



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

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Office Hours

The office will be open during the following hours for the October break.

Monday - Friday: 08:00 - 15:00

Dates to Remember

October

- 12 - Term 2 starts
- 13 - 15: World Math Day
- 22 - UN Day Assembly



FROM THE DIRECTOR

You may have seen a half-page item in *The Namibian* today announcing that the school has been successfully re-accredited.

So, what is accreditation and why does it matter?

Accreditation is both a continuous process of school improvement and validation by an external agency that the school meets a (very) long list of precise standards. WIS is accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). They have jointly (and over many years – we are currently on the 8th edition) developed a template of standards that a school must meet in order to be accredited.

As part of the process, a school must evaluate itself against these published standards, deciding where it is already doing a good job and where work remains to be done. In many ways, this 'Self-Study' is the most valuable part of accreditation. It requires all teachers, staff and Board Members, supported by representatives of the student and parent bodies, to examine – honestly – every aspect of school life. It is a process that takes months and looks at the obvious – academic results, student success, the quality of teaching, the suitability of facilities, etc. – but also at health and safety issues, the financial stability of the school, the effectiveness of governance (the Board), and even the philosophy and ethos of the school.



Teacher of the week

Teacher: Beata Stephanus - KG2B

My name is Beata Stephanus and I was born and raised in Poland. I came to Namibia 10 years ago with so much enthusiasm and courage. I married a wonderful man, Arthur, and we have two beautiful children, Oliwia 7 and Logan who is almost 3. "Without my children my house would be clean and my wallet would be full but my heart would be empty".

We love animals and we have four dogs, Lola, Jack, Toby and Nelly.

My organisation skills and punctuality are my greatest strengths. I have a friendly nature and I'm a team player. I'm also a good learner as well as teacher.

This is my fifth year as a Kindergarten teacher at Windhoek International School.

Continued on page 3>

At the conclusion of this 'Self-Study' the school submits a report (a big one!) to its accreditation agency (or agencies) who some months later will send a team of professionals to the school for up to a week to compare their findings against the school's own self-evaluation. Their recommendations and reports are then submitted to the boards of CIS and NEASC who will decide to award, suspend or withdraw accreditation.



In any event, the school will receive a list of commendations and recommendations - and the cycle will start again. Accreditation is therefore a badge of quality. All serious international schools subject themselves to this process every five years (look for the relevant logos on their websites) and many schools use the accreditation commendations and recommendations as a valuable roadmap to help them grow, improve and develop.

Lastly, universities - particularly in North America - attach enormous importance to a school's accreditation status. It reassures them that the school is an authentic, serious and professional establishment whose graduates are likely to have enjoyed a comprehensive and high-quality education.

Going through the re-accreditation process every five years is a lot of work. But we are a better school because of it.

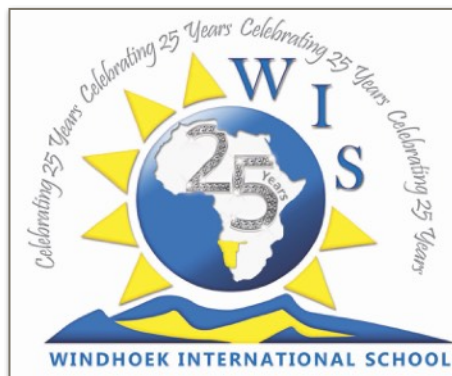
Learn more about accreditation: [Click here](#) or [Click here](#)

With best wishes

Peter Mackenzie

WIS @ 25

Preparations for our 25th birthday are progressing quickly and we are looking forward to some exciting and enjoyable events in December and January. We will be introducing a special logo as part of our celebrations. You will be seeing a lot more of this over the coming months. Hope you like it!



Teacher of the week continued>

I have 10 years of experience teaching Lower Primary students. I graduated from a Polish University with a Master's degree from the faculty of pedagogics, majoring in Special Education and Educational Art.

Over the years, I have taken many hours of professional development in order to be prepared to meet each child's needs.

I love teaching kindergarten! My mission as a teacher is to help students discover the joy of learning, and to help each learner develop a strong belief in his or her own ability. I want them to do their best and become independent learners.

My life style is very simple. I'm interested in many things such as music, sport and watching movies. I love to read but I do not have much time for it at the moment.

I like to spend time with my friends and eat good food.

I believe that a job should be like a hobby. Teaching has become a huge part of my life and I love what I do.

I'm a passionate, optimistic and dedicated woman who takes up responsibilities with utmost enthusiasm and see to it that I complete my tasks. My optimistic and planned approach in things I do is what drives me towards success.

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Thank you for your time in attending the Primary conferences. I hope you and your children found the conferences to be a positive and reflective experience. In talking with many of the children about their conferences the general feeling was positive and enthusiastic. Having the conferences during the day allowed for a more relaxed atmosphere and time for many of the students and parents to visit the specialist teachers

This week we have said goodbye to several Primary staff. On Monday we said goodbye to Gaby Ferreira, Year 6 teaching assistant, who resigned to pursue her career in law. We are currently interviewing candidates for the Year 6 TA position and hope to employ a new TA by the middle of October. Wednesday was Lizl Opperman's last day. Lizl has been a part of the Learning Support Department for 7 ½ years and is leaving to spend more time with her family. Today was Tanya-May Knouwds's last day with us as she is going on maternity leave. Ms Tanya-May will return to the Learning Support department in January. We wish all of these staff members well and thank them for their service at WIS.

With the completion of Term 1 there have been many end of unit presentations and projects and new units of inquiry have begun. Please be sure to read each year level's PYP Newsletter and blog. We finished the term with the rock band concert with performances by students and staff. Congratulations to the following Primary students for their participation in the rock band concert:

Year 3B: Mateo Maz Beltran, Matthew van Zyl, Hakumeni Kandido

Year 4A: Josie Anuszkiewicz

Year 4B: Mischa Nangolo-Rukoro

Year 5A: Kamogelo De Almeida, Evan Black, Franz Hangula

Year 5B: Ben-Timothy Visser, Awana Andrade, Jayden Jacobs, Paolo Greiter, Ruth Ntema

Year 6A: Eyana Kandido, Ricardo Capela Sandao, Mark Lintuange

Year 6B: Thomas Prybylski, India Kay

I wish you all a pleasant, relaxing and restful October break.

Kind regards,

Beth Smith

MULTI-SENSORY LEARNING AT WIS

At Windhoek International School, in the Early Years (Toddlers through to Year 1), we apply a multi-sensory approach to teaching and learning in playful ways.

What is multi-sensory learning?

Multi-Sensory learning involves using all the senses. The senses are very important for learning. Our eyes, ears, taste buds, nose and skin are truly windows to the world. They help us know and understand the world around us in a whole and complete way. We are designed to learn through all the senses. Inability to use and experience even one of these sensations affects the way we perceive the world. On the other hand,

WORLD MATHS DAY

The practice period has begun! All students from Year 1 up can now enjoy practicing for World Maths Day. The event takes place from 13th - 15th October and then access continues until 31st October.

Remember: If you are using an iPad you must access it through the free Mathletics App.

Have a Mathemagical time!



CANCER COLLECTION

On Saturday the 26th September some of our Year 10 students volunteered to participate in the Cancer Association of Namibia's annual street collection. WIS Year 10s have volunteered for this worthy cause for many years and as usual did us proud again on Saturday.

Sharon Gorelick

See photos on page 5

using as many sensations as possible helps us to learn and understand better. Research has shown multi-sensory learning is the best way to teach and introduce concepts to children.

Children don't learn just from books, but by doing, feeling, and experiencing. These experiences are very concrete, hands on and give children the opportunity to explore and transfer their understanding in a real world context. Multi-sensory teaching helps children register information better and retain it for a longer period of time.

Early Childhood Concepts

Early childhood concepts can be taught using multi-sensory learning techniques. Some examples for activities are:

- **Playing games like hunting for an object shown in the picture and saying the word or the initial sound it makes.**
- **Touching and guessing what the object in the bag is.**
- **Action songs to teach body parts**
- **Finger painting to teach colours, trace and create pictures**

Pre Reading Skills (Toddlers to KG 2)

Multi-sensory learning helps children pick up reading skills. A multi-sensory approach encompasses the senses where children are exposed to:

• **Auditory skills:** This incorporates children listening to environmental sounds, listening and singing along to nursery rhymes, listening to stories and retelling stories, this embraces the skill of listening, responding and developing vocabulary. Phonological awareness - this is where students are becoming aware of sentences and that this consists of words. Then the syllables in the words and finally the sounds in a word. This gives children the experience of the big picture e.g. the sentence moving down to the fine detail such as beginning sounds in words.

• **Visual skills:** In play based experiences students are given the opportunity to explore logos, signs, symbols in their immediate environment and start to associate and make meaning of symbols. In the classroom environment and at home putting up labels helps students identify and explore meaning behind them e.g. toilet, chair, exit etc.



Posting, pincer grip, eye hand coordination



Water babies: squeeze, roll, pincer grip



Early Writing

Through multi-sensory play experiences children can explore ‘mark making’ and ‘role play’ writing with many different mediums. For example, shaving foam, shopping lists, clay etc.

Fine motor skills and coordination needs to be put into place before children can later on use motor control and motor planning (skills for handwriting). The fine motor experiences accommodate students developing small muscle strength and coordination e.g. squeezing sponges in water, painting with large brushes, playdough, bead threading, weaving, using tongs or pegs for pincer grip. tearing and scrunching paper.

Emergent Reading Skills: (Year 1)

Term 1: Has been a focus on listening skills which is building phonological awareness

•**Analysis:** This is important for spelling later on as it gives students exposure to sound bites e.g. c-a-t in that specific sequence makes cat. This includes segmenting, which is taking parts of the word away e.g. seesaw, if see- is taken away, what is left? Then the next step is to start with beginning sounds and ending sounds, e.g. dog - what can we hear in the beginning? If we take the “d” away what can we hear at the end?

•**Synthesis:** This is important for reading later on. As it gives students exposure to sound bites that blend together e.g. c-a-t makes “cat”. Students need time and exposure to practice this. We start with a visual cue/picture (visual skills) and ask the child, for example, which is the b-u-s? OR Which one starts with a b sound? Then we take away the visual and start working with only listening (auditory) skills, e.g. what is b-u-s. What can you hear? What is the beginning sound when you hear the word cat?

•**Spatial awareness** is important as it gives children indicators of the “position of the sound in the word”. This is linked to body awareness and is connected with our Gross Motor Programme: Motorics or “Move to Learn”.

•**Year 1** will slowly be introduced to the letter formation of sounds. This element connects with our multi-sensory approach as children experience formation and movement with shaving foam, sand, clay, playdough, big body movements, on the painting easel, cutting and pasting.

•**Fine motor skills:** In Year 1 the focus is more on visual, tracking skills, following and copying patterns, copying shapes e.g. a square. Follow dot to dot patterns, and opportunity to explore “mark making/writing” through role play writing e.g. shopping lists, make labels on pictures, story books, copy from food cans. Students are beginning to put the sounds they know onto paper. This develops awareness that a phoneme (a sound bite) has a grapheme (which is a written expression)

Next term the school will be providing an Early Years Workshop for parents to find out more about our approaches to literacy and numeracy in a Multi-Sensory and playful

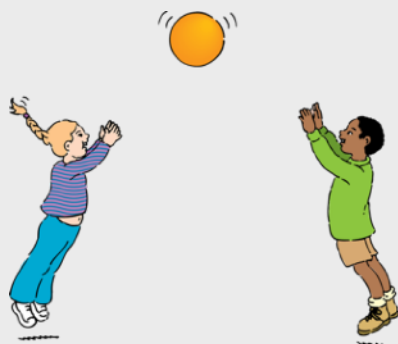
WIS Saturday Ball Club

Fun ball games involving throwing, catching and dodging to develop hand-eye coordination, teamwork, sportsmanship and enthusiasm for sports

Who: WIS Year 2 to Year 6 Students, led by Marc Deragon

Dates: Saturdays, October 17, 24, 31; November 7, 21, 28

Time: 10 am - 12 pm (just show up; no registration needed)



Location: WIS PE Hall

Fee: N\$100 per child, per day (due Saturdays upon arrival)

Contact: Please direct all questions to Marc mderagon@wis.edu.na

Pincer grip & eye hand coordination



Tracing, squeezing, touching



Cutting, tearing, ripping



Pincer grip, thumb/finger squeeze

Avril van Zyl

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

The first term is coming to an end and everyone, students and teachers alike, is looking forward to a well deserved October break during next week.

As always, classes have been busy with all kinds of exciting things. Exam preparation is ongoing in the IGCSE and IBDP classes.

At the beginning of this week, we had a poetry slam in Year 9. The students wrote their own poems and presented them to other classes, parents and teachers on Monday morning. It was interesting to see the the different approaches to the topics given in the poems students presented. On Wednesday the Year 9 students worked with the Year 13s who are starting poetry to analyse the Year 9 poems and then write a poem together. **(See more on pages 8 and 9)**

Chasing Dreams by: Joana Ribeiro
Theme: Pursuing your dreams.

*Chasing your dreams
is like walking on a beam
You keep going
And think it's worth showing*

*But sometimes you might snap
So you'll have to do another lap
You're going to have to climb
Before you can shine*

From flopping to flying
From success to dying
What's the point of whining
If you're not even trying

Student Parent Teacher Conferences were conducted on 30 September and 1 October. Thank you to all parents and students who attended these.

I would like to already inform you that the annual Pupkewitz Schools Swimming Gala will be taking place on the 23rd and 24th of October. WIS participates each year, but it would be great if we could have more of our students participating. Students participating do not necessarily have to be active swimmers. This is an opportunity for WIS to participate and swim against students from other schools and we encourage all students who have had swim training to enter their names to swim for WIS.

We are very grateful to the families Ellmies and Sharma for sponsoring swim caps and t-shirts for WIS students at the event.



Kind regards,
Maggie Reiff

RISING FROM THE DEPTHS

WIS swimmers bring back 6 medals
Nirab Sarma (Year 12)

Swakopmund was the place to be last weekend as the place was abuzz in an almost festive spirit. Nearly 150 athletes, and their supporters, from all over Namibia had gathered for the Namibia National Short Course Swimming Championships, the most prestigious event in the swimming circle. The clubs represented were, Aqua Swimming, Dolphins Swimming Club, Namibian Swimming Academy, Oranjemund Sand Sharks and the hosts Swakopmund Swimming Club.

Three of our students (including myself) were part of the Dolphin Club contingent. Collectively we returned with **six medals!** Viktoria Ellmies of Year 8 bagged 3 bronzes (50m and 100m butterfly and the 50m breaststroke), Abhinab Sarma of Year 12 two golds (50m and 100m butterfly) and myself, also from Year 12, one bronze (100m freestyle).

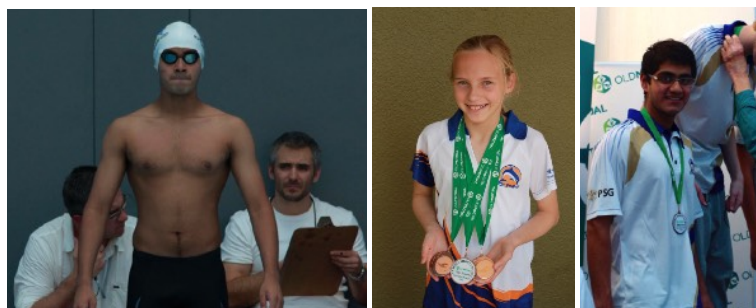
Petite Viktoria can be quite a threat to some of those formidable muscular girls in the water. Extremely dedicated and hardworking (in and outside the pool), Viktoria managed to clock an unbelievable time of 1:07.28 in the 100m freestyle. Even though she did not bag a medal in this event, she came a close fourth and one has to say this is a phenomenal achievement at her age. Abhinab's gold medals were earned

clocking the times of 1:05,46 and 29,44 in the 100m and 50m butterfly events respectively. Finally, I earned the bronze medal with a time of 1:01.68.



Statistics aside, the meet was an extremely fun event. As a now long-time swimmer in Namibia, I have had the opportunity to attend many a national championships in our country and a few others in neighbouring South Africa. These allowed for familiarization with swimmers from other clubs and their specialties, something I appreciate so much. There is a sense of camaraderie, as we mount the blocks for a race. The 50m butterfly finals race that my twin brother and I swam last weekend is a good example. Comments after race were all about the fantastic entertainment – apparently it was an excellent race to watch. Four of us, in the centre lanes, swam times only split seconds apart. I can decisively state that we were all proud of putting on a good show

for the public, as well as achieving what we had set out to do, that is, improve our times.



Swimming is not only an exceptional sport, it is a necessary life skill. Swimming has played a significant role in my life. It has and continues to help me grow as a person. Perseverance, dedication and self-discipline are some important lessons that I have learnt as a swimmer. Many amongst us are not born athletes but we have indeed managed to rise from the depths. I

would be delighted to see more youngsters from our school participate in this sport. In a month's time swimmers from various schools of the country will be coming together in Windhoek for the Pupkewitz Inter-school gala. I look forward to be part of an enthusiastic WIS contingent!

IBDP ENGLISH & YEAR 9 POETS

On Monday we enjoyed the second annual Poetry performance within the English Department. Under the guidance of Dr. Guest and Ms. Van Rensburg, Year 9s created and performed poems in Spoken Word style. The students' poems focused on themes of innocence, anger, truth, blood is thicker than water, happiness, and love is blind.

Inspired by the Year 9's performances, Tamara Winschiers (Year 13) initiated a collaborative effort to bring the Year 9 poems and poets to the Year 13 IB English classes. This self-driven idea was proposed to the IB teachers via a well-written introduction paragraph complete with a strong thesis sentence. This was Tamara's proposal:

"Life is a one-time offer, use it well". The year 13 IB HL students, are studying Nikki Giovanni's poetry, but how often are they able to encounter young poets just metres away. Recently the Year 9 class presented their own poems, written under the umbrella of specific themes. After gaining feedback on how incredibly talented these young poets are, there can only be one solution. *Thesis statement: In order to experience poetry in different forms the Year 13 HL IB students must be exposed to the minds of young poets, and analyze the tone of voice, identify the theme and stylistic devices used.*

Tamara organized groups of four in which one IB student was assigned three year 9 students. Each of the Year 9 students recited their poems and as a group they deconstructed the poem's theme and poetic devices. Together, they then used various words from songs and Giovanni's poetry to construct a group poem. Finally, Tamara reflected back on the experience and wrote an Abecedarian poem with identified poetic devices to cap this incredible learning experience!

