



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Director of Teaching and Learning

If you attended the Annual General Meeting on 30th January, you will have heard me say the following.

To a degree, all schools are in transition all of the time. Things change. Things certainly change in the field of education.

Change can sometimes be something to fear, a thing to meet with apprehension. But it need not be. And if a school is not in transition, what is it up to? Doing the same old, same old? That isn't an option these days.

Change? Transition? Other words suggest themselves. Evolution. Adaptation. Development. Progress.

Transition is, in my view, generally a good thing. It means you are questioning what you do. It means that there is growth. You are doubting and challenging rather than accepting and obeying. Whatever is going well, there is no room for complacency. Whatever goals you have achieved merely encourage you to look for the next ones.

Very much in that spirit, the school year that is drawing to a close has been one of review and reflection. We were fortunate in the first half of the year to be visited by representatives of the **International Baccalaureate** (in September) and the **New England Association of Schools and Colleges** (in November). Each acted as a "critical friend", helping us to see ourselves through fresh eyes.

Work had already started on a root-and-branch review of our Middle School programme and progress there has been remarkable.

And, following the **NEASC** visit in November and an earlier one in March 2018, we established in January of this year three whole-school committees looking at the ten **Learning Principals** of the **ACE** accreditation protocol.

<https://cie.neasc.org/ace/learning-principles>

We have achieved a lot this year but, if anything, the pace will accelerate next year. The taught curriculum (**what** we teach) is being substantially revised and ever more time and effort is being invested in ensuring that pedagogical practices across the school are consistent and appropriate (**how** we teach).

The scale and importance of what is on the horizon is such that we have decided to take a leaf out of the books of other successful international schools and create the position of **Director of Teaching and Learning**. I am delighted to announce that Mike Parsons, who has been very ably leading the review of the Middle School, has

Contents

- From the Director p. 1 - 2
- Primary News p. 2 - 6
- Secondary News p. 7 - 8
- Other News p. 9 - 12

Dates to Remember

May 2019

- **20 - 24:** Week A
- **25:** Africa Day - Public Holiday
- **29:** Secondary AA End
- **30:** Ascension Day - No school
- **31:** School Closed

June 2019

- **07:** Primary AA End
- **10:** Internal Exams Start
- **19:** End of term 4



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WEEKLY PUZZLER

Eden and Tiancheng showed perseverance and both eventually solved last week's puzzler. Well done!

We will stay on the mysterious island with knights, who always tell the truth, knaves, who always lie, and now add spies, who can be honest or dishonest at will.

On the island you come across three people. One wears blue, one wears red, and one wears green. You know that one is a knight, one is a knave, and one is a spy.

"Who is the spy?" you ask.

The man wearing blue says, "That man in red is the spy."

The man wearing red says, "No, the man in green is the spy."

The man wearing green says, "No, the man in red is in fact the spy."

Who is the spy? Who is the knight and who is the knave?

Please send solutions, or any fun and interesting puzzlers to pfarrell@wis.edu.na



accepted the position. He will start in August.

This is a new position in the school and Mike will be working with the Principals, the various academic coordinators, and, of course, the teachers. Among his responsibilities will be ensuring the coherence of the taught curriculum from Early Years to High School. (The *what*.) He will also be taking the lead in coaching teachers to ensure consistency of practice. (The *how*.) And he will be offering regular information sessions for parents to explain the developments you and your children will witness. (Many of you will already have attended the numerous sessions Mike has been conducting this year on the new Middle School.)

"Change. Transition. Evolution. Adaptation. Development. Progress."

I hope and believe that members of the community will see and recognise exactly these over the coming months.

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

With Kate Leeming's visit to WIS on Monday and the impression she made on the students, I've been reminded about the importance of providing our students with authentic, real-life experiences whether through inviting guest speakers or taking field trips. Both of these options facilitate inquiry and research, enhance and enrich student learning, and reinforce that learning can be fun and interesting. Through these experiences students are able to tap into the local community, and meet people who are experts and who are making a difference.

One of the *Key Concepts* of the PYP is *Connection*. Each field trip or guest speaker helps students to make a connection with what they are learning and this takes their learning beyond the four walls of the classroom.

There have been about twenty field trips taken this year. Some of the many places visited include: the National Museum of Namibia, Daan Viljoen, Diamond Works, Hope Village, Ferreira's Garden Center, National Botanic Garden, Owela Namibian Museum, Asco Car Hire, Trans Namib Train Station, Westlane Spar, and on the list goes.

N/a'ankusê has been a particularly rich resource this year as several Grade levels have visited, each with a different focus. Grade 2 classes, for example, were learning about habitats as part of their unit under the *Sharing the Planet* theme. Grade 4 students learned about the San people, enhancing their understanding of civilizations under the theme of *Where We Are in Place and Time*. The Grade 3 classes will be visiting Na'ankuse for their unit's theme, which is also *Where We Are in Place and Time*. They will be learning about how geographical tools work with tracking and mapping of animals and why it's important.

Thank you parents, guardians and caregivers for supporting your children's participation in their class field trips.

"Nothing beats an exciting hands-on experience to deepen learning. The magic of a field trip isn't just the subject. It's a break in the routine and adventure that opens up children's minds to new things." - Anonymous.

**Regards,
Beth Smith**

PYP Coordinator's Message

Through its inquiry-led, transdisciplinary framework, the PYP challenges students to think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning as they explore local and global issues and opportunities in real-life contexts.



Our students had such an opportunity on Monday morning. Both Primary and Secondary students were invited to attend a presentation by Kate Leeming. She departed the next day to embark on her expedition across the length of the Skeleton Coast, here in Namibia. <http://www.breakingthecycle.education/>

Kate departed on her cycling expedition from Kunene mouth to Oranjemund on the 17th May. Karibu safari will be her back up for the duration of this exciting expedition. For those interested you can follow her on www.breakingthecycle.education.

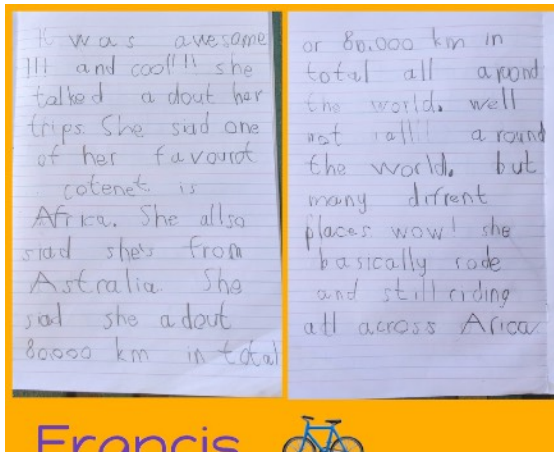
She is here to promote the importance of education for all and to raise awareness of the coming support of the GHE solar project for Purros later this year. We wish Kate all the best.

Students reflected after her visit: They saw her as inspirational. Especially when she emphasised the message that they can do anything they dream of. All they need is to be **committed**, **dedicated**, **work hard** and **never give up**.

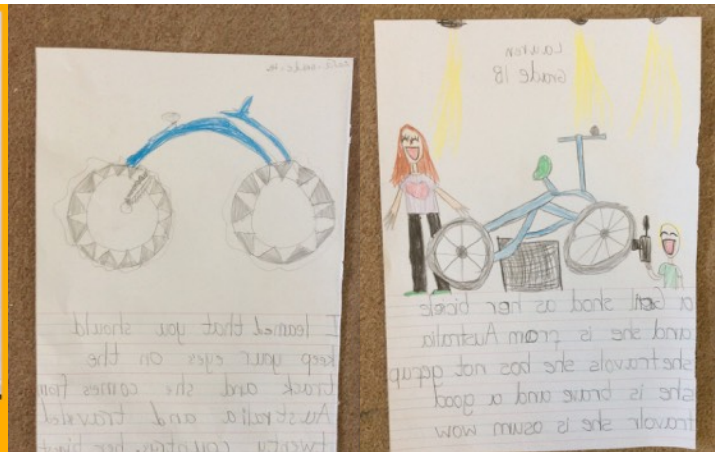


Her bike is an "All Wheel" design enabling her to plough through the sand or snow and here is Kate's support team (Karibu Safaris) helping pack and prepare for the departure.

Below you see some pictures and writing some students shared and an email follow up from a parent in Grade 1.



Grade 1J: Francis,



Grade 1B: Zara and Lauren.

"Dear Ms. B,

Ohole was very inspired by Kate from Australia yesterday. She came home recounting her adventures in 48 countries to me and my daughter spoke a lot of Kate's passion and determination.

We just learnt how to ride a bike 2 weeks ago, so this intervention is relevant. Yesterday early evening we went out for a ride and I could hear her saying to herself "even though my legs are sore I won't give up".

Thank you for that exposure. These kinds of influences and positive role modelling are invaluable."

This Expedition will be supported by our very own "[Karibu Safari](#)" based here in Namibia.

Kind regards

Avril van Zyl

Art Pop-up Exhibition



Pop-up Exhibitions are great fun to have and share the art room with all of you. So glad that many parents and primary and secondary classes popped in to view the students' work. Thank you for coming to support the future artists and, indeed, visual art.

Ms. Genie and Ms. Sigrid

Coding with Sphero

Makerspace activities take place around the school. It is nice to see more of them coming up with time. They incorporate Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM) activities. Some makerspace activities are happening in the classes and a couple during after school activities. In my previous post, I wrote about the 3D Design & Printing after school activity. This week I am writing about the coding after school activity. [CLICK HERE to read all about it.](#)

When students learn to code, they begin to “understand how automation works and use algorithmic thinking to develop a sequence of steps to create and test automated solutions” (ISTE). The students had to cooperate with group members to draw the paths and develop their code. The students used a variety of tools and resources such as paper, pens, scissors including technology.



Danai Maramba

Bonjour from the Grade 2D French class

As an introduction to the new unit How We Express Ourselves, the French students read a book titled: Escargot, French for snail. This story allowed students to make authentic connections, provoked their wondering and questions to gain new understandings of their inquiry into the central idea: How we express ourselves through our values beliefs and culture.

The story is based on a snail that travels through France and explores the different elements that make up the French culture e.g Art, Cuisine, Language, Fashion and much, much more...

Students were introduced to new words that enriched their French vocabulary and exposed them to some typical expressions used by the French people. On this inquiry journey, students will learn more about different cultures, showing respect and appreciation towards these cultures, as well as compare similarities and differences of those cultures to their own. Students wearing a Béret the traditional French hat in the photo below.



Ms. Laetitia, Ms. Debbie, and Ms. Sinead.

N/a'ankusê Foundation Wildlife Sanctuary

Grade 2 was fortunate enough to go on such a trip to N/a'ankusê Foundation Wildlife Sanctuary.

During the Unit of Inquiry: "Sharing the Planet", Grade 2s have been exploring habitats within our environment. They were developing their understanding of the positive and negative impacts that are faced when humans share natural habitats with other living things. Real life, authentic experiences like our educational field trips, enable students to connect with these concepts explored. They have the opportunity to experience and meet experts in various fields and ask questions. This hopefully supports their learning and new understandings.

N/a'ankusê (*Namibia Animal Rehabilitation Research & Education centre*), is situated 42 kilometers from Hosea Kutako International Airport. N/a'ankusê attempts to contribute to public awareness of the importance of healthy, biologically diverse ecosystems and conservation through guided and educational programs.



The main focus of the field trip was to go there and experience the other living things we share our environment with. The students went on a game drive and they saw various animals including baboons, caracals, lions, cheetahs, African wild dogs, leopards, and some free-roaming animals were spotted too. The other important part of the trip was to ask questions to the experts and conservationists that work with these animals. This was a realistic opportunity to gain new knowledge and understanding. The students watched them being fed by experienced guides as they shared stories of how the animals ended up being rescued by N/a'ankusê. Most animals taken in and cared for at N/a'ankusê were the result of animal-farm conflict, sharing the farmland has created a problem where the carnivores are killing the livestock of the farmers and the farmers are responding by trapping these animals. A result has been that a lot of the rescued animals at N/a'ankusê have been injured, trapped or orphaned. N/a'ankusê tries to raise awareness with farmers and provide a solution to the negative impacts by either relocating these animals humanely or bringing them to the Sanctuary to be better protected and cared for.

This exciting getaway allowed students to not only learn about these amazing animals but also provided for some unique up-close photographic opportunities.

It was evident that students gained further understanding of how humans play a part in sustaining healthy habitats that are vital to the health of larger ecosystems, sustainability, and stewardship of all living things. They also met people, like the staff of N/a'ankusê, who are driven to raise awareness, provide solutions and ensure the conservation and advocacy of these precious animals.



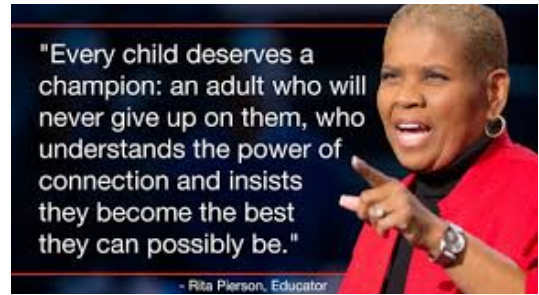
Grade 2 Team

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Every child needs a champion

Many of you will have seen this TED talk by Rita Pierson. And every time I watch it, it inspires me.

It is so powerful if we believe that we can make such a difference in children - we as educators - parents, teachers, sports coaches, music coaches and other role models. It is sometimes intimidating to know how much power we have and what an impact we can make in young people's lives.



On Monday, [Kate Leeming](#) came to talk to our learners about her passion and her journey cycling around the world and making a difference. Her message was inspiring and certainly something to take home: *Explore your passion, have a positive mind and look at the beauty of your surroundings. And when a task is challenging, break it up in pieces - approach it one bit at a time, one day at a time, one stretch at a time.*

From these two examples it is encouraging to experience the passion and inspiration that can guide young people into a life where they can find their passion, make the right choices and become strong; where they know that they can make a difference - with who they are, no matter what their strengths and challenges are. If we can make children and young people feel that they matter, we can give them the confidence and the tools to embrace challenges they face and to utilise their strengths.

As Rita Pierson emphasises in her TED talk, if we "understand the power of connection", we can make children/young adults confident in their own abilities so that they will be able to build strong relationships and connections themselves.

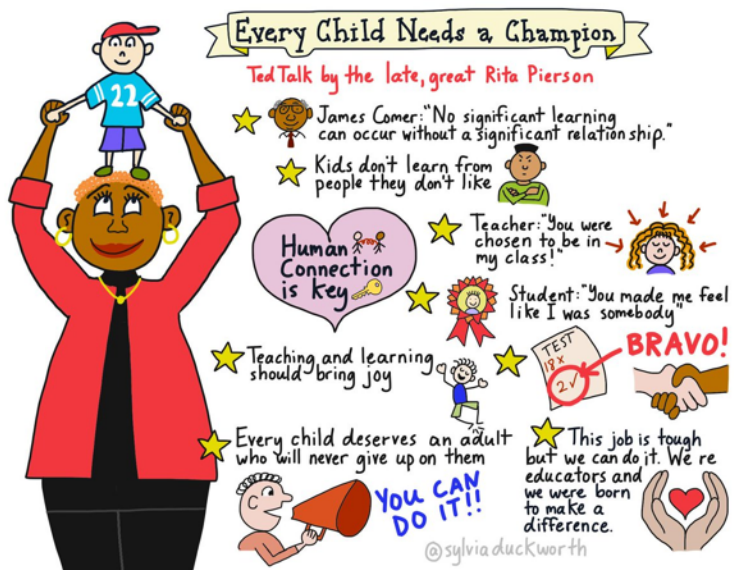
We can compare the relationships between learners and teachers with athletes' relationships with their coaches. When the coach believes in the athlete and cares for his/her performance and progress, the athlete will be a better sportsperson. "A growing body of research shows that students are affected by more than just the quality of a lesson plan. They also respond to the passion of their teachers and the engagement of their peers, and they seek a sense of purpose. They benefit from specific instructions, constant feedback and a culture of learning that encourages resilience in the face of failure — not unlike a football practice. There are many ways to be an effective teacher, just as there are many ways to be an effective coach. But all good teachers, like good coaches, communicate that they care about your goals."

([Math Teachers Should Be More Like Football Coaches](#), by John Urschel

Mr. Urschel is a Ph.D. candidate in mathematics and former professional football player)

Whatever we do and how we do it, showing that we care, showing our passion for something, are probably the most powerful tools we have to guide young people and show them the way, to model behaviour and to instil the confidence in them that will make them believe in themselves and take risks at times to become better. If we can help children find their passion and purpose, we have given them the skills to succeed as humans and in their future.

Kind Regards,
Maggie Reiff



Teachers teaching Teachers

Teachers learning from and with each other

As we follow the IB Learner Profile in educating our children, we as educators also aspire to have the Learner Profile attributes - amongst others being caring, being knowledgeable, being risk-takers, being inquirers and being communicators and being open minded.

At WIS, we place a great deal of emphasis in professional learning for our teachers. This results in us being able to improve our practices, but also being able to share our learning.

In the last week, we have had several opportunities to share and celebrate what we learn from each other and with each other.

On Monday, we concluded this year's work with the New Middle School Committee. The committee has worked tirelessly under the competent leadership of Michael Parsons to take our Middle School a vast step forward to ensure that we are in line with current practices and that we structure our Middle School in a manner that benefits our learners, but also inspires our teachers. Thank you to all the members of the New Middle School Committee for their hard work and dedication through the year: Michael Parsons, Heike Mayer, Urte Dörgeloh, Kelsey Daignault, Angatha Janse van Rensburg, Danai Maramba, Edwin Chinyemba, Teresa Araújo and Lizl Opperman.

During the year, our teachers attend professional learning workshop either online or off site. On Wednesday, Beata Stephanus and Pamela Mungate did a workshops with all Secondary teachers on Inquiry. Our teaching approach across the school is an inquiry based approach. This means that learners are making meaning themselves and we teachers facilitate the learning. This was an exciting, inspiring workshop with teachers being engaged in the exercises. Thank you Ms. Beata and Ms. Pamela for being risk-takers and working with the Secondary School.



As mentioned by Mr. MacKenzie in his introduction, as of August, we will also have a Director of Teaching and Learning to assist with aligning our different programmes and to ensure that our teaching and learning is in line with our IB and ACE accreditation standards. Mr. Parsons will be facilitating coaching teachers and working with our Academic Coordinators to ensure a smooth transition of students from one programme to the next. A lot more work will be done in this regard in the different sections of the school in the next year.

Maggie Reiff

I see you...

A learning support perspective

I see you

I see the doubt in your eyes

That faint hesitancy before you try, again

I hang a banner of encouragement in my eyes that when you look up for reassurance that you would see, I know you can do this

You suddenly jump with grace over this immediate hurdle, you sense success

You smile because success has such a delicious taste

I smile because I know that you are one step closer to be free from the fear of failure

This is learning support

I see you as an individual

I sense your potential

Maybe it is not immediately visible

You yourself may also not be aware, well, not yet

But it is there

I know

I give you bits of self-belief each time that we work together

It is growing

Sometimes it is broken down by adults (we can be so cruel with our grown-up expectations)

Sometimes friends.. Situations..

But it is growing.. growing.. growing

And one day you will not need my confidence in you anymore

You will have enough of your own resources

Our process completed

It is magic: you realising that you can..

This is learning support

Grown Ups sometimes seem sceptical when I tell them what you can do in this special magical space

I see what you can do

Some may not see it, well, not yet

We are building your Maths and Language foundations

But most of all we are building your sense of self

Where I see you, your potential

Where you grab it, making it your own

This is learning support

Supporting teaching and learning

Advocating for your needs to be met

For you to grow and develop optimally

We either find a way, or we make one

I know you can

This is learning support

Ronel Bosch

From the PTA



Grade 3 Pizza Party! The PTA hosted a much deserved pizza party for the Grade 3 students on Friday 10 May. Congratulations once again to the Grade 3s for registering the most participants in the Family Braai Day Colour Fun Run!

**JOIN THE PTA FOR A CELEBRATION IN HONOUR OF AFRICA DAY!
COME DRESSED IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN ATTIRE OR ADORN WITH AFRICAN INSPIRED ACCESSORIES!**

LET'S CELEBRATE AFRICA!
FOOD ● MUSIC ● CRAFTS
PTA COFFEE MORNING
MAY 23, 2019
IN FRONT OF THE PTA HUT

Made with PosterMyWalls.com

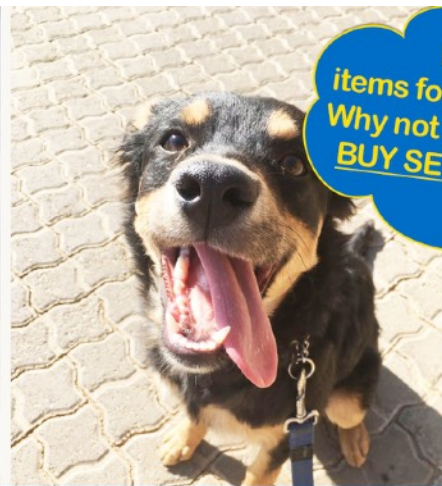


Hoodies - Only N\$150
(Sizes available: Age 13 - adult)
Hot drink mugs - Only N\$100

Hooded Towels - Only N\$150

Keep an eye out for our new PTA display boards to see specials and events!
Thanks to Bill Walker for his craftsmanship making these boards for us.





Looking for items for your home? Why not REUSE/ REDUCE? BUY SECONDHAND!!

ALL FUNDS COLLECTED DIRECTLY HELP THE ANIMALS AT SPCA WINDHOEK!

SPCA WINDHOEK YARD SALE FUNDRAISER



YARD SALE
SATURDAY, 18 MAY, 2019
09:00 - 13:00
145 ROBERT MUGABE AVENUE

DONATE YOUR STUFF!

Do you have "stuff" to get rid of?
We will gladly take it off your hands.

DROP OFF DEADLINE: 16 May 2019, 09:00 - 13:00
@ 145 Robert Mugabe Avenue, Windhoek, Namibia
OR

Call us on 061 238 654 to make other arrangements!