



# THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### Creating a Culture of Kindness and Solidarity Against Bullying

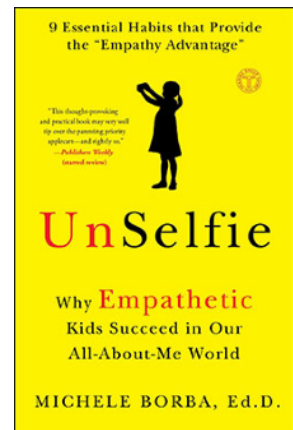
On Thursday 3 Friday the school wore pink as part of UNESCO's [International Day Against Violence and Bullying at School Including Cyberbullying](#), standing in solidarity against bullying. Next week is [World Kindness Week](#). The two go hand in hand.

In her book *"Unselfie: Why empathetic kids succeed in our all-about-me world"*, Michele Borba provides a lexicon of empathy and advice to schools on how to build a culture of kindness.

To be **kind** means that we consider the needs, feelings, and concerns of others and then act appropriately. To have **empathy** means that we are able to take as your own, someone else's perspective so that we can understand their needs, feelings, and concerns. It is possible for people who bully to have **cognitive empathy**, whereby we understand what another person is thinking but out of egoism or perhaps narcissistic/sociopathic tendencies we do not take the welfare of others into consideration when acting in our own self-interest; however, to have **emotional empathy** means that we actually experience other peoples' feelings as our own.

Doing kind and brave things requires emotional empathy and a courageous heart. It requires attention to the way we communicate both verbally and non-verbally, in person and online. It requires a continual focus by every member of the community in order to build lifelong habits. We are all on this journey together, and it requires everyone in order to cultivate a culture of respect and caring here at WIS.

We view WIS as a community rather than an institution because we believe that relationships are the most powerful influencer of learner success. Learning is not only cognitive - it is also a deeply personal, social, and emotional process. To learn best, every person at WIS must be safe to be themselves.



**Principles of Effective Empathy Education**

Effective empathy education requires seven core principles guided by strong, empathetic school leaders.

- 1. Ongoing:** Educating for empathy is not a one-time lesson, but a continual focus.
- 2. Woven-In:** Empathy competencies are integrated into content and interactions, not tacked on.
- 3. Meaningful:** Instruction is authentic, touches the heart and mind, and stretches "me" to "we."
- 4. Internalized:** The goal is for students to adopt empathy competencies as lifelong habits.
- 5. Student-Centered:** Students' needs, not curriculum, drive the lessons and experiences.
- 6. Respectful Relationships:** Empathy breeds in a culture of respect and caring.
- 7. Empathic Leadership:** Empathy is modeled, expected, and core to a principal's vision, purpose, style, and interactions.

- Dr. Michele Borba, Educator, Speaker and Best-Selling Author

**PARENT INFORMATION PORTAL**  
Click here for more information

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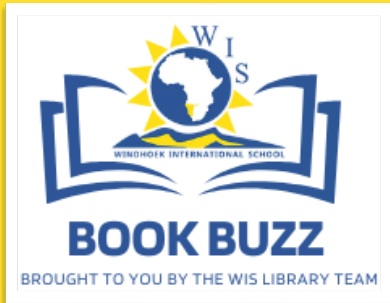
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### Dates to Remember 2022

- **7-11 November 2022**  
World Kindness Week
- **10 November 2022**  
Coffee Morning
- **11 November 2022**  
Staff Work Day
- **22 - 24 November 2022**  
School Photos: Details TBC
- **24 November 2022**  
Parent Coffee Morning
- **25 November 2022**  
Movie night SSC



**WIS BOOK BUZZ**



As we aspire to streamline our book recommendations, we'd like to share our process. After all, libraries want to have books in their collection that their patrons want to read. We know that when you put in a book suggestion, that this is a book patrons want. So here's how it works:

- Step 1: Hear about an amazing book!
- Step 2: Click the [BOOK SUGGESTION FORM](#) link.
- Step 3: Complete the form by answering questions about the book and finish all the required fields.
- Step 4: Press Submit and do a little happy dance.

We want our library collection to provide access to a wide range of information and stories with authentic perspectives. This will help students understand themselves and their world. They can find out about the cultures and languages represented in their community and this will help ensure that our collection reflects and celebrates the diversity at WIS.

For questions and inquiries, please email us at [jwashington@wis.edu.na](mailto:jwashington@wis.edu.na) and [mneftali@wis.edu.na](mailto:mneftali@wis.edu.na)

We appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, just as we celebrate the different values and traditions of others. We believe that all people already possess excellence and compassion, and it is our collective responsibility to bring these values to the fore. In the WIS community we all matter, equally.

Since August 2011 the school has had in place something called the [Administrative Rule for Community Conduct](#). We will be reviewing this Code of Conduct to ensure that it captures what we know from research on the brain and learning, and what we hold true as core principles of our learning community.

**WIS Institutional Partnerships**



On Thursday the 3rd of November, WIS signed a protocol with the Embassy of Portugal and the Camoes Instituto Da Cooperacao e Da Lingua Portugal which will allow for the application of the Camoes Junior Portuguese Foreign Language Exam and credentials for all Grade 10 WIS students, at a discounted rate of fees. This is the latest in a long line of collaborative agreements made between WIS and Camoes, and we look forward to future collaborations which promote cultural exchange between Namibia and Portugal.



WIS has also entered into a memorandum of understanding with the University of Namibia which has established a prestigious “international teaching fellow” programme which will fulfil both WIS’s understudy requirements and UNAM’s teacher training requirements. I am excited to see how this programme develops as we work in common cause with UNAM to elevate the teaching profession talent pipeline here in Namibia!

Have a great day!

Sincerely,  
Ethan Van Drunen

***Pink Day - At WIS, every term we take a stance against bullying by all wearing something pink to school. This week, it coincided with Unesco International Day against Bullying.***



WIS will be participating in study to approaches in teaching and learning in international schools. The guiding questions of this study will be:

1. How do schools select, adopt, plan, implement and evaluate pedagogies?
2. What factors lead to changes in practice? (cultural, historical, curricular, contextual?)
3. How & where do schools access evidence to make decisions?
4. How do perspectives between stakeholders align and diverge within a school?

**The study will be conducted in 3 phases:**

1. Phase 1A - August 2022 - February 2023 - Research and Mapping - literature reviews and surveys
2. Phase 1B - February - August 2023 - Exploring perspectives - focus group listening exercise
3. Phase 2 - August 2023 - July 2024 - Toolkit, Design, Pilot, Publication - engage with practitioners and students

**The sampling principles of CIS are as follows:**

- From diverse schools: geographic, demographic, curriculum, size, governance model
- Statistical significance:
  - surveys - larger numbers of participants, volunteer sampling
  - focus groups - smaller feasible sizes and number; targeted and selective sampling for diversity (tbc)
- Multiple Stakeholder Groups: decision makers, parents, practitioners, students - representing diverse backgrounds and contexts.
- The first phase involves WIS conducting surveys. We had to select a two week window between mid-October and December. WIS will be conducting surveys in the weeks from 13 - 27 November 2022. The process for the survey will be as follows:
  1. A link which will enable participants to complete an informed consent form will be sent to survey participants in advance of the surveys; and a brief overview of the survey will be shared with participants.
  2. The survey links will be shared with participants one week before your administration window.
  3. School members to be surveyed:
    - 8 - 12 students
    - 3 parents
    - 1 teacher
  4. **The survey:**
    - 15 - 20 minutes to complete
    - 2 links will be sent to participants - one for the consent and another one for the survey.
    - Survey participants:
      - SLT
      - 4 teachers - across the school
      - 12 students
      - 12 parents
    - Participants of the survey will be chosen to represent as much diversity as possible within our WIS community.
      - **Parent participants:**
        - Early Childhood – Lower Primary (3 - 8) - 4 parents
        - Upper Primary – Lower Secondary (9 - 13) - 4 parents
        - Upper Secondary (ages 14 - 19) - 4 parents
      - **Student participants:**
        - Upper Secondary (ages 14 - 19) - 12 students
          - Parents have to complete and submit the permission form.
      - **Teacher participants**
        - 4 teachers across the school - lower primary, upper primary, middle school, high school

**If you have any questions with regard to this study, please don't hesitate to contact Maggie Reiff ([mreiff@wis.edu.na](mailto:mreiff@wis.edu.na)).**

### **WHY SHOULD YOU PARTICIPATE?**

*The study will make us aware of best practices in teaching and learning! Participating in the study recognises WIS's position as one of Africa's leading international schools.*

# PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear WIS Community,

## The value of SeeSaw and Feedback

When using Seesaw, students will submit various activities and work projects. Seesaw allows teachers to give timely, personal feedback through the use of written and/or verbal comments. Allowing students to comment on each other's posts gives students an authentic audience for their work and valuable feedback from their peers. Actionable feedback provides students with a plan of action so they can meet their goals, and is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement.

## As a parent, you can give feedback too!

Another factor that influences student success is the extent to which families are involved in their child's learning and support it at home. When families view work and give specific feedback that highlights effort, students are encouraged to reflect, and are motivated to persevere and keep learning.

**Seesaw creates a powerful learning loop that brings together students, teachers, and families to deepen student learning.**



## Moving from feedback to feedforward

A good way of looking at how feedback can be more effective is to see it more as feed forward than as feed back. The table below and [this article](#) give a good overview of the difference. Instead of focusing on what's already been done, we can focus on how a student can improve, grow or learn.

TRADITIONAL <b>FEEDBACK</b>	THE <b>FEEDFORWARD</b> APPROACH
Affirms what the person already knows. <i>"You're really good at that."</i>	<b>Regenerates</b> talent. <i>"Would you lead a training on that?"</i>
Points out problems. <i>That idea won't work because...</i>	<b>Expands</b> possibilities. <i>What if we added this?</i>
Is an "information dump." <i>Think rubrics with 10-20 different measurements.</i>	<b>Is Particular.</b> <i>Is ongoing, embedded in instruction, and focuses on just a few things.</i>
Tries not to be mean. <i>"Praise sandwiches" hide criticism inside gauzy praise.</i>	<b>Is Authentic.</b> <i>Describes the problem and its impact, then prompts the person for a solution.</i>
Doesn't always offer a plan of action. <i>Focus is on measurement, not a plan for change.</i>	<b>Has an Impact.</b> <i>Has the person create a specific, step-by-step plan for improvement.</i>
Comes from the top down. <i>Delivered within a strict hierarchy, from people on the same team.</i>	<b>Refines</b> group dynamics. <i>Rich, varied input comes from people with different viewpoints and skill sets.</i>

From The Feedback Fix: Dump the Past, Embrace the Future, and Lead the Way to Change, by Joe Hirsch

CLAYTON PEDAGOGY

When learners see their parents and teachers use the same language for feeding forward on their learning, they understand they are supported by a team of adults. This has a powerful effect on learning.

At WIS, we know it is important to teach students HOW to give effective feedback. Some teachers like to use the acronym TAG as an easy way to model effective feedback. The T stands for - Tell me something you liked, the A stands for - ask a question, and the G stands for - Give a suggestion. We encourage parents to use the same ways of giving feedback on their child's learning. [Here](#) is a useful framework to help you, using the TAG acronym. Another useful tool that teachers use is [The Ladder of Feedback](#).

Finally, an easy way to provide feedback in Seesaw is by using the video tool to leave a video or screen recording of feedback for your child. Including a short video for feedback is a powerful way to get their attention and support growth.

Your child's homeroom teacher will also be asking you to feed forward on your child's learning on SeeSaw and during learning celebrations. I hope this article has given you some tools to join us in the pursuit of providing our students with feedback that helps them grow!

**Warm regards,  
Marcelle van Leenen**

## Special Performance

Dear WIS community,

We could like to call out all music lovers and vocalist for an upcoming special performance, just before we go out for the December holiday. We would like to have morning rehearsal that will take place in the auditorium Tuesdays-Thursdays 7h05-7h45. We would like to open this to students from Grade 4-Grade 12. If you would like to be part of this surprise performance please click on this [link](#) to sign up. The first rehearsal will be **Tuesday, 8th November 2022**.

Please Note that we would like dedicated members, as we will only use your mornings for practices.



**Best Wishes,  
Mrs. Michelle and Mr. G**

## Grade 2 - How we Express Ourselves



Dear Community members,  
In Grade 2, we are doing 'How we Express Ourselves' as our Unit of Inquiry and we are looking at different cultures and their traditions/celebrations.

Please sign up [HERE](#) for a class visit between 15 November and 8 December 2022. We would like to hear stories, do arts and crafts with the students and learn more from you. If there is a particular celebration which is not on our list please let us know.

Here are our email addresses if you have any questions.

[bstephanus@wis.edu.na](mailto:bstephanus@wis.edu.na)

[dsmith@wis.edu.na](mailto:dsmith@wis.edu.na)

Thank you in advance. We are looking forward to hear from you!

**Grade 2 Team**



## SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

### Feedback - Intention - Perception

... these aspects of communication can be constructive or hinder the process of growth and learning.

When interacting with others our intentions are mostly positive. What skews the conversation and potentially communication and relationships is when there is a misalignment between intention and perception.

Our positive intention with all we do or say is not always perceived in the same positive way and that can ultimately hinder how we receive feedback.

When we receive feedback - personally or professionally, as a student, professional or parents - we tend to work with this feedback in different ways. Constructive feedback that focuses on an outcome can make us learn and grow, help us reflect and adjust our actions and approaches accordingly.

As a school, we value feedback and try to act upon it in our approach to how we do things as well as in our teaching strategies. Feedback can come from different sources - each other, our leadership, our students, peers and parents, our accreditation agencies and outside sources. We tend to be more open to feedback that is well intended and geared towards improving ourselves or our institution as a whole.

Feedback is one of the strategies that John Hattie identified as a high impact strategy in his research on Visible Learning - *"Visible Learning means an enhanced role for teachers as they become evaluators of their own teaching. Visible Teaching and Learning occurs when teachers see learning through the eyes of students and help them become their own teachers."*

Feedback is a strong tool for learning in all relationships, whether in the classroom, between colleagues or in the family situation. If we are able to give constructive feedback, it is one of the most effective ways to learn and grow.

Here are some aspects to consider when looking at feedback and its purpose to help us become better at what we do. Feedback should always give the opportunity to act upon. When we get feedback as teachers or as a school and it gives us the opportunity to act upon it and to become better at our craft, then this ultimately has an impact on student learning. If feedback is not concrete and a statement that does not have opportunity for action, then it is potentially more counterproductive than productive.



The same should happen in the classroom. When an assignment or assessment is marked, feedback given on it should be concrete and enable the student to act upon it to learn, grow and improve. Students need to know their learning target and what the specific skill is they are supposed to learn. Just to be told what to do - that is not learning and that way, feedback is not meaningful. When students know that their classroom is a safe space to make mistakes and to learn, feedback from peers as well as the teacher can have a great impact on their learning.

We invite feedback from our stakeholders. By receiving feedback, we can ascertain whether our approaches are perceived and understood in the same way they are intended. That is why we give students and parents opportunities to receive feedback from us, but we - the school - also value feedback from students and parents to help us get better at what we do.

Look out for a community survey that will be sent out soon to get feedback about communication from school and other matters that we would like to get your opinion on.

**Regards,  
Maggie Reiff**



## WIS Graduate 2021

### Viktorija Ellmies

“So, what do you want to do after you graduate?”, the dreaded question every high school student faces. I certainly didn’t have a good answer throughout Grade 11 and 12, only now after studying for one and a half years an idea has crystallised.

I’m a full-fledged WIS kid, fulfilling all 12 of my schooling years at WIS. I completed the IGCSE in 2019 with 9 A\*s and the IB Diploma in 2021 with 44/45 points.

My time at WIS instilled a deep found sense of curiosity in me for the world – from tiniest micro-organism through architectural wonder to stellar explosion. I remember being asked if I wanted to follow in my dad’s footsteps in becoming a geologist and my answer being (pointing at some nearby rocks) “but they’re so dead, they’re missing the life”.

Years down the road, I’ve now rediscovered the same idea – the science behind “life” is fascinating, look closely and it manages to thrive in the most unexpected places: an acidic hot spring, the depths of the ocean and the driest of deserts. I find the most interesting questions are those without an answer (they also just happen to be the most difficult) and questions about the origin of life, its evolution, the genetic and biochemical interactions underlying it, certainly fall in this category.

During the science fairs I did at WIS, I was introduced to the basics of scientific research, and this continued in IB when designing experiments for my IAs and Chemistry Extended Essay. Now I’m part of an honours course at university, designing a PhD proposal on the mechanisms of gene regulation and its impact on the quality of stem cells. My time at WIS has laid the foundation for a pursuit of scientific discovery, to deepen our understanding of the universe and harness the practical applications that spring to life (no pun intended) along the way.

In August I began my second year of studies at University College Utrecht in the Netherlands, following a Liberal Arts and Sciences program. Having the opportunity to try out different disciplines in my first year, ranging from a variety of science courses to Psychology and Philosophy, I’ve gained a sense of surety in what I want to pursue and will be majoring in Chemistry and Molecular Cell Biology. To deepen my knowledge, I took a summer course at UCL on the applications of Nanotechnology in Medicine and am currently planning an exchange semester at the University of California (Berkeley). There, I intend to take more specialised courses and scout out universities in the US for Master’s and PhD programs.

Maintaining a balance between academics and hobbies has and will always be important. Throughout my school years I did competitive swimming and the CAS program prepared me in juggling multiple activities with a high workload. Now, I am part of two committees on campus, organising student events, and swim in a casual group. Going to an International School also developed my love for learning about different cultures.

During lockdown and the stress of IB, making travel plans kept me sane; Rome, London, Paris, Vienna, my bucket list was never-ending. I was fortunate enough that my plans came to fruition, and at 17, after recently graduating, completed my first interrail trip across Europe. And after winning an interrail pass through the DiscoverEU program, I did it all again in the following year. In the two Summers I spent travelling, I explored 10 new countries, visited countless museums, went scuba diving, climbed a volcano, and made new friends along the way.

After living with just a 40L backpack for months and making questionable hostel choices, suffice to say my university dorm room compared to a luxury hotel. Yet travelling has benefited me in many ways. I’ve gained independence, learnt to deal with unexpected situations and regulate finances, all while taking cringy photos in front of the world’s most famous landmarks.



## Grade 7 Nacho Libre Movie Review

*The Grade 7 students had the opportunity to watch Nacho Libre in the auditorium in order for them to write a movie review summative.*

### **Nacho Libre Movie Review: By Ondeya Neri Gr. 7ME**

Nacho Libre is a comedy directed by Jared Hess, it was released on June 16, 2006.

The story follows Nacho (Jack Black) a friar from a church in Mexico, whose dream is to become a luchador. Wrestling however, is a sin, so Nacho must train in secret.

One day, a nun named Encarnacion (Ana de la Reguera) comes to the church. Nacho falls in love with her, but Encarnacion hates wrestling. On one fateful night, Nacho saw his idol, the luchador named Ramses, and decides he finally wants to go pro. He finds a man with a common goal, a poor man named Esquelito (Héctor Jiménez), and together they start their wrestling career.

My favourite character was an orphan named Chanchito, because he was supportive of Nacho up until the end, as well as acting sort of like the comic relief. I feel like the movie just wouldn't have been the same without him.

My opinion is that overall it was a good movie, if I had to pick something myself, it wouldn't be my first choice, but it had a good flow and an inspiring message at the end. It showed that if you just stick to your dreams, anything is possible.

I would recommend this movie to younger audiences, because the main message of the movie is something that is more important for them to hear, plus they might find the humour more appealing.

See the [following link](#) to the movie trailer.



## WIS MUN Club in Action

### **Global Learning and Fun Debating**

This article serves as the opportunity for several WIS Model United Nations club members to share what they have learned. We had a great experience participating online in the American International School in Johannesburg MUN Conference last month and the Namibia MUNNAM Conference prep day on Saturday, 29th October. On Tuesday, 8th November and Wednesday, 9th November, nine WIS learners will participate in the MUNNAM 2022 event at UN House in Klein Windhoek.

### **Erikka (Grade 9)**

*My experience at the JOMUNXX was fun and also entertaining. I learned a lot and got to meet a lot of people even if it was just virtually. The MUNNAM prep was enjoyable as I got a chance to help people understand what Model UN was all about. It was really fun to represent the school and myself.*

### **Saima (Grade 9)**

*I always had an interest in debating but didn't know where to do so, I joined the school MUN group and it has been amazing. On the 6th of October I took part in the JOMUNXX. It was my first time debating. It was a two-day conference and I really did not have so much confidence on the first day. On the second day I gained courage and did better than the first day. The organisers were really nice and told us anything we needed to know. It was a really good experience with fun always in the midst of it.*

**Aqeela (Grade 11)**

Last year I was able to take part in the JOMUNXX and it was a new experience that took me some time to get used to. Once I was comfortable however, I had lots of fun in debating new points and perspectives. I want to improve my public speaking skills by taking part in the MUNNAM occurring next week and I think it would be a great way to collaborate with new people.

**Tapiwa (Grade 9)**

Last month I had the opportunity to participate in JOMUNXX and it was really fun. During the session I had made mistakes but I learnt from all of them and I am looking forward to seeing how much I've improved. I also found it really interesting to teach other people about MUN and socialise with them. A highlight from the training session was after the session was over because I started talking to everyone. I think MUN is a great place to boost your confidence, make new friends and learn.



Organised by **Rick Fitzpatrick - WIS Model United Nations Club Director**

**Car Security Stickers**  
**Please collect your 2022 - 2023**  
**windscreen sticker at the Office!**





# AFTERCARE SIGN-UPS NOVEMBER

**SCAN THIS QR CODE TO SIGN-UP!**





**COFFEE MORNING**

**JOIN US FOR A SPORTY MORNING COFFEE ON ...**

**THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER**  
**@THE TUCK-SHOP, FISH EAGLE'S NEST**  
**FROM: 07:00 - 08:00**

**WEAR YOUR SNEAKERS AND JOIN US FOR A COFFEE/TEA AND A CHAT!**

**THERE WILL BE SNACKS TO ENJOY!**

# Animals by Night

## WILD AT HEART

LIVE MUSIC BY

Laughn Ahrens  
Olivia Amupala  
& Riaan Smit

ART SLAM  
with talented artists  
painting live!

SILENT AUCTION

TICKETS  
EARLY BIRD: N\$150  
*(available until 15 November)*  
LATE/ DOOR: N\$200



To get your tickets, email [events@spcawindhoek.org.na](mailto:events@spcawindhoek.org.na) or stop by the SPCA Windhoek.

Friday, 25 November 2022 | 18:00 - 22:00 | Goethe Institute

All proceeds go to the animals at the SPCA!

This event is sponsored by:



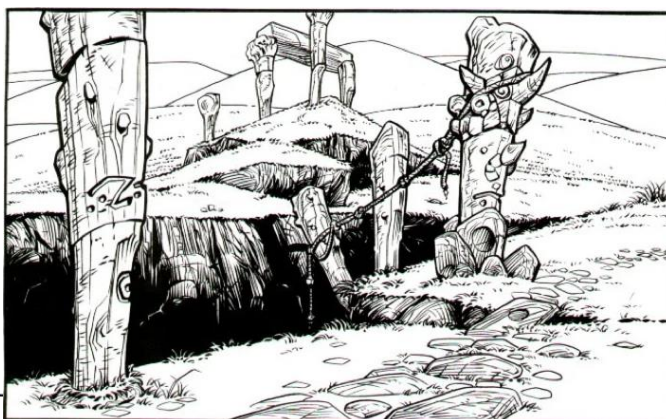
GOETHE  
INSTITUT



Find us in the WIS Secondary School Library!

# ADVENTURERS WANTED!

Two members of the Lords' Alliance have been missing for two tendays, since departing on an expedition to investigate rumors of a magical tree in an underground fortress known by local legend as the "Sunless Citadel".



*Sharwyn & Talgen Hucrele's last known location:  
Ravine on the Old Road.*



*Enclave scrivener's  
interpretation*

Lord Protector Neverember will reward any adventuring party that discerns Sharwyn and Talgen's whereabouts and, if at all possible, return them to Hucrele's Wares in the nearby town of Oakhurst. Adventurers are cautioned to be wary of goblins and unconfirmed reports of "twig monsters" in the area.

## DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

IS A TABLETOP ROLE-PLAYING GAME WHERE A GROUP OF PLAYERS EXPERIENCE A PERILOUS WORLD WHERE EVERY DECISION MATTERS.

Join the adventure every THURSDAY afternoon at 14:00-17:00.

DUNGEON MASTER ALEX

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## VOICES OF WINDHOEK

NAMIBIA'S NEWEST UPCOMING CHOIR

CONDUCTED BY FANIE DORFLING

**NOVEMBER 12**  
**10 AM TO 1 PM**



For further details  
send a WhatsApp  
message to

**081 127 5465**

with your name,  
surname, and age and  
we will contact you.

Private Bag 16007, Pioneers Park, Windhoek | Scheppmann Street, Pioneers Park EXT. 1, Windhoek

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