



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Big Picture

“[You] can’t see the wood for the trees.”

I know the same expression exists in German. I think it exists in French and Portuguese. My wholly scientific and comprehensive survey of two people in my office suggests that it doesn’t exist in Oshivambo or Afrikaans and after that I have no idea.

So, if you are not familiar with the idiom, it means that you have lost sight of the big picture because you are too focused on one part of the whole.

To do so is common. It’s understandable. We all do it. But, obviously, it can blind us to a more important narrative taking place just outside our field of vision.

So this year we are trying to encourage and remind people not to lose sight of “The Big Picture”.

The educational experience we offer here is a package, a rather complex one. Each and every part of it has its place and is important but what matters the most is the whole.

Without getting into Chaos Theory (mostly because I don’t understand it), everything each of us does has an impact on everyone and everything else. In a complex and dynamic community like a school (especially one that includes and embraces such diversity) this is particularly true.

So let’s take pride in the part we each play in the school’s story but let’s not lose sight of ... the Big Picture

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Commitment - What does this word mean to you? It’s one of the Attitudes of the PYP and is defined as, *students being committed to their own learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility.*

During last week’s Assembly the word, *commitment* was mentioned by Ms Junelle, when encouraging students to attend the tryouts for the upcoming Primary production, and reminding them that taking



Contents

- From the Director p. 1
- Primary News p.1 - 4
- Secondary News p. 4 - 6
- Other News p. 6 - 8



Dates to Remember

August 2017

- **21:** Toddlers - Year 2: Back to school Night
- **22:** Middle School: Back to school
- **23:** IGCSE/ IBDP: Back to school
- **24:** Year 3 - 6: Back to school Night



Teacher Feature

Veena Nambiar
Year 2A Homeroom Teacher

Dear ORYX Readers,

Please find here an introduction about myself.

I am Veena Nambiar and I am the Homeroom Teacher for Year 2A. I am an Indian and I have come here with my family that consists of my husband and two children. My husband Ajit, volunteers for the Table Tennis After School Activity. My daughter Amrita is in Year 11 and my son is in Year 5.

This is our first visit to an African nation and we are very excited about all the newness that surrounds us. As much as India, my country, is about phenomenal developments in areas such as IT and healthcare, thanks to our very able prime minister Mr. Narendra Modi's many initiatives, it is also a land of diverse cultures, mind boggling cuisines, a thousand faiths and a million beliefs, traffic, tranquility, yoga and serenity, breathtaking monsoons and beautiful spring.

Continues on page 3

part in the production requires commitment. The Under 10 and Under 12 Field Hockey teams were recognized for exemplifying commitment by showing up for practices and the games.

With the start of After School Activities this week, it's a perfect time to talk with your child about what commitment means and the importance of persevering and seeing a task, or activity through to completion. Commitment is important, not only for oneself but also it's a responsibility to the group and to the leader or facilitator of the activity.

As it's a new school year, it's also a good time for parents and guardians to reflect on how committed you are to your child's education here at WIS. Here are some questions to consider:

- Do you ensure that your child arrives at school by 7:20 and is picked up at 13:30 (or 14:45 if your child is participating in After School Activities)?
- Have you subscribed to your child's class blog and are you reading the blog?
- Do you read the messages and information posted on the D6?
- Have you read last week's Oryx?
- Do you encourage and listen to your child read?
- Have you attended a parent workshop about the PYP?
- Have you made a plan to attend the Back to School Night(s) next week? *(Monday 18:00 - Toddlers - Year 2; Thursday 18:00 - Years 3-6)*

These are just a few of the ways that you can exemplify the Attitude of commitment for your child's learning.

I look forward to observing the various ways your children demonstrate their commitment to After School Activities, homework, classwork and to their own learning. I also look forward to your commitment to your child's learning.

Regards,
Beth Smith

What's going on in the PYP?

"Who We Are!"

An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.



The PYP is all about making connections. Connections to the world around us, building relationships and communication.

This year we will focus intensely on building connections with old and new families in

Teacher Feature continued

India has an eclectic mix of interests for one and all and therefore, in my opinion, India is an experience of a lifetime!

A little more about myself:

A deep rooted passion to teach and a continual thirst for knowledge led me to complete a degree in Bachelor of Education. My love for learning and my desire to impart knowledge to children, led me to complete my post graduation in International Education from The University of Nottingham, UK.

I am a PYP trained teacher and I firmly believe in the IB values. When I started teaching six years ago, I was delighted to be able to treat each student as an individual and cater to individual learning requirements.

I always tell my students that I am here to learn from them as much as they are here to learn from me. This often leads to interesting conversations in my classroom!

Other than teaching, my interests in life include baking and travelling with my family and often just spending time with my family. I like to wind down on a Sunday by watching a favourite Hindi movie or read a book whilst listening to a plethora of Indian songs.

I am excited to be part of the WIS family and I look forward to getting to know as many of you in the time that I will be here. If you are planning a trip to India or just want to know more about it, just let me know and I will be happy to help.

our school. There are lots of ways that you as parents can find out more about what is going on in the PYP. HOW?



Well try this:

- Subscribe to your child's blog
- Connect to the D6 communicator
- Face to face chats with Homeroom teachers
- Read the Oryx articles each week

PYP MEET & GREET

Come to the **PTA Community Centre** every Thursday between 07:10am and 08:05 am and meet myself, the *PYP Coordinator* and Mr. Danai Maramba, the *ICT Coordinator*. This is your chance touch base informally and find out about the PYP programme and how you can get involved. This also a chance for you as a parent to make other connections with parents and buy things your child may need from the PTA.

Other events:

- *Back to School Night next week will give you more information about the Primary Years Programme: **August 21** - Toddlers to Year 2 **Back to School Night** and **August 24** - Years 3-6 **Back to School Night**.*
- *Introducing the PYP Parent Workshop will be held: **September 5th** - Toddlers to Year 2 and **September 7th** - Year 3 to Year 6. This is an interactive workshop where you can find out more about what the Primary Years Programme is.*

I look forward to meeting you over the course of this year.

Please visit the wispp.blogspot.com to find out more.



Kind regards,
Avril van Zyl - PYP Coordinator



6 ways parents can foster good technology habits

Are you worried about how your child is using technology at home? While we talk to students about Digital Citizenship at school, a lot of parents often don't know what to do about technology in their own homes. In some homes, technology is banned or is only to be used during weekends. [CLICK HERE](#) to find out what an organisation that helps educators around the world use technology to solve tough problems in education has to say. They have some advice for parents too!

Image from www.iste.org

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Back to School and new year's resolutions

On Tuesday and Wednesday we have our annual Back to School nights for Secondary School. This is an opportunity to meet your child's teachers and to talk with them about their subject.

However, at the start of a new year we often resolve to do things that we have failed to do in the previous year. This is a great idea. However, like with most new year's resolutions, these often stay intentions and don't become reality.

It would be a very useful exercise for students in support of their parents, to reflect on the year that was and to talk about matters that went well and things that could have been done better. In order to grow, we need to review what has happened and pick the good things, but especially work on the things that didn't go so well.

In school we hear so often that students say, at the beginning of the academic year, that they'll work harder, that they were lazy last year and many other arguments why it should get better this year.

BUT the things we want to address and change only change if we commit to changing them. And that needs a concerted effort and energy needs to be invested to move forward.

My wish for the year ahead of us is that all students (in fact, all of us) reflect on the past academic year and work on areas that can take us forward. This needs initiative, self-discipline and a conscious effort to grow.



Here are the details for the Back to School Nights next week:

- **Middle School Back to School Night - Tuesday - 22 August 2017 - 18:00 - 19:00**
- **IGCSE and IBDP Back to School Night - Wednesday - 23 August 2017 - 18:00 - 19:00**
- **PLC Auditorium**
- **Introduction of teachers**

- **Short introduction of the programme**
- **Questions and Answers**
- **Time to have a talk with individual subject teachers**

We hope to see many families attend these nights. It is an excellent opportunity to get to know your child's teachers a little better.

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**



FEEL THE RHYTHM!

Every Wednesday night the patrons of Joe's Restaurant are treated to a musical extravaganza with one of the best Musical Artists currently working in Namibia. We are delighted to have secured the services of Artwell for our Wednesday After School Activities Session. He is leading the Drumming Activity at school this semester.

There are spaces still available - please contact Ms Catherine (cstapton@wis.edunam) for further information.

Malaysia trip: July 2017

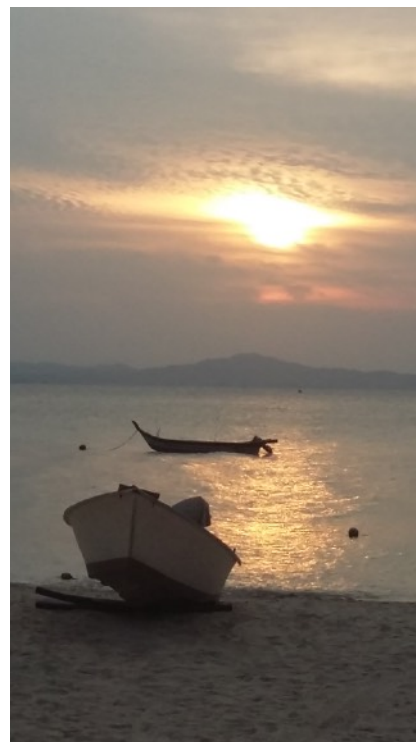
On Sunday the 9th of July, we set off on the long plane journey to the beautiful country of Malaysia. We immediately started off with a stellar tour guide named Mr Lee, who began telling us (over the cute karaoke mic in our tour bus) about the history of Malaysia. From the Portuguese seizure of Malacca (a coastal state in Malaysia) in 1511, to British colonial rule, and finally independence in 1957, we learned much about the country's rich history.

So far, I'm making it sound like all we did was learn conventionally, *on holiday*, but that's hardly the case! On our first full day, we went to Sunway Lagoon, a massive theme park with over 90 attractions, with areas like a scream park, water park, wildlife park and amusement park. The day was filled with laughter and fun, and cooling off in the water park when the humid heat was too much to bear.

That evening, the Namibia High Commissioner graciously welcomed us to Malaysia with a taste of home, and included popular dishes native to Malaysia. She reminded us that even though we were so far away from Namibia and our homes, the High Commission was to be a place of solace for us.

We then went on to a tour of Malacca city, and down Jonker street, a hub of activity, part of Chinatown and the heart of the city.

Taman Negara, a national park in Kuala Tahan, Pahang, is filled with many different fauna and flora. Trees skyrocket upwards in a constant battle for sunlight, creating thick canopies. The night walk presented us with interesting bugs, such as a centipede, as well as the odd snake (harmless but thrilling). Boating down to Lata





berkoh(cascading rapids that are safe to swim in)and swimming in the cool water during the boiling days native to Malaysia was incomparable.

We visited mosques, as well as Taoist, Hindu and Buddhist temples, which was a mind expanding experience, as these faiths were so different to what we usually see, especially in Namibia. The different religions coexisted peacefully, and the saying "Malaysia: Truly Asia" proved true due to the wide spectrum of Asian nationalities who live there. This mixture of very different cultures and religions was mind-blowing; they all live so differently, and yet they all accept each other. It was good to see, especially considering the evident hostility present in the news these days.

Many found that their scuba diving training came in handy during our stay on Kapas island, with there being 3 different opportunities to scuba dive. Snorkelling was also available. The beautiful clear, warm, waters were bursting with fish of all the colors of the rainbow, and the massive coral structures in which they live. Many of us did find Nemo and Dory, though she was more elusive. However, the presence of bleached coral was a worrying reminder of our environment's situation (so please do your best for our earth at school and everywhere, if everyone helps we can start making a difference!)



The island itself was a shimmering image of paradise, with white sand beaches (living up to it's name, which means "cotton island") and we were met with friendliness from the locals who ran the beach side accommodations. There was also an abundance of cats and kittens on the island, as well as a semi-domestic young monkey named Tony. Many of us were afraid of him due to his very rough playing with a student the first day on the island. Despite this, he was definitely a sweetheart.

We also had the chance to visit Royal Selangor, the largest manufacturer of Pewter in the world. Many of the products we saw were handmade, and much effort goes into the quality of an item. On the same day, we visited a batik (decorating cloth with wax and dye) factory, and we were showed the intricate method they use to create these amazing pieces of art. Some of us even had the chance to create our own batik!

For some, the highlights of the whole trip were made when we shopped! Many of the things we found were at an extremely good price, especially as we roamed around the areas which we stayed. Mr Lee (or Bruce Lee, which he mentioned we could call him) advised that we could always bargain in areas such as Chinatown for a good deal. He was enthusiastic and hilarious, and even before we had to leave him, we knew we would miss his contagious laugh and his kindness towards us.

Another highlight was the food. The cuisine in Malaysia is a fusion of different Asian cuisines, such as Malay, Chinese and Indian, with spicy, hot food at it's core. Many of our students also tried the King of Fruits, the

durian, but most can agree it was an *extremely* acquired taste. It's texture and sweet, strong onion-y flavour as well as it's strong smell, linger. I still have nightmares.

There was even more to what we did everyday, besides our itinerary. As a group, we all got to know each other more and did our best to stick together. Whether it was playing cards for ages, having deep conversations, night walking to the local market and our late night group trips to 7/11, we were always learning new things about each other. The accompanying teachers, Mrs Reiff, Mr Jackson-Read and Ms. Jacky kept us safe and, most of all, trusted us to be responsible and make our own decisions.

After this trip, I can truly say that I've learned so much from it. One can say that they are open minded, but to really know so, one has to experience new things and realise that many people and places are very different and that's okay. In fact, it's amazing.

Lucy Hopwood

WIS Around the World Competition

Sponsored by WIS Parents Teacher Association (PTA) & Westlane Spar



The following students participated in the competition. From left to right: *Mauritius Island - Camila Giroud/year 4, Paris/ Jardin des Tuileries - Salome/year 6, Waterberg Plateau (Namibia) - Oliwia Year 5, Mexico Chacchoben, Mayan Ruins - Elias Walker / year 1*

... And the winner is Olivia Year 5



The PTA/PYP coordinators meet every Thursday morning for Q&A and Coffee.

Place: PTA Community Centre

Time: 7.30am to 8.30am

Come & Chat!

Dream Big!

Today we were immensely pleased and proud to welcome the Namibian Police to the school.

Chief Inspector Victoria Matjila introduced an impressive team of specialists from many branches of the Police Force and each explained the work they do and its importance for the community.

The theme of their visit was "Dream Big!" and as well as a fascinating look at the role of Police today our visitors wanted to inspire our learners to have ambition, aim high, and set out to make a difference, whatever their chosen career path.

We would like to thank Chief Inspector Matjila and her entire team for a presentation that was as inspirational as it was both educational and entertaining.

Thank you!

