



# THE ORYX

*The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School*

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## Dates to Remember

### May

- **27:** IBDP Dinner
- **31:** Year 6 Exhibition Evening

### June

- **6 - 15:** Sec Internal Exams
- **15:** End of term 4 - Secondary - Last day
- **16 - 17:** Secondary reports
- **17:** End of term 4 - Primary - Last day



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

It seems only a short time ago that this school year began but already we are racing towards its end. Students and teachers have been working hard and in many cases May is the month when their efforts are recognised and rewarded.

Next week we will enjoy the Year 6 PYP Exhibition. This annual event is a wonderful culmination of everything that these students have learned throughout their PYP years. It shows them to be independent and thoughtful inquirers quite capable of tackling real world issues. It is authentic learning – meaningful, relevant, and student-centred.

And tonight we will celebrate the graduation of our Year 13 class. These young men and women – for that is what they now are – have spent much of this month taking their IB Diploma exams. These exams are the conclusion of two years of intense studying but they also bring to a close their school careers. It is an occasion deserving of recognition.

And spare a thought for our Year 11 students whose IGCSE exams continue for a few more days. They too have been working hard towards this moment and have now experienced for the first time (but surely not the last) formal external examinations.

“Conclusion...” “Culmination...” Yes, but let’s remember that everything above is no more than part of a cycle. You pass over one hurdle only to be ready to start preparing for the next. So, congratulations to all of our students who have just faced their most recent challenge and good luck with the next!

With best wishes  
**Peter MacKenzie**



## Teacher Feature

**Avril van Zyl**  
PYP Coordinator

A little bit about me:

A funny question for me is always, where are you from? It is hard to answer because although I am Australian and was born in Tasmania....(that little Island at the base of Australia) I have been quite transient for many years. Probably the most grounded and 'at home' I have felt is here in Namibia.

When people here ask me where I am from I always respond I am a local and we all know local is lekker! LOL.

A bit of background, I love to travel and from a very young age felt the need to explore and see things for myself. So when describing my passion that was the most important aspect for me early on. Included in this is my need for music.

It is a very important part of me and I love this as a means to express myself. Early on in my teens I was in the band; "Cold Shot" and travelled around Tasmania playing live music, lining my pocket with a bit of cash, so I could go and travel more.

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## PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

About eight weeks ago the Year 6 students embarked on their journey with the PYP Exhibition. The Exhibition is the culmination of a student's years in the Primary Years Programme. It is a collaborative inquiry project that requires students to identify, explore and investigate a real-life issue or problem. During these eight weeks the students have been synthesizing the essential elements (Knowledge, Concepts, Skills, Attitudes, Action) of the PYP, exhibiting the attributes of the Learner Profile and preparing to share their learning with the whole school community.

This year's Exhibition falls under the transdisciplinary theme of Sharing the Planet. Students have chosen to work individually or in small groups on such issues as: the effect of plastic recycling on the environment, the effect of people's eating habits on their health, poverty, natural resources, the future of fossil fuels, unequal access to education, and many more topics.

The Exhibition process provides the students an opportunity to:

- *demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning*
- *explore multiple perspectives*
- *take action as a result of their learning*
- *celebrate the transition from primary to middle/secondary education.*

The Exhibition would not be possible without the support of various members of the school community:

The Homeroom Teachers guide and facilitate the process of the Exhibition. This is the time that the teachers have to let go and let the students take on the responsibility, while encouraging them along the way and supporting the students as they experience the need to manage their time, meet deadlines and be organized. Ms Avril (PYP Coordinator) and Mr D (IT integrationist) have worked alongside Ms Kaye and Ms Yolandé supporting the students in the process.

The Parents support the students with organizing resources, helping with making contacts for interviews and providing transportation to the interviews. They encourage the children to meet deadlines, to remain calm and not give up.

The Mentors meet with the assigned student or group a minimum of once a week. The mentors assist the students with setting goals. They facilitate interviews, ask questions of the students about their inquiry and encourage time management and organization. The following staff members have volunteered their time to be mentors: Primary staff: Ms Barbara, Ms Beata, Ms Catherine M, Ms Christi, Mr B, Ms Genie, Ms Jan, Ms Kathleen, Mr Marc, Ms Natasha, Ms Ronel, Ms Ruby; Secondary staff: Ms Angatha, Ms Lian, Mr. Jackson-Read, Ms Urte.

The Exhibition opens Tuesday evening, 31 May when the students will have the opportunity to show their parents, teachers and other members of the community, the efforts of their hard work.

The Exhibition will be in the Sports Hall and will be open Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00-11:40. I encourage you to visit the Exhibition. I

### Teacher Feature continued

Another passion was starting to work with young children. I worked in early years for many years and managed and directed a private "Childcare centre" in Australia. My passion for young children became apparent.

Times changed eventually I decided it was time to leave Australia and venture out. I moved to the UK back in 1999. I worked in Nursery schools, elderly care, Irish pubs pulling, pints and then finally in an inclusive school with children of various needs and backgrounds in the East End of London.

This was a fascinating time for me as I was immersed in a colourful rainbow of culture, language and diversity. I could go to work everyday and "travel" and had to find ways of communicating with and developing young minds in creative ways.

During my time in the UK I was very fortunate to travel and study and keep learning. I think I have and always be very curious and fascinated by the world around me.

I always felt comfortable with a backpack on my back and my eyes open ready to soak up all that there was to see.

The longer I was away from "home" the more I knew I would probably not go back and settle. I met my husband in the UK and the natural step then was to move to Namibia. So in 2005 I moved here and began to "settle" and make my life here in Namibia.

Well, you can imagine I moved here and no one that I knew at that time spoke English. But the welcome I got from family and friends was wonderful.

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guarantee that you will be surprised and amazed by what Year 6 students are capable of doing.

Kind regards,

**Beth Smith**

## From our PAD

KG 1 have been painting their favourite toy with sand and glue. Their many varied interpretations and concepts of toys delightfully interesting.



**Ms Genie and Ms Sigrid**

## SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

### Report time - blessing or curse

Receiving reports at the end of the year or semester can be a daunting experience. The intention, however, of sending reports home is a totally different one. Reports are sent home to parents and their children to inform them about the progress children are making in school in their different subjects.

Here at WIS, detailed reports are sent out twice a year for Secondary School students. The first report is sent in December and the next report is sent in May, ahead of the internal end of year examination.

What do we want to achieve by sending these detailed reports? First and foremost, we want to comment on students' progress through the semester to inform them of their strengths and also comment on areas that can be worked on.

What is the situation at home, when the report arrives? Do you share the report with your child, do you take time to go through the different subjects and the comments teachers made? Teachers spend a lot of time writing comments for all students they teach. This is probably the most daunting time in the year for teachers. Because we want to inform parents thoroughly

**Teacher Feature continued**

Suddenly I was on a new adventure and was keen to explore. I think I saw more of Namibia within that first 12 months of moving here. Straight off the plane from London and into the bush, was an adjustment, but one I was eager for. What a place!

Our stay here was initially to be short term but something about the place gets under your skin. So now looking back over ten years later I still am excited and keen to adventure and find out more. The turning point in my life here has been my opportunity to have and build a family.

So if you ask me now what is my passion? It has changed and adapted. My family is my passion, my two boys are my passion, Namibia is high on the list as my passion and feeling more at home here than anywhere in my life.

Of course education is my passion and is one that I juggle to find a balance with everyday.

The Philosophy and the programme at this school inspires and challenges me to constantly learn, reflect and develop as a professional and to grow as a person. I have been very fortunate to work with so many different talented professionals and learn a lot from them.

I also love our students who never cease to surprise me when revealing their thinking, when reflecting about the world around them. I have also done full circle and find myself back in a community that is a colourful rainbow of diversity, culture, beliefs, values and identity. Again I feel I come to work everyday and travel within this experience.

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about their children's progress. We want to say what needs to say in a way that is helpful and that can make a difference to the future attitude and approach a student has in school, if necessary. We want to praise student's achievements, but we also want to make them aware of areas that need to be worked on.

Each report has three sections: the header which includes the days of the semester, absences and late arrivals. Please take a minute to look at this information. The second section is the comment and an achievement and effort grade for each subject the student is taking. The achievement is a summary of all formative and summative assessment that was done during the semester. The effort grade is an indication of the effort the student puts into his/her different subjects. The comment is intended to give information about the syllabus covered as well as the progress the student has made in the past semester. The third part is the comment of the homeroom teacher and the comment of the coordinator, which summarise the overall performance of the student. Overall, this gives a good indication of the child's progress and areas that need attention on the way forward.

Parents are strongly advised to take some time to go through these reports with their children. Reports should not be used as a punitive measure. Reports can be a great means to discuss school and different subjects and look at ways to work on aspects that need attention. By punishing your child because of their report or by rewarding them with material things, the essence of the aim this report goes missing. Taking the time and talking to each other about the report, should be the incentive and should in the end result in a positive and helpful discussion about the next term/year.

Working through reports with your child/ren can also initiate talks with specific teachers at the beginning of the next term to discuss strategies to work on certain areas that need strengthening.

Reports will be sent out to families today. Please contact the office if you have not received your report.

Transcripts capturing the grades of the different semesters (Semester 1 & Semester 2) and the final examination will be sent to families at the end of the school year on 17 June 2016.

Kind regards,  
**Maggie Reiff**

**WATER SAVING TIP!**

With the current water situation in Windhoek in mind, here is an indication of how much water our beloved household washers use:

**Teacher Feature continued**

What next? For me Namibia is "home" I see myself here for a few years yet, watching this school grow, watching my children thrive and develop and finding time to take a moment to myself and enjoy life.

When speaking about balance I find myself exploring this everyday, balance as a teacher and facilitator, balance as a mum, balance as a friend and partner, balance for "myself".

One way to overcome this is to enjoy the moments, so precious, enjoy good food and yes good wine! LOL...why not? Enjoy music...through our band "Tangled and Confused" and enjoy each opportunity that comes my way.

•1 Dishwasher Cycle uses approximately 23 litres (15 litres for Star-Rated dishwashers)

•Wash dishes by hand rather than Dishwasher.

**Buy a front loading washing machine rather than a top loader.**

•1 FRONT LOADER washing machine cycle uses approx. 76 Litres (Front loader washing machines are gentler on clothes and your electricity bill too)

•1 TOP LOADER washing machine cycle uses approx.. 150L



**VISIT:** <http://www.conserveh2o.org/h2o-house> and click on any part of the inter-active house for more tips on water saving.

!  
**Children whose fees have not been settled in full for the 2015-2016 school year will not be permitted to re-enrol until all outstanding amounts have been cleared.**  
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**RE-REGISTRATIONS**  
 The deadline for re-registration is 30 May 2016

**YEAR 6  
 PYP  
 EXHIBITION**

**TIME: 9:00 – 11:40 DAILY**      **WHEN: WEDNESDAY, 1ST OF JUNE AND THURSDAY, 2ND OF JUNE 2016.**      **WHERE: WISPE HALL**

**THROUGH SMALL ACTIONS, EVERYBODY CAN MAKE AN IMPACT.**

**PICCOLLAGE**

**AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES**

Secondary: The last day of after school activities is 3 June.  
Primary after school activities will continue until 10 June.



**The Circus is coming  
to Town!**

**ROLL UP! ROLL UP!**

**COME ONE! COME ALL!**

Thursday, 16 June 2016  
10:00  
Windhoek International School

More details to follow soon!

# Music & Milkshakes

FEATURING: KATE MARSDEN



**28 May**

La Brocante Café  
Macadam St.  
11:00 - 14:00



**Free Live Band: WIS Musicians**



**Kids Jumping Castle**

Windhoek International School  
Presents

**THE ELL'S**

Slickartie  Eli  Emmanuel  
(WIS '16) (WIS '15)

**Live Music**

**\$50**

**19:00 - 21:00**

**Saturday 28 May**

**WIS Underground Theatre**



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THE  
ELL'S

Slickartie  Eli  Emmanuel

FREE LIVE MUSIC

SUNDAY 29 MAY 2016

11:00 – 13:00

AT FRESH 'N WILD UTOPIA

  

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