

Dear Friends of DCS,

Thank you, once again for your ongoing support, both in prayer and in giving. We have had a busy and dynamic start to 2022, full of change and transition. As you will know from our previous newsletter, we have had a number of staff changes, meaning we started this year with a new-look team and many taking on new roles and responsibilities. The transition has gone well and we are thrilled with the gifted people we now have, believing they have been sent by God to be a blessing to our community (see below).

This last term we endeavoured to move Covid to the background of our lives and transition towards a 'back to normal' timetable, filled again with creativity and fun practical activities, with our classroom environments beginning to return to the vibrant active places we really like. We had to adhere to some Covid restrictions such as wearing masks indoors, cleaning and sanitising but we have just heard that, as of next term we will not have to wear masks at all; a cause for celebration indeed!

Sports and cultural activities are gradually returning; we hosted Misseo Dei School (an independent school in Ficksburg) for a sports tournament and we have been practising various contributions towards the Eisteddfod, a cultural and arts festival held locally in Bethlehem, and we are planning a Heritage Evening next term. It is such a joy to be able to put education priorities front and centre again.

I hope that you enjoy reading this update from us all and thank you again for standing with us.

Andy

New Staff for 2022



New staff joining us this year are:

Left -back row standing- Annesti Meets and Chamonix Boland, sharing the teaching in Grade 1, with Annesti also teaching languages to Grades 6 and 7.

Pontsho Mahloma, kitchen staff, and Fortune Mofokeng, finance and office admin for term 3 and part of term 4.

Front row seated: Makhu Kuhmalo, finance and office admin, soon to be on maternity leave.

Janet Horsburgh, part time teaching maths to Grade 7.



Above: Mapuso Mofokeng (ex-student), assistant in Grade R.

Sponsorship and Website

We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors who donate regularly as either child sponsors or supporters of other specific aspects of the school. Sponsorship contributes to over one third of the school's income and is therefore vital to our existence. We have over 25 children currently on role who are paying reduced school fees, or no fees, in the case of orphans, and who are therefore in need of sponsorship. If you or someone you know would like to support our work, please visit our website: **www.dihlabengschool.com** where you will find information about the school's history, aims and vision and information about sponsorship, including a response page which links directly to Alan and Carol Goodson, the sponsorship coordinators. We have recently revised and updated the website, so please do take a look. Thank you.



Grade RR We have been learning facts and about the characteristics of wild animals this term. We had lots of fun moulding animals out of play dough. We also learned the Makaton signs for the animals.



Modelling Animals, Crafty Crocodiles and Wild Animals in Grade RR



Playing in the 'kitchen' and learning the shapes of letters and numbers in Grade R

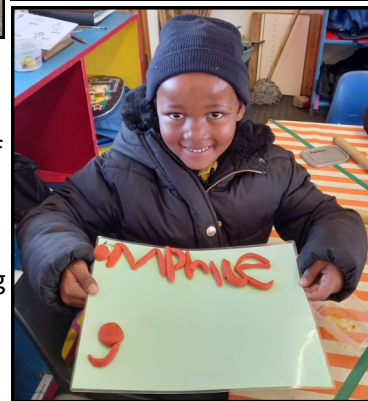
Grade R

We have been learning to identify numbers and practising forming them. We have also been working hard at phonics, learning the letter sounds and also the correct formation of the letters in the children's names. Grade R have particularly enjoyed being able to have their role play area back again, which they call the 'kitchen'. It is lovely to see them playing together again.



Learning at DCS

We asked each Grade teacher to send us some photos and information on some of the highlights of the children's learning during Term 1 and 2. As Covid restrictions have relaxed, it has been wonderful to restore the creative, hands-on learning experiences that we aim to give the children.



Grade 1

In Grade 1 this term we have been learning all about the weather and water and have had many exciting lessons and some amazing outings!

Grade 1 visited the Ash River Outfall engineering works just outside Clarens. It shows how the 'Trans Caledon Tunnel', a massive water pipeline was built to bring water from neighbouring Lesotho, through the mountains to South Africa some 30 years ago.



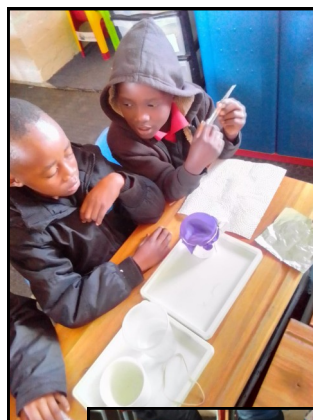
Visiting the Ash River Pipeline, playing parachute games and making model boats in Grade 1



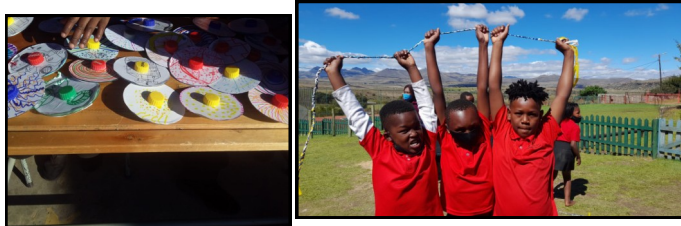
Testing insulation materials for a 'mouse house' and making time puzzles and games in Grade 2

Grade 2

In Grade 2 the children have been very excited in their learning about animals. We had an amazing time experimenting with different materials to help a little mouse build his warm, safe house that will hide him away from other scary animals. We have also been learning about time using various games and making time puzzles.



Grade 3 In Grade 3 our theme has been 'Pollution' and we have been looking at ways in which we can keep the Earth healthy and clean. We have re-used plastic bags to make skipping ropes, old CDs and bottle caps to make spinners and old boxes and bottle caps to make our own table football games. We sold our spinners at our 'Eco-Sale'.

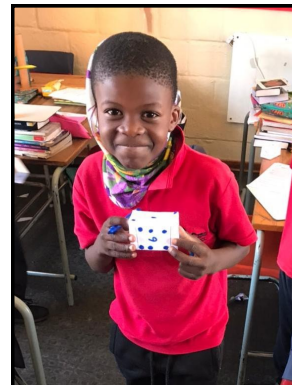


Grade 4 Grade 4 have had a fantastic year so far, It has been exciting to see growth, maturity and confidence in the children's learning. Many of the students are enthusiastic to learn and, in our bible time it's been a privilege to teach them and help them grow in Christ. Grade 4's English work with Margaret has been based around 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' by Roald Dahl, which has been very enjoyable, they have also been writing fables. In Natural Science and Technology we have been learning about Materials and Structures and in particular how to strengthen structures.

Left - Skipping Ropes, Spinners and Football Games



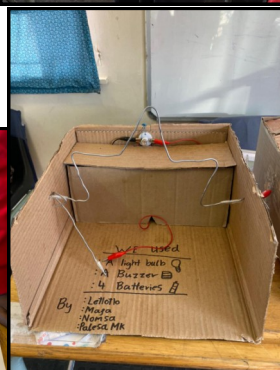
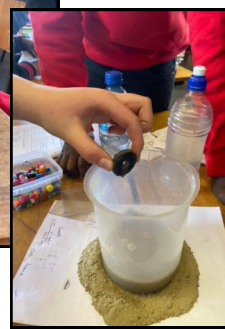
Materials and Structures - Making and testing boxes from net designs



Grade 6 Throughout the past two terms we have done quite a lot of practical activities in Natural Science, in particular this term the students have loved separating mixtures of solids and learning about solutions. During our Maths and Science week we designed 'Steady Hand' games. This involved using simple electrical circuits. The game makes a noise and lights up when triggered by touching the curved wire.



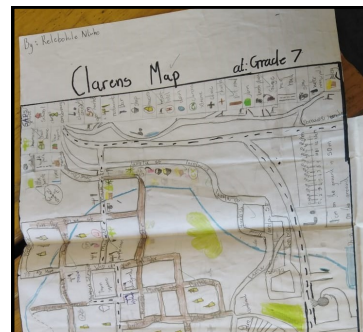
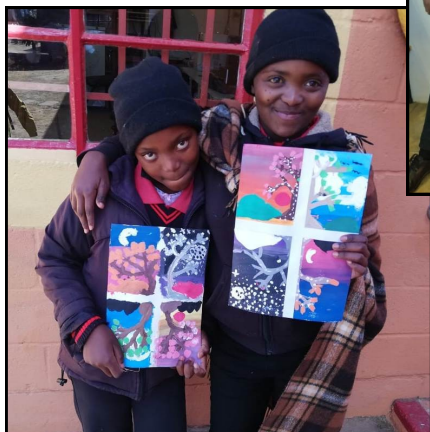
Experimenting with Solutions and Separating Materials



Steady Hand Games made with simple electrical circuits

Grade 5 In our bible time this term we have been challenged by Matthew 5 as we talked about what God's Kingdom is like and how we can apply the teaching to our classroom situation. During our Maths and Science week we focused on the subject of time. We talked about the seasons then, in art, the students were excited to complete a painting on this theme using gradient colours and mirror imaging. In English, each student completed an instructional text using strong (imperative) verbs to help others create something.

Art work on the theme of Seasons



Grade 7 In Grade 7 we have been learning about mapping skills in Geography. The children had a project to sketch a map of Clarens with a key, symbols and a scale. These are pictures of our beautiful town. Also, in creative arts we have been doing drama and role play.

Mapping Skills and Role Play in Drama



Sports Update

We are so pleased that sports activities have been able to resume at DCS. In term 1 a number of students took part in the local preliminary rounds of the school's athletics championships, held in Bethlehem. Two of our boys, Rethabile Mokoena, Grade 7 (far left) and Antrie Mlangeni, Grade 4 (left) were successful in the initial rounds, in high jump, hurdles and sprinting. They then progressed to the Free State championships held in Bloemfontein, winning medals in hurdles for Rethabile, and sprint races for Antrie.

In term 2 DCS hosted a friendly sports tournament with Misseo Deo school from Ficksburg. This is an independent school in Ficksburg (about 80 km from Clarens) with whom we have partnered in recent years, joining together for staff development training, sharing of good practice and mutual support. The tournament was held at the local sports stadium in Clarens with activities for all ages, and soccer and netball competitions for the older children.



DCS and Misseo Deo Senior Soccer Group



DCS and Misseo Deo Senior Netball Teams

These events are so valuable in helping to raise the expectations of the children, their self confidence and abilities, as well as practising social skills and having a lot of fun!



Soccer in action at the local sports stadium

Ralph Burls, Grade 4 (right) competing in the cross country competition at Caritas College in Bethlehem.



Feeding Scheme Update 2022

So far this year 31 children have been registered for support from the Feeding Scheme which continues to serve the most needy children at DCS. Our kitchen staff prepare the children's food ready for collection at first break and again at lunch break. The meals are simple but nutritious and are often supplemented by seasonal fruit and vegetables. The shopping is done each week by volunteers from the DCS team and we are able to store some items in the school's deep freeze. When the children receive their food they are now able to sit and eat it with all the other children, unrestricted by Covid rules. They then rinse and return their lunch boxes to the kitchen.



A very special 'thank you' to those of our sponsors who specifically support this aspect of the school. The budgeting, shopping, preparation and serving of the food would not happen without your generosity.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

