



Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter



Dihlabeng Christian School

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School Web site: <http://www.dihlabengschool.com>



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To All Our DCS Family - Sponsors and Friends,

Thank you for your continued support for us at DCS here, in Clarens, South Africa. We have had a busy and productive year in many different ways. In addition to our academic success, we have had a great year outside of the classroom. One special event was our first 'Basotho Day' when we celebrated the local Basotho culture, as part of our Heritage Day celebrations (a national holiday in South Africa, on 24th September). Whilst we have marked this occasion before, this year we made it very special, learning a lot more about the culture, whilst enjoying Basotho dance and food.

We took three sports teams all the way to Ficksburg, some 50kms away, for a friendly sporting event with Misseo Deo, another independent school similar to DCS. In fact, we enjoyed further travels for sport, all the way to the Eastern Cape, with three of our boys making it through to represent the Free State in the national finals of the school's Cross Country Championships. This was a 10 hour drive from Clarens, and a great honour for our boys! Our thanks go to Janine Burls, coach Morapedi and Tshepiso Mlangeni for their dedicated support in helping the boys with their training and travels.

To finish off the year, our School Council, (consisting of students from Grades 3 - 7) who had been busy all year raising funds in many different ways, decided they would use the money to improve our toilets. Many learners and staff assisted in decorating the walls (see the pictures on Page 3) and making them brighter and friendlier. Thank you to all those who helped with all the cleaning up afterwards!

Your support of the children through sponsorship and gifts enables them to achieve so much as young people. Thank you all again. Here's to more successes in 2024!

Andy Woodage (Principal).



Top: Mafa Gd 7
Below: Brother and sister, Retshidisitswe and Tebogo.

Our students, top, middle and below, dressed in national Basotho outfits.



Above: those who took part in the preliminary rounds. Left: coach Morapedi with Ralph Burls and Antrie Mlangeni. Below: Antrie and Ralph, Grade 5, with Joseph Mokoena, Grade 3.



Joseph, left, gained 18th place nationally in the under 8 age range and 2nd place in the Free State. Antrie, centre, and Ralph, right, were placed 21st and 49th nationally in their age group.

Celebrating the End of 2023



Grade 7 Trophy Winners, from left to right: Nthabeleng Mokoena, Perseverance Award. Letlotlo Ntoko, Creativity Award. Mathabiso Mokhele, Performing Arts Award. Lucy Woodage, IP Top Achiever, Exemplary Behaviour, Afrikaans Award. Nomsa Mashinini, Moshoeshoe Sesotho Award. Nthabeleng Motaung, Care and Kindness Award, Principal's Award for Leadership. Lebohlang Mahlatsi, Basson Maths Award.

In South Africa the school year ends in December. Term 4, the last term, is slightly shorter than the other three and is always very busy. There are important examinations, in which the children are tested on the whole year's work, end of year reports are written and decisions are made about the coming year, 2024. At DCS we like to focus on celebrating all that has been achieved by our students throughout the year. Trophies are awarded for achievement, progress and effort, and at four different Prize Giving events, each child receives a certificate and is applauded for their personal efforts and achievements.



Other Awards

FP Sportsman: Joseph Mokoena

IP Sportsman: Antrie Mlangeni

(see previous page photos).



Far left. Cheslyn Burls: FP Top Achiever.
Left. Mpho Lebusa: Bill Robbins Award for Progress.

Right: Grade 2, Oliver Family Good Fellowship Award. This was awarded to the whole Grade for their exemplary attitude and friendliness.

Head Boy and Head Girl

Our serving Head Boy and Head Girl, together with their deputies, passed on their responsibilities to our newly elected team for 2024. Our student leaders for 2024 will be, left to right: **Oarabile Mofokeng**, Deputy Head Girl. **Mpho Ofobi**, Head Girl.

Morena Mashinini, Head Boy. **Tihonolofatso Mokoena**, Deputy Head Boy.



Farewell to Grade 7

Our Grade 7 leavers, accompanied by members of staff, put on their best outfits for their farewell at the Protea Hotel, in Clarens, where they enjoyed a delicious meal.

Outings Each grade also had an outing to somewhere relatively local such as, Clarens Extreme, the Basotho Cultural Village in Golden Gate National Park, a farm, or maybe just a large garden with a splash pool. Fun, games and treats were enjoyed by all.



Nativity 2023

Foundation Phase (Grades RR - 3) presented the Nativity story in song and narration from the play, 'It's A Baby'. All the usual characters were played by Grade RR and R students, assisted by narrators, choir and musicians from the other grades. Just prior to the performance we held our Christmas Market for which the children and staff had made simple and attractive gifts to sell, raising funds for the school.

Grade 4 Gardening

Grade 4, together with their teacher, Rabson Chatikobo, made good use of the ground space behind their classroom, planting individual small garden plots in disused car tyres. They grew vegetables including, spinach and carrots which they harvested and either took home, or donated to the school's kitchen for the Feeding Scheme meals. Each child learned how to care for their plants and took on the responsibility of watering and weeding their small plot.

Rabson would very much like to continue this project next year on a larger plot, if we can fundraise for equipment.

This kind of activity is an important life skill, and is of great benefit to those students who are less academic.

Grade 4 with their teacher, Rabson Chatikobo



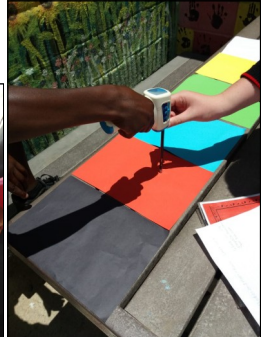
The individual garden plots and the produce harvested by the children.



Science Club - Grade 5 and 6

During November, Carol Goodson, who was visiting Clarens for five weeks, provided 4 sessions of Science Club for selected children for Grades 5 and 6. The theme was on 'Light', and activities were planned to demonstrate how we see light, how light travels and is reflected, how rainbows are formed and how different colours absorb light and reflect heat. The lessons were mostly practical, allowing the children to experience science in a 'hands-on' way, discussing the activities and making conclusions about experiments.

It was a lot of fun!



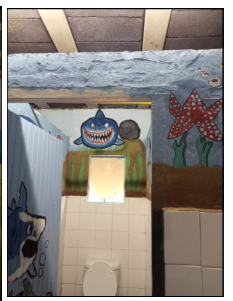
Science Club activities included, making rainbows using old CDs, observing how light travels in straight lines, and how it can be reflected using mirrors and prisms of different kinds, and shapes. We used periscopes to look above the balcony fence, and we set up an experiment to test which colour absorbs the most light (and heat). We measured the results using an infra-red thermometer which was given to the school during the Covid pandemic.

School Council - Decorating the School's Toilets

Our School Council representatives decided that they would like to use the money they had raised to give the school's toilets a face-lift. So, towards the end of term 4, assisted by Andy Woodage and other members of staff, they embarked on an ambitious project to re-paint the boy's and girl's toilets with an 'under-the-sea theme'. The older children painted the background colours of graded blue, then two very artistic teachers, Becky Woodage and Elize Ferreira, sketched in the illustrations to be painted by staff and children. The results are stunning, as you can see from the pictures! Thank you to everyone who helped with this project. The children were delighted. In term 1, 2024 we shall judge the competition for the best painted toilet door!



Andy Woodage supervising painting the walls. And, the finished results.



Our Feeding Scheme Christmas Party

In the last week of term Yolanda Van den Broek (right), who administers the Feeding Scheme at DCS, organised a special Christmas Party for all the children registered with the scheme. They had a delicious 'Christmas' dinner, which was prepared and cooked by our kitchen staff, and served to the children, together with Christmas Crackers and festive music, in the church main hall.



Our Feeding Scheme provides regular, daily meals of breakfast and lunch to approximately 30 of our most needy children. This is a part of our school life that is funded separately to school fees or child sponsorship. We have several regular sponsors who give monthly to specifically support this aspect of the school, but we always need more. If you are interested in supporting the Feeding Scheme with either a one-off gift, or regular sponsorship, then please see our school website: www.dihlabengschool.com for more information.



If you are one of our regular sponsors who support the Feeding Scheme, we would like to thank you too for your dedicated and committed giving which allows us to provide for the children, in this way. Thank you so much.

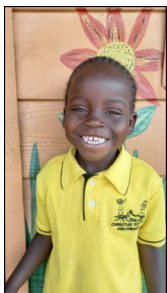


We would also like to thank Yolanda and our team of kitchen staff (see above) for all their hard work throughout the year.

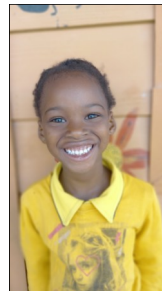


Dihlabeng Christian School Sponsorship Programme

Since the foundation of the school in the year 2000, the majority of the children attending the school have done so because of the

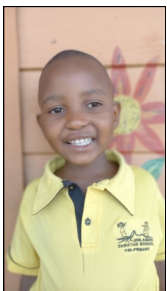


generous donations by so many, through our child sponsorship programme, which contributes to the school fees of the most needy children. Our sponsorship programme is managed by Carol and Alan Goodson, from Kent, UK, assisted and supported by New Life Church, Biggin Hill, Kent. Carol and Alan visit the school regularly (self-funded) and manage all the administration of funds, and correspondence with approximately 100 sponsors in the UK, and other parts of the world. As we end one year and plan for next year, 2024, we will

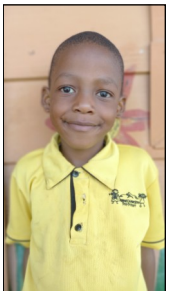


Alan and Carol Goodson with the children of DCS, Grades 1 - 7

reassess all the sponsorship needs of the children. We aim to provide sponsorship for the children from Grade R (age 5/6) upwards, but we never have enough sponsors. We currently have over 20 children in need of sponsorship for either their full, or part of their school fees. Our school fees for 2024 are set between R1,050.00 to R1,300.00 per month (approximately £50.00 per month, depending on exchange rates). Any amount donated monthly, from £10.00 per month, up to £50.00 per month, would help one of our children. You will receive a photo, letters and work each year from your child, as well as our newsletter, twice a year. If you, or anyone you know, would like to find out more, or would like to consider other ways in which you might support the school, please go to our website: www.dihlabengschool.com for more information.



Thank you.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

