don't. We have become so used to wearing masks that we sometimes forget we are wearing them. One teacher joked that we should see if we were eligible for a Guinness World Record for longest mask-wearing whilst at school!

However, in the midst of it all, we achieved many things. For example, we continued to teach almost the full curriculum. In all grades, we managed some Performance Art (dance) and some non-contact sports. We even began to train in the athletics disciplines, optimistically hoping that school athletics competitions might return next year.

Prize-giving was very different this year. For starters, we held it outside, under parasols to provide some shade. In the end, we celebrated nine separate times, once for each grade, including a special 'Awards Evening' for Grade 7 and our trophy winners. It was not quite the raucous event that we are used to having but parents were appreciative of the effort.



Paper hats and paper flowers to celebrate 'Spring Day' on 1st September



Grade R end of year outing to Sunnyside Farm - playing in the river

The end of the year was wonderful. We have all become so used to thinking around COVID protocols that the teachers managed to find some very inventive ways to still have end-of-year trips and events, including mountain walks and socially-distanced picnics. The Grade 7s even had a 'Prom Night' at a local restaurant. We finished the term with our first whole school event since March, when we all sat, socially distanced of course, on our tennis court and said goodbye to our 2020 leavers.

I wish to make special mention of my staff team here. It has been a long, long year. I recently reminded some Grade 5 children of something that had happened in Term 1 and they said, "That feels like it was years ago!" All members of our staff team have been sensational and

'gone the extra mile' in so many ways. From delivering extensive cleaning schedules, to fitting in the whole curriculum, to providing support for learners who have had lives complicated by unemployment and other social issues, I am so proud of all of them!

2020 has been a year that we will never forget! Thank you to each one of you who has supported us, in so many ways. I thank God for getting us through it and ask for His great blessing in 2021, especially for all who are part of the DCS family.

Much love, Andy.

End of Year Assembly
A fitting way to end a socially
distanced year



Future Plans for 2021

We are looking forward to better times in 2021 and being able to move forward with new projects, one of which will be developing an outside play area for our Pre-school, Grades RR and R. So far we have managed to install the fencing needed to separate the area to be developed. Funding for this project has come from several specific donations. Foundation Phase leader, Carolyn Revill explains more : *'We are keen to extend the classroom outdoors and create a safe learning space for our youngest children that is separate from, but still very much part of, the main school.'*



Our Pre-school classrooms with the new fencing and gate in place already

'We are planning to build some low level play equipment such as balance beams, stepping stones and structures to climb on and hide beneath.'

Small play houses will encourage make-believe play and there may even be a simple maze! We already have some old tyres to create mini motorbikes and an old bath where we will plant seeds.'

We hope to be able to continue with this project once school re-opens in January.



Head Boy and Head Girl for 2021 - and their Deputies (photo below - left)

We have pleasure in announcing our new Head Girl and Head Boy for 2021, together with their Deputies.

Head Girl - Rethabile Makutu (centre, front) and Deputy, Retshedisitswe Mofokeng (front).

Head Boy - Katleho Mokoena (centre, back) and Deputy, Chaka Mosea (back).

These Grade 7 students will assist the staff team in many ways and provide a role model of leadership to other students.

Congratulations to them; we wish them well.



2020 Book Prize Winners

Each year one girl and one boy in each Grade is awarded a Book Prize for outstanding achievement/effort. These are the winners for 2020. Children in Grade RR and Grade R are also given a small prize each. **Is your sponsored child among the winners this year?**

Foundation Phase

Gd 1 - Busisiwe Mzangoa G
Keabetswe Mofokeng B
Gd 2 - Reitungetse Nzimande G
Prince Kuria B
Gd 3 - Lebohang Moloi G
Tlhalefo Mokobocho B

Intermediate Phase

Gd 4 - Lucy Woodage G
Letlotlo Ntoko B
Gd 5 - Makeresemese Dlamini G
Tieho Motsoeneng B
Gd 6 - Rethabile Makutu G
Katleho Mokoena B
Gd 7 - Keryn Woodage G
Tshiu Mokoena B



Trophy Winners 2020 (photo above)

FP Top Achiever - Tlhonefotatso Mokoena Grade 3

FP Sportsman - Morena Mashinini Grade 3

IP Sportsman - Rethabile Mokoena Grade 5

Perseverance Award - Bakoena Soko Grade 7

Exemplary Behaviour - Retshedisitswe Mofokeng Grade 6

Care and Kindness Award - Xihlovo Mhlari Grade 7

Creativity Award - Tshiu Mokoena Grade 7

Moshoeshe Sesotho Award - Nkadimeng Mota Grade 7

Afrikaans Award - Keryn Woodage Grade 7

Basson Maths Award - Keryn Woodage Grade 7

IP Top Achiever - Keryn Woodage Grade 7

Principal's Prize - Thokozile Nkhomo Grade 7



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