

We apologise for the late delivery of this newsletter. We have been unable to travel out to Clarens as we normally would have done and this has made it difficult to compile the newsletter, nor have we been able to take photos of sponsored children this year. Hopefully normal service will be resumed in the near future. Carol and Alan Goodson.

End of Term 2 Message from Andy Woodage - Principal of DCS.

Hello everyone,

I can hardly believe we have reached the end of the second term of 2021 and are half way through the year already. Where does the time go? If you had told me at the start of this COVID pandemic that we would still be held in its grip, I would have asked you to stop being so pessimistic. Yet, here we are! As I write, South Africa is experiencing a third wave and the President has just announced tighter lockdown restrictions, including the closure of schools. Thankfully, we have completed Term 2 and have just started our Winter Break so we are hoping this will have little impact on our school's calendar.

It has been a rollercoaster six months, beginning in January with the delayed reopening of schools (due to the second wave), which led to an adjusted start to the school year. However, it was not too long before infection numbers reduced and restrictions relaxed. We restarted sports clubs and even managed to reopen our jungle gym and find a soccer ball for the children to use during break times. We had some exciting moments too, such as the installation of solar panels, one above our Feeding Scheme kitchen and another above our pre-primary block, giving us hot water on-tap for the first time.



Solar panels fitted at two locations at school provide running hot water in the school for the first time!

A tremendous help with food preparation and washing up for our Feeding Scheme staff.



Unfortunately, then came an outbreak of COVID in our town. We experienced the first cases in our DCS community, with two teachers and three Grade 7 pupils testing positive. (I am thankful to say that all five of them are now recovered and well.) However, these cases were an indication that the third wave was arriving and we swiftly reinstated restrictions, including a return to playing only non-contact sports.

Of course, our brilliant staff have generated many wonderful learning opportunities in the last couple of terms. You can read more about some of those in this newsletter. I continue to be thrilled and delighted by the passion and creativity of the team that God has put together.

And, what of our future plans for 2021? Will we be able to take Grade 6 on a residential trip? Will we be able to play contact sports again? Will we be able to gather the whole school together for assemblies or parents' evenings? Who knows! South Africa is behind the curve with its vaccine rollout but the Department of Education is working hard to provide vaccines for all school workers and, as of publication of the newsletter, all of the DCS staff have now been vaccinated which is fantastic! We will ride this third wave with resilience and determination to succeed. We will continue to wear our masks and sanitise regularly, whilst giving our very best for the children in our care. We will trust in God for His wisdom and strength.

Thank you all, once again, for partnering with us and for your overwhelming generosity. Together, we are making a huge difference!

God bless,
Andy.

The staff at DCS have been outstanding in keeping the children's education enjoyable, as well as instructive. We asked each Grade to send us a few photos of activities they have been doing in these first two terms.



Grade R

'Grade R have been learning about bears this term. Our favourite story was 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' so of course we had to go on an expedition to find our own bears!'

'We also made bear finger puppets and finished the term with a teddy bear pyjama party.'

Teacher: Carolyn Revill



Grade 1

'This term Grade 1 have been learning 'tricky words' (high frequency words such as, 'they, here, be, me, said, so') which help them to read and write sentences. We have also been reading some bible stories and drawing pictures about them. One favourite activity has been learning to play tennis because it involves having to use a racquet!'

Teacher: Elize Ferreira



Grade 2

'It is autumn in Clarens. In English we went on an Autumn walk and did some art to build Autumn vocabulary.'



We then used the words we had learnt to write poems on leaves and displayed them in the classroom.'

Teachers: Lizzie Mbele and Becky Woodage



Grade 3 making robots and insects from recycled materials

Grade 3

'The learners in Grade 3 have been very busy making robots and model insects from recycled materials to link in with their Natural Science and Technology curriculum.'



Some students attended 'Eco Club', an extra-curricular activity, and learnt how to make recycled paper, to be used later to make greeting cards.'

Teacher: Naomi Lokers



Grade 4

'In term 1, as part of Natural Science and Technology, Grade 4 had a go at gardening in raised containers. They were learning about conditions needed to grow vegetables. They enjoyed caring for the vegetables and took home their little produce.'

In Art in term 2 the students used leaves of different plants to make prints.'

Teacher: Rabson Chatikobo



Grade 5

'Grade 5 has had an amazing and fun first two terms. We enjoyed making ice cream whilst learning about processing materials in NST. We had plenty of fun making clothes from old magazine pages to celebrate Eco-Day. The girls made skirts and the boys made bow-ties and armour.'

Teacher: Aimee Leigh Cameron



The whole school enjoyed 'Eco-Day' led by teacher Yolanda Van Den Broek during term 2. Environmental issues are her passion and she brings many thoughtful and practical ideas to the school team. Educating the children in caring for their environment in a fun way is so important. There are more photos of this enjoyable event on the **DCS Facebook page**. Follow the links at the top of this newsletter.

Grade 6

This is what the students in Grade 6 have to say:

'Being in Grade 6 is amazing! During these first two terms we have learnt about food preservatives in Natural Science and, in History, our historical site, Mapungubwe.'



'Creative Arts was also fun in these two terms. We got to show our creativity and learnt a lot about patterns. We studied Mandala designs and created our own collages.'

We also used a picture called 'A Girl Watching the Moon' as inspiration for our mono-chromatic pictures using pastels. We made a lovely display in our classroom.'

Teacher: Bohlokwa Mofokeng



'We enjoy working together as a class because we are a team. We are trying to come up with creative ideas of how we can make money for our class trip away to Drakensville in November.'

The school hopes to take Grade 6 on their residential trip away to Drakensville Adventure Centre for 3/4 days in November, at the beginning of term 4. Grade 6 will be busy in the meantime trying to find ways to fund raise. This is made more difficult because of current restrictions.

Grade 7 (6) Trip to Drakensville Adventure Centre

This trip was postponed from 2020 when the children were in Grade 6. They were finally able to go in March 2021. Thank you to everyone who contributed to their fundraising.

'After all the hard work of fundraising, Grade 7s with Teacher Bohlokwa, Teacher Yolanda and Teacher Mathandela, had a fantastic time away at Drakensville. Although it's only a couple of hours away from the school, very few of the 14 learners had ever been into the neighbouring province of Kwa Zulu Natal, so even the journey was cause for excitement! It was an action-packed three days, with archery, rifle shooting, zip lining across a lake, abseiling, swimming and team building activities. For most of the children, the highlight was when they got to spend time in the swimming pool and were able to make use of the water slide'. **Yolanda Van Den Broek.**



Pre-school Playground

We have made good progress with the Pre-school playground, the beginnings of which were featured in our December newsletter. Thank you to everyone who has contributed funds for this project.

'Since January, our 'outside classroom' has steadily been taking shape. Howard Kirby has designed and made (with the help of Suzanne) three different-sized play structures with brightly coloured roofs that the children call the 'tents', some low level balance beams and a wonderful double-sided chalkboard. He also organised a local company to make a small-sized tepee tent. Great fun has already been had by all the children as these structures have become houses, schools, cars, and even a church!'



"The blue tent is the best; there's lots of room in there"



"I like balancing on the balance beams"



"I like drawing ice-creams on the chalk-board"



'We are very thankful to Howard and Suzanne for all their hard work. The next stage of the project will include a small jungle gym and sandpit area.'

Teacher: Carolyn Revill

Volunteering at DCS - It is always a pleasure to have student volunteers with us and, despite the pandemic, this year is no exception.

'My name is Olly, I am 18 years old and I am a volunteer from England. I have been here at Dihlabeng since the end of April. I have been helping with some Maths and English lessons in Grades 5 and 6 but my main passion is to bring as much sport as possible to the children here. So I have started an after-school tennis club for grades 3 to 7 and will hopefully form a school cricket team for next term. I am really enjoying my time so far, getting to know the kids and teachers here and I feel incredibly blessed to be a part of this amazing school! I hope to be volunteering here until around November, when I will go back to the UK and start applying to universities.' **Olly Newton**



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