



# THE ORYX

*The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School*

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## Dates to Remember

### August

- **26** - Heroes' Day: Public Holiday, school closed
- **29** - Back to School Night (Primary)
- **30** - Back to School Night (Middle School)
- **31** - Back to school Night (IGCSE & IBDP)



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### 2016 Exam results

I am pleased to announce the school's external examination results for 2016.

#### IGCSE

Learners in Years 10 and 11 spend two years working towards IGCSE exams. IGCSE stands for International General Certificate of Secondary Education and the courses and exams are designed and marked by Cambridge University in the UK. IGCSEs have been around for almost thirty years and are used in thousands of schools worldwide. The results therefore give us a meaningful way to evaluate and compare our results.



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

IGCSEs are graded on a scale of A (excellent) to G. Outstanding scores are recognised with an A\* and at the other end of the scale a U (ungraded) mark may be awarded. There is officially no "pass mark" but a C is unofficially considered to be a "pass" and schools commonly express their success rate in terms of the percentage of grades at C and above.

This year thirty-seven WIS students sat IGCSE exams in twenty subjects. The percentage of A\*-C grades was 68.3%. This compares with 67.6% last year and a five-year average of 68.2%.

*(Please note that IGCSE letter grades such as A, B, C do not correspond in any way to the grading system familiar to parents from North America. In fact, there is a rough*



## Teacher Feature

### Mrs. Kathleen Britz - EAL

My name is Kathleen Britz and I am one of five children born to an Irish father and a British mother, in Cape Town, South Africa.

I grew up in Cape Town and graduated from St. Mary's Convent, Mowbray Teacher's Training College and UCT.

I am a mother of three children in their twenties, two of whom graduated from WIS.

Since July 2002 I've taught in both the Primary and Secondary School at WIS and love EAL (English as an Additional Language) most of all.

A smile comes to my face when I hear some of the 'gems' children say and do.

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*(but unofficial) correlation between IGCSE and IB grades with a C at IGCSE corresponding to a 4 at IB.)*

### IB DIPLOMA

WIS is the only IB World School in Namibia and our senior students in Years 12 and 13 have been taking IBDP exams since 2002. Again, with around 3,500 schools in the world offering IBDP exams, this gives us an invaluable way to compare our grades to those in other schools.

Over the last six years we have entered 71 students for the full IB Diploma of whom 64 have passed. The worldwide pass rate is 79%. The school's pass rate over six years is 90%. The maximum possible score is 45 points and the worldwide average is 30 points. Our school's five-year average is 31. (Bear in mind, however, that many IBDP schools are selective whereas WIS is a proudly inclusive school.)

In 2016 eleven of twelve WIS students passed the Diploma (a pass rate of 92%) with an average score of 31.6. The highest score was 44.

There is a good deal more to delivering a first-class education than exam results but they do have real importance and value and excellent results are certainly achievements to celebrate. Moreover, when a school consistently records fine exam results parents are commonly, and I believe correctly, reassured that standards are high throughout the school.



Many of the WIS students who did so well this year have been with us for many years – in some cases since they were very young children – and their success this year is a testament to the quality of education they have enjoyed throughout their careers at WIS.

With best wishes  
**Peter MacKenzie**

## PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

One of the School goals for this year and one of the overarching aims of the Strategic Plan is Connectivity. During the Staff Orientation week this idea was discussed and the various meanings behind this one word.

I've been reflecting, from the School's perspective, on what Connectivity means for parents. In this digital age one might first think of the internet.

Certainly, being able to connect to the internet is important as a tool for learning and for communicating. It's equally important to be connected to what children are doing and how they are using the internet. (That's another article in itself.)

Overall I believe that connectivity with the School means being connected with your child and his/her learning; being aware and knowing what is happening at school and participating in school events.

**Teacher Feature continued**

'My windows are dirty!' said a student when her specs needed to be cleaned.

My young son putting on his glasses at bedtime so that sleep wouldn't get in his eyes!

A five year old boy asking his parents 'Are we there yet?' when they were miles from nowhere and the same child insisting to be carried when he was wearing his new trainers so that they wouldn't get dirty!

A 'new arrival' told me it took 'two moons and a sun' to arrive in Windhoek from his country.

Such are the joys of teaching!

I enjoy spending time with people I love, sometimes traveling long distances to do this, and stay connected by reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The following are some of the many different ideas and suggestions encouraging Connectivity:

- ◆ Attend the Parent Back to School Night (Monday, 29 August);
- ◆ Attend and participate in the 3-Way Conferences (Wednesday, 5 October and Thursday, 6 October);
- ◆ Get involved with the PTA;
- ◆ Help your child to find a place dedicated for doing homework and encourage the homework to be completed on time;
- ◆ Make an appointment with the homeroom or subject area teacher if you have any concerns about your child;
- ◆ Make sure that your child arrives to school on time (in the classroom by 7:20) - late arrivals and absence can affect your child's learning;
- ◆ Make sure that your child is collected on time at the end of the school day (dismissal is at 13:30 for Primary; Afternoon Activities finish at 14:45);
- ◆ Read and comment on your child's class blog;
- ◆ Read the weekly Oryx so that you know what's happening in school;
- ◆ Talk with your child about his/her day.

I would welcome additional additional ideas and suggestions to add to this list.

Regards,

**Beth Smith**

## **SECONDARY PRINCIPAL**

### **How much is enough time .....**

These days, most of us are in a rush most of the time, most of us spend a lot of time working very hard to be able to afford a great lifestyle, to be able to give our kids an excellent education.

But how much time do we have for our kids?

This past week, Steve Hamilton was talking to our students about drug and alcohol abuse and his life story. On Wednesday night there was an opportunity for parents to listen to his story - to listen to how he got into this situation. It was disappointing to see the very low attendance at this parent evening.

Why would a talk like this not be important enough to attend? How certain are we as parents that our kids are "okay" when it comes to their social behaviour? Was it too much time to invest in listening to someone who is experiencing a life that none of us want for our children?

As Steve said, we might all think: "This is not for me, not my child." Do we really know?

During his presentation, Steve very often referred to his parents. How often do we send them away, when they come for something "trivial" - I'll be there now, ask mom, ask dad, let me just finish - and then we don't have time - to connect

**Concert:**  
**Date: Thursday 25th**  
**Time: 1.30-2.20**  
**Place: (P7 for senior school) Auditorium**

**Middle School Welcome**  
**WIS Alumni and Special**  
**Guest Local Artists**  
**Concert**

with our children. There is always something more pressing, more urgent - the kids retreat to their rooms and go onto social media, the internet. Do we know what our kids are busy with when they are in their rooms? Do we know who they hang out with when they go out? Do we know what happens when they are "chilling with friends"?

My appeal to all of us who are parents is to take the time to connect. Too soon are our kids out of our control, either, because they leave our house, or because we lost control, because someone else or something else took control over them.

If we take the time to connect with them, spend time to talk to them and establish and sustain trust, we will be able to protect them so much more from possible negative influences - and we might be able to intervene early if necessary when something goes wrong.

***"Listen earnestly to anything your children want to tell you, no matter what. If you don't listen eagerly to the little stuff when they are little, they won't tell you the big stuff when they are big, because to them all of it has always been big stuff."* Catherine M. Wallace**

Steve Hamilton has written a book about his addiction - "I want my life back". It is certainly worth a read.

Regards,  
**Maggie Reiff**

## Afternoon Activities

Click [here](#) for the Afternoon Activity Schedule or alternatively check the d6 communicator under resources.

## REGIONAL SCIENCE FAIR 2016

The Khomas Regional Science Fair was held in July 2016 at SKW.





Our student’s performance made us proud. Windhoek International School took the third place among all the secondary schools in the Khomas region.

*We had in total 18 projects that was judged for the regional competition. Five of our students Viktoria Ellmies, Noam Babluki, Fiona Farell, Nishant Shejwal ,Wendy Swart were awarded gold medals, Emilio Leto, Varun Srivatsava, Bernard Petrick, Sasha Jarvis, Ilay Cohen silver medals and Jethro Hiwipelo, Grace Farell , Chiara Zorn and Karim El-Kallawi were awarded Bronze medals.*



**Top Category Winners**

These were amazing results. We are very proud of all of them.

There were 10 different categories and the top places for three of the categories were awarded to our pupils.

Victoria Ellmies won the top category prize for Environmental Science, Nishanth Shejwal for Physics and Technology and Wendy Swartz for Animal Science.

They were awarded a cash prize of N\$1000/- and have the honour of representing the Khomas region in the National Science fair to be held in the first week of September.

Congratulations to all our pupils. We would like to wish our national Science fair students all the very best. Thank you to the parents for all their support. Thank you to Ms Urte (Science teacher) who guided them through their projects.

**Mariamma Mathew**

