



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Welcome Interns

On Monday we welcomed two interns who will be spending six weeks at WIS having the opportunity to put into practice what they've learned in their studies and honing their skills as they prepare to become teachers. They are both from Germany and are in their last year of study at University College Zealand in Denmark. Jennifer Rössler is under the mentorship of Ms Barbara in Year 3B, while Mirjam Pougin's mentor is Ms Yolandé in 6A. I'm sure they will find their experience at WIS to be enriching and rewarding while at the same time the students will benefit from Jennifer and Mirjam's enthusiasm, passion for working with children and the experience they bring from previous internships.

Absences and Dismissal

I've noticed on the daily absence lists that many students are absent without reason. This is a friendly reminder that in the event that your child will be absent, please inform Ms Catherine at Reception (reception@wis.edu.na) as well as the homeroom teacher.

Another friendly reminder concerns dismissal. Dismissal is at 13:30 for all Primary students. If you need to collect your child before 13:30, please sign your child out at Reception and get an exit slip to give to the homeroom teacher.

Swim Gala and Mary Poppins Ballet

Good luck to all of the participants in today's swim gala. It's great to see so many entries from across the Primary School.



Congratulations to all of our students who are dancing in this week's Mary Poppins' Ballet. There have been many hours of rehearsal and preparation for this special event, not to mention the excitement.

Regards,
Beth Smith



Making Global Connections

Kindergarten 2B is taking learning outside the four walls of the classroom. I asked Beata Stephanus what this meant for her and the class. [CLICK HERE to find out more.](#)

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Dates to Remember

October

- 31 Oct - 4 Nov:
Secondary Week B

November

- 5: International Day
- 18: Staff Work Day
- 22: Primary Photo Day
- 23: Secondary Photo Day

FROM OUR PAD

(Primary Art Department a.k.a. Positive Art Day)

FRIENDSHIPS ARE LIKE A BOX OF PENCIL CRAYONS. CRAYONS NEED SHARP POINTS IN ORDER TO WORK WELL, SO DO FRIENDSHIPS. BLUNT PENCILS CAN BE SHARPENED, SO CAN FRIENDSHIPS!



Year 1 Students each created a PENCIL CRAYON to make up a box of PENCIL CRAYONS, which we linked to our class friendships. They used papier mache and imagination with lots of meaningful discussions.

Ms Genie and Ms Sigrid

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

How much pressure is “healthy” in trying to get our children to perform to the best of their ability?

We all want our children/students to do as well as they can. We want to equip them with the necessary skills - and have them achieve the best grades possible. However, don't we sometimes push them too much? Don't we sometimes achieve the opposite by putting pressure on them to perform - even to an unrealistic level?

Where does this pressure come from? Teachers and parents want their child/student to perform at a level that will keep all doors open for future education -



Teacher Feature

Pamela Mungate - Year 3A

My name is Pamela Mungate and I am proudly Zimbabwean! I am really glad to be a part of WIS. This is my first time in Namibia and first time teaching Year 3. Prior to coming here, I taught Year 4 at Harare International School, Zimbabwe.

I have a strong background in Elementary Education and IB PYP curriculum including PYP Exhibition. Being a flexible, passionate and a competent teacher, I have taught three different grade levels in the past five years.

I graduated with BSc in Special Needs Education and a Diploma in Teaching Secondary Education. I am currently studying towards my Masters with the University of South Africa. I come with experience of teaching English and Geography and Shona to the IGCSE 7,8 and 9 in Zimbabwean State schools and 15 years of IB PYP in various capacities.

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Teacher Feature continued

I believe teaching provides an opportunity for continual learning and growth. As an educator, my hope is to instil a love of learning in my students as I share my own passion for learning with them.

I feel there is a need for compassionate, strong, and dedicated individuals who are excited about working with children. In a competitive society, it is important for students to not only receive a solid education, but to work with someone who is aware and sensitive to their needs.

I value bringing up a whole child who will turn out to be an invaluable global citizen. I believe that respect, acceptance and embracing differences is at the core of what makes life so fascinating!

I come to Namibia with my twin girls, Chloe who is in KG2B, Zara, KG2C and my husband and friend, Duarito-Eddie who is traveling back and forth between Harare and Windhoek. Apart from that, I am always on a quest to meet new people and learn about their culture.

I strike some as a reserved and private person but am very sociable and pleasant to be around once you get to know me better.

Being a lifelong learner myself, I am living the IB philosophy which I strongly believe in and which is what landed me at WIS. I was looking for change and an adventure for my family.

Continues on page 4

getting into the IBDP, getting into university, etc. This pressure in and out of school can have various outcomes - it can cause all kinds of side-effects from anxiety to depression, eating disorders and withdrawal. Children can often not voice or recognise the cause of their anxiety or unhappiness. They learn that it is important to perform, that it is necessary to do well in school, especially in academic work, and sometimes they don't know how to do that.

What we as adults try to achieve - that our kids work and do well - can just as well have the opposite effect on them; that they withdraw, become anxious, become rebellious and do the opposite of what we want them to do. If a teacher in a classroom refers to the final exam and that kids have to start working all the time, it will mostly not make them work harder. What is needed is the understanding and compassion from teachers. The same applies at home. Parents need to be involved in their child's education, but merely putting pressure on them will not automatically make children work more and be more committed to school work.

When addressing this with young people, we should try to be constructive and take into consideration the developmental situation the child finds him/herself in as well. Teenagers especially, often find it hard to develop a positive self-image that makes them strong. There are so many factors influencing their way of thinking about themselves: peer pressure, physical and emotional factors. We as adults should help them build a positive image of themselves - no matter what their friends think. Perfect grades are not the only thing that will matter later in their lives. More and more universities move away from looking at grades and standardised test scores. They look at the "package" - the grades are important, but they also look at the student's description of themselves, their extra-curricular activities and the references their teachers write for them.

"Researchers found that children of parents who put pressure on them by 'over-managing' their lives at school ended up having higher levels of depression, decreased satisfaction with life and lower levels of autonomy and competence. The researchers concluded that though the parents in the study believed they were being supportive, ultimately this extremely involved parenting style undermined their children's developing sense of self and confidence." The same would apply in school when teachers are over-eager to have their students perform well.

What can we do to be supportive in a way that is helpful rather than putting too much pressure on our children? "Setting realistic expectations is important. Unless your child is the rare student who truly loves every subject, it's not reasonable -or healthy- to require As across the board. Also, give your child the chance to relax. Just like adults, kids need periods of "check-out" time in order to alleviate tension and reduce stress."

<http://motherhood.modernmom.com/effects-academic-parental-pressure-kids-10380.html>

Teacher Feature continued

I already feel that and believe I am at the right place surrounded by the right people who will advise me of places to visit not only in Namibia but the rest of the world at large.

My family is of a Christian background and my hobbies include travelling, watching T.V and cooking as long as someone else will do the dishes. I am a neat freak although working with children and having my own has taught me what it means to be patient and flexible.

I have come to understand that things can be messy and it's okay, clothes can get dirty from playing and that's okay too. Life goes on!

"No wonder you are all sad. They've stolen your childhood and replaced it with homework and grades. They don't let you dream any more, they crush it with the pressures to be mediocre yet pretend they want greatness from you. That is wrong. That is so wrong."

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**



YEAR11 Students enjoying the long-awaited rain!

More football news!



On the weekend of the 23 October, 2016 the Khomas League came to an end. The Khomas League has about 12 teams which compete playing home and away games every weekend, on Saturdays and Sundays (especially at lunchtime); there are even times when teams are called to play during the week with less than 48 hours notice.

It is with a sigh of relief that for the first time in 2016 the soccer boys can finally have a weekend without having to be on the soccer field at 7am. The parents, no doubt, are just as relieved!

The under 15 A team, led by coaches Ville Kivimaki and Gordon Van Wyk, received their silver medals over the weekend. Although a great achievement, the boys had a bittersweet victory. Their loss to Swallows Football Academy cost them the trophy which they had won since under 11. One of the boys is quoted as saying "First, accept sadness, then realise that without losing, winning isn't so great!" - indeed showing wisdom beyond his years.

In the near future, when the Manuel Neuer, Boateng, Ronaldo and Messi of the football world retire, you will surely hear about the new great stars, Kyle Webb (goalkeeper), Alexander McNab (defender), Nicolas Kivimaki (midfielder) and Diogo Ferreira (striker). Remember these names.

Well done to our WIS boys who trained diligently, who fought through injuries to stay on the top of their game and who never once complained throughout the league matches! The truth is, you boys are the players other coaches warn their team about!

Jeanne Vieira

AISA conference



Our bags were packed and ready to go. Junelle, Urte, Kaye and myself were on our way to Johannesburg for the AISA conference. This experience was a first for all of us and we did not know what to expect. Upon our arrival, we were met by friendly staff, handing each of us a warm hand towel and a bottle of water. We were driven to the Indaba Hotel where the conference took place. We stayed in lovely rooms and were able to start our day with a variety of breakfast items. After breakfast, we were to go off into our separate rooms, for the specific training we each signed up for. The training took place from Monday to

Wednesday, where we signed up for a specific session in the morning and another session in the afternoon.

I chose the Literacy workshop with Laura Benson. It was exciting and I learned much regarding reading, writing and assessment. One thing about this session that I find fascinating is "Effective assessment gives students feedback on how well they understand the information and on what they need to improve. They help teachers better design instruction to teach more effectively." If students are more involved in their own development of assessment, they will then be able to understand and accept that the assessment is adequately measuring their learning. It is said if middle school students want to improve their reading and writing, they need to read and write for up to 90 minutes a day. The type of reading and writing should be their own choice and can be done throughout all the subjects. "The fact is that kids learn by making decisions and not by being instructed."

The afternoon session I chose was all about - How to sustain meaningful integration: Service Learning in the curriculum. The facilitators were Tara Barton and Chris McBride. All of this links with the CAS programme we are currently running in the DP. The main idea with this is to integrate the service learning into the whole school and work together. We use student initiated ideas to help our community (people, environment and animals) with a continuous and sustained partnership. Moving away from community service to service learning is key (connections between my own learning and the outcomes of the project).

Urte signed up for Finding Balance: Technology Integration for Teaching and Learning by Ryan Harwood and Digital Platform to Enhance Learning by Mark Engstrom. Both workshops covered strategies that can be deployed with regards to working smarter, not harder. We have to acknowledge that the tools we need are online in some kind of form, consequently what we have to do is to choose the tools to make our work easier. We spoke about our aim as teachers - what do we want the students to learn and how can we use the tools to help the students learn and understand the content better. We learned some techniques on how to use technology in our classrooms and then everybody had to search and find out what these tools were and review them so that one can access as to where and when the tools are located. Ryan showed us how to import data into google maps and how to collaborate and curate it.

Kaye felt that the AISA conference was an inspiring conference that made you look at certain teaching tools differently. The workshops that she attended were - The Joy in teaching and learning by Robin Harwood and Inquiry based teaching by Mark Church.

Robin Harwood focused on the brain techniques and strategies on breathing exercises for students to do during class time. This teaches them to control their emotions and feelings and at the same time it relaxes students and teachers. We got to do a survey that would let us know what are our top ten strengths. The 'feeling' brain is just as important as the 'thinking' brain. Robin also feels that it is important for students to express their feelings that they are experiencing, be it sad, happy, angry etc.

Mark Church's workshop focused on the understanding of the subject and thinking strategies, how to get students involved in the lesson and make it more meaningful. Mark Church's aim is that he would like to see the change in education by getting students more involved and intrigued by the subject. How are we, as teachers, taking more notice of the culture in our classrooms, do we pay attention to students thinking? We got to focus on three strategies, Social disposition, Work disposition and Thinking disposition. Mark Church left me thinking, what message do we as teachers want to leave our students with, what is our role in shaping those messages?

Junelle was really intrigued with the notion of 'Letting the Students do the Thinking'. It fits in really well with the IB PYP Inquiry Based Learning, so she thought she would give it a go to see how it could be applied to Drama. The speaker was inspirational, witty and engaging. Karen Boyes taught through relating many of her own experiences which were useful. She supplied us with a lot of tools to teach in a way that encourages students to work independently and take responsibility of their own learning. One of the major key elements is to take away the fear of failure and change it to FAIL (First Attempt In Learning).

Junelle's afternoon Institute was with Dr Rich Allen on 'High Impact Teaching in the XYZ Era of Education. What an adventure! During these sessions we became as excited as little kids discovering the most amazing things. Dr Allen truly believes that you can teach anybody anything if you do it in the right way and he made believers of us all by modelling his lessons on us. Education has evolved through the ages and so should teaching and learning. We discovered many different approaches to keep the students' attention and hone their focus. He also pointed out common mistakes that we as teachers make when we give instruction and how to fix it.

We all enjoyed a great evening at the Gala dinner where we met great teachers from around the world. We did not only learn new concepts about the specific courses we signed up for, we also had the opportunity to do networking and making connections with teachers in other schools that teaches in the same area as us.

We are thankful for the opportunity that was given to us regarding our professional development and think that it is important that every teacher gets the opportunity to do so. Collectively we feel that we got affirmation that WIS is definitely on the right path of International Education.

Angatha Janse van Rensburg, Junelle Stroh, Urte Dorgeloh & Kaye Van Rooi

JOMUN CONFERENCE 6TH - 9TH OCTOBER



We were told about the upcoming conference a year before it happened. It felt so far away but when it was two weeks to the conference it hit us unexpectedly. We felt unprepared, scared and nervous, so full of these volatile emotions we could burst. The first day, we were in awe and extremely shy surrounded by strangers. It was a new environment with people from all over, South Africa, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Mozambique and Sri Lanka. To us everyone seemed experienced like they knew exactly what they were doing, we seemed to be the exception. Every day got a little better and we were able to speak up about our country's stances on the issues at hand.

We debated worldwide issues concerning various topics. JOMUN helped us understand the world we live in and gave us an insight into the life of an adult. We had responsibilities and we had to go through with them. We had to integrate with our peers and share ideas. We learnt from others as they learnt from us. JOMUN wasn't just about debating, it was about socializing, sharing and responsibility. It was about finding who you are and implementing that into what you do and how you do it. It was about learning from others. It was about teaching others. It is about being humble and accepting you are wrong when you are. JOMUN was more than just a conference - it was a lesson in life and an insight into reality.

A lesson that was learnt by all of us is to speak out when you think something is wrong. It was to not back down from a challenge. We learnt how to move forward even when we were afraid. We were able to do this because we had each other. Strength doesn't come when you are alone but when you are together with people laughing, sharing and caring.

As we debated the problems of the world, they did not seem so far away anymore. They were right in front of us. All of a sudden we were the ones responsible for coming up with the solutions to these world issues. Real people out there were suffering and our job was to help these people. We discovered that the job of the UN was far more than we thought it was. It is incredible that our little ideas could change the world, make it a better place.

By Year 11: Afua and Njeri

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Dear WIS Community,

The School's annual INTERNATIONAL DAY will be held on

Saturday, 5 November at WIS from 10h00 to 14h00.

This event, being organised by the WIS Staff Events Committee together with the WIS PTA, celebrates the diversity of the school's community and its nationality mix.

As is the tradition every year, the classes represent different countries, their culture and cuisine. Embassies and international organizations are also to take part in order to enhance the International experience and to associate the school with the international community in Windhoek. The embassies donate some of their profit to the school's Scholarship fund. Profits from the classes go back to the classes.

Looking at the preparations so far, this promises to be a wonderful day where you will enjoy cultural, educational and culinary experiences from all over the world.

We encourage the entire community to attend.

You are most welcome to bring your umbrella and blanket and enjoy the day with your family and friends in the picnic area.

We would be most grateful if you would bring money in smaller denominations (N\$10, N\$20, 50N\$ and coins) rather than big notes.

A successful International Day requires a major effort on the part of students, parents, teachers, administration, support staff, the PTA and of course our external participants. We would like to thank parents who have already signed up to help at their children's class stalls.

Finally, the PTA and Staff Events Committee thank you for your ongoing support and we look forward to making this International Day another great success!

Regards,

Sandra Camilo-Giroud

PTA chair person

