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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

The African Fish Eagle is the official bird of Namibia. It has a large range, and is also the national bird of Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. I first saw a Fish Eagle while taking a white water canoeing trip down the beautiful Orange River. I was struck by the bird's distinctive and powerful presence - with a white head, brown body, white tail, and yellow beak and a broad 2 metre wingspan. Truly awe-inspiring.

The Fish Eagle is also our school's mascot, so it's fitting that a trip down the Orange River is something of a rite of passage for our WIS students. Within this week's Oryx, you'll see an account of our latest student expedition down this storied river. In speaking with the students, guides, and chaperones, it is clear that our high school students overcame the adversity of high water and high temperatures, and built memories and relationships which will last a lifetime. As one of my educational heroes Kurt Hahn once put it, "The experience of helping a fellow man in danger, or even of training in a realistic manner to be ready to give this help, tends to change the balance of power in a youth's inner life with the result that compassion can become the master motive." What's more, encounters with wild nature bring a sense of wonder, peace, and possibility. Humans need wild spaces.

A group of African Fish Eagles is called a Soar, and so SOAR became an acronym for organising our thoughts about what we wanted to accomplish when the Board sat down to develop our two-year school wide goals during the first semester of the 2021-22 school year: we wanted to set priorities that would further for WIS an approach to education which is **S**tudent-centred, **O**pen-minded, **A**ction-oriented, and **R**eflective and responsible.

We are now mid-way through our <u>SOAR two-year plan</u>, and in this Oryx I want to provide an update on our progress for the goals we set for ourselves in 2022:





Dan Pandeni Idhenga - 2016

This week, I am proud to graduate with a Master's degree in Emerging Economies & International Development from King's College London. Walking across the stage with other graduates was a surreal moment considering my undergraduate graduation at Baruch College was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's been a long journey, but I am grateful for the opportunity to complete this milestone, especially in the presence of those who have supported me throughout.

Through my degree, I gained a deeper understanding of the complexities of global development while focusing on entrepreneurship focused solutions to addressing development challenges. The programme also provided the tools and knowledge to make a positive impact in the world and to contribute to sustainable global development.

In particular, I enjoyed writing my dissertation "Have Startups Contributed to Development in Namibia? - To what extent have startup companies, through the use of public and private investment, contributed to Namibia's development since independence in 1990?"

I am proud of myself for never giving up and for pushing through the challenges that came my way. I would like to express my gratitude to all the people who have helped me along the way including my family Linda Scott and some of my professors at Baruch and King's Ranjit Nair, Ph.D., Lin Peng, Michele Costello, Ingrid Kvangraven, M. Sudhir Selvaraj, PhD Robyn Klingler-Vidra, PhD and many more! To my wonderful friends, professors, and colleagues, thank you for being a part of this journey.

Going forward, I will continue to support the London venture capital and startup ecosystem through the King's Angel Network, Kings Alumni Office, and King's Entrepreneurship institute.

I'm excited to see what the future holds and I'm ready to tackle the next challenge.

By December 2022, we will accomplish the following school-wide goals: Education at WIS is Student-Centred

Status

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH &
APPRAISAL: Implement "Profile of a
WIS Educator" - a teacher goalsetting and appraisal system that is
focused on student learning and
professional growth. (Learning Walks,
Curriculum Audit, Professional
Conversations, Allocation of
professional development funds)

We have increased the professional development budget to N\$745,500, and will spend all of this amount this school year. The Professional Growth & Appraisal system is now in place. Current year priorities are MYP & Teaching Literacy Across the Curriculum.

PLAYGROUNDS: Repair, improve, and expand the play implements in all areas of the school.

Great parent volunteerism has seen improvements especially to Primary play spaces and the purchase of a cement table tennis and a fusball table. Construction of amphitheater and artificial turf next to Eagle's Nest.

SCIENCE LABS: Remodel the Middle School Science Classroom so that it becomes a Middle School Science Laboratory that is purpose-built for student scientific inquiry. Purchase additional required resources for Physics.

We will begin a full-scale remodel of Ms Urte's classroom in January 2023 for completion by the end of March 2023.

SAFETY & SECURITY: Improve security and safety on campus.

Received a generous grant from the US State Dept. Office of Overseas Schools for improving perimeter security.

Education at WIS is Open-Minded

IDENTITY, BELONGING, and EQUITY: Approve and begin implementing a IBE Policy and IBE Action Plan (Appx. 1)

Action plan is now underway. There will be a 3-day student/staff/board workshop in April, run by Alkimia.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: Plan and implement a calendar of events for the 2022-23 school year which celebrates our community's diversity as a significant source of learning at WIS.

Many events have been happening, and we know that we can be more.

PARENT REPS: Establish parent committees which support student learning in the form of classroom representatives, school advancement, teacher support, and International Day.

Parent Committee Acct. is a separate line in the school's chart of accounts. We will be launching the March 11 International Day planning in January.

Education at WIS is Action-Oriented

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES & THE ARTS: Define and improve opportunities for enrichment and after school activities at WIS:

- a. Increased participation in our WIS sports codes including Netball, Soccer, Basketball, and Athletics.
- b. Increased opportunity for creative expression through participation in Choir.
- c. Continued emphasis on Visual Arts, the WIS Art Festival, physical education and physical expression, and Drama.

Appointed a Head of Sports and After School Activities; introduced responsibility stipends for coaching duties and after school activities offered more than once per week.

Introduced "WIS Kids" After Care for EY through Grade 8 students to have fun and study supervision on campus until 5:30pm.

EDCAMP 2022: Deliver "EdCamp 2022", an opportunity for 70 public school teachers from across the country to visit WIS and with a grant from Australia DFAT establish a Namibia-wide network of teachers who are committed to a student-centered approach to education. Use social media and school visits to build this professional public-private school partnership.

With a generous grant from Australian DFAT (No cost to school), this has been successfully implemented and the network of schools is continuing to share teaching strategies with one another.

SOLAR POWER PROJECT: Reduce our community's carbon footprint by installing solar panels on our campus.

The solar power project was successfully constructed and is fully functional, significantly reducing the school's energy bill and carbon footprint.

Education at WIS is Reflective and Responsible

MYP & CP FEASIBILITY STUDY: Conduct studies to determine whether WIS should introduce the International Baccalaureate's Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Career Programme curricular frameworks; establish the policies and procedures required to confer the WIS United States High School Diploma; emphasize the IB's Approaches to Learning across the school.

MYP has been adopted and MYP Coordinator has been hired; authorisation process begins in 2023; Will conduct a feasibility study of the IBCP in late 2023.

ORGANIZE FOR LEARNING: Review what if any timetable changes would maximize efficiencies and improve student learning; review the organization chart and responsibility post job descriptions; review approach to Afterschool Activities.

New Org Chart for 2022-23 is linked <u>here</u>.

IB LEARNER PROFILE: Promote the IB Learner Profile as a common code of conduct for all members of the WIS community, because we believe that these attributes and others like them can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national, and global communities.

Featured within Assemblies and with monthly awards; introduction of the Book of Excellence Award.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION & ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES: Conduct an audit of Professional Responsibilities undertaken, and update the Staff Working Agreement to reflect school priorities, values, and suitable remuneration. Improve and update the school's online presence and curriculum guides to attract international families considering Windhoek as an option.

Communication Standards have now been developed and an increased social media presence is underway. Still developing curriculum guides, admissions prospectuses, and a streamlined approach to communications.

You may wish to check out the <u>SOAR two-year plan</u> to take a look ahead at the priorities in 2023. Based upon surveys and feedback from students, staff, alumni, and parents, these 2023 priorities may be under revision and could see some important additions and changes.

Cooler Classrooms Initiative

One such addition may be the introduction of air conditioners and evaporative cooling units for our classrooms and learning spaces. The heat of a Namibian summer can reduce learning and productivity, and though some fundraising may be required, we feel that this development be a good investment to promote learning. The WIS Board Business Development Committee is therefore seeking someone who might be willing to help the school by writing a scoping document and then adjudicating quotations from reliable suppliers. Please write to evandrunen@wis.edu.na if you would like to volunteer for this, or if you know of someone in the WIS community who could assist.

Sincerely, Ethan Van Drunen

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear WIS Community,

We refer to WIS as a learning community. Teachers continuously inquire into their profession in order to know how to improve learning for students. This is why it is important for any school to provide opportunities for teachers to learn from and with each other.



Unpacking our Learning Principles

Learning Principles into Practice

Organised under our Learning Principles (which are the fundamental concepts and guidelines that underlie the process of learning), we have put together a set of high-impact research-based teaching practices that we have agreed should be visible in our classrooms. They act like a set of criteria that we can hold ourselves to. Some common practices include: active engagement, practice, immediate feedback, and relevance to the learner's goals or interests. This week, teachers in the Primary unpacked these practices and engaged in a series of activities to reflect on what was already happening and what they felt they would like to learn more about. They visited each other's classrooms to look for evidence of learning. A lot can be learned from an empty classroom. You can observe the intentional decisions by a teacher that have been made for learning. For example, a space

to come together could mean a teacher builds regular moments to connect and reflect on learning with students.



Pineapple Chart

To facilitate an open culture of learning we have also started <u>a pineapple chart</u>. This is a revolutionary professional learning system that allows teachers to invite one another into their classrooms for informal observation. Teachers can learn from each other but also give feedback, essential for professional growth.

These are some of the systems and structures we have put in place at WIS to support teachers with embodying the <u>WIS Profile of an Educator!</u>

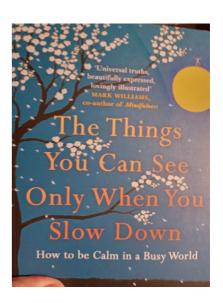
Warm regards, Marcelle van Leenen

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

In a busy day - take time for yourself, to slow down and to be grateful In the weeks preceding our IGCSE and IBDP exams and in the preparation for these two year groups' final examinations, I want to send some thoughts with regard to our busy schedules.

At the start of this semester, a colleague gave me the book "The Things You Can See Only When you Slow Down" to say thank you. I am grateful for this gesture and it has prompted me to use this thought to encourage a positive approach to the upcoming exams and challenges facing our senior students.

We all often feel we "don't have time" for things that are not pressing - we don't have time to just sit down for a conversation, we'll do it sometime, I'll let you know when I have time, I have so much to do, there is not time for these "other things". But if we don't take the time to pause, to foster



relationships at home and with our friends, to be grateful and appreciate what we have. More often, we are frustrated and agitated by things that stress us out.

For their preparation for the upcoming exams, I wish our Grade 10 & 12 students the energy, motivation and perseverance to prepare for these exams in a positive manner and still be sure to take the time to balance out this challenging academic period. Take the time to move, to do some sports, to do something that is not academic. Take the time with your friends and family to appreciate each other and support each other. Strong relationships are the foundation of a healthy and positive life, but

these need to be fostered.

Our decision on how to react to challenges and if we see challenges as opportunities for learning and growth determines the outcome of these challenges and ultimately our mental wellbeing. Any challenge can be perceived as stressful and negative and it will be stressful and negative. If, however, we see difficult situations in a positive light and use these for our own growth and development, they can empower us and advance us to become kind, compassionate and caring to ourselves and others around us. "It is not the situation that is troubling us, but our perspective on it." (Mark Williams). Mindfulness should not be something artificial. It should be an integral part of our day and lives. And being mindful of your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around you empowers us, gives us energy and motivation and helps us handle situations that are difficult or challenging.

Regards, Maggie Reiff We know the world only through the window of our mind.

When our mind is noisy, the world is as well.

And when our mind is peaceful, the world is, too.

Knowing our minds is just as important as trying to change the world.

*

I squeeze myself into the subway car.

People are crowded all around me.

I can either get annoyed or think it's fun that I don't have to grab a handrail.

People react differently to the same situation.

If we look at it more closely,

we see it's not the situation that is troubling us, but our perspective on it.

REMINDER

Tuesday, 24 January 2023
School Photos: Makeup day for absent/new students

Grade 7 Creative Writing

We are sorry mother earth - By Sarthak Kumar

Hello! I am a 34-year-old <u>traveler</u> and I have more than a decade of experience in traveling. I have been to 93 countries, Romania being my newest. I have explored the deep forest in Brazil which had a lot of <u>undergrowth</u>, the horn of Africa, the luscious <u>grassy</u> mountains in Iceland, countries that <u>diverge</u> into two continents, and more.

Throughout my journey, I found so many bad things about our world which were our fault.

We apologise to mother Earth for cutting down trees without even <u>doubting</u> what will happen. We Apologise to mother earth that we made beautiful animals like The Pyrenean ibex, or the great auk extinct. We also made the Bengal tigers, axolotls, and pandas endangered.

Sorry, mother earth for turning your beautiful land into large graveyards in which people <u>trod</u> through crying because of these brutal wars which caused a valley of blood.

It is shameful to us people who did this for a paper that had value, apparently more than this beautiful earth. There is a big <u>difference</u> between today's world and the old world. I am <u>worn</u> out by this.

We may not get our earth to be <u>equally good</u> as the earth before but we can make it so we can take a <u>sigh</u> of relief for our planet by cutting fewer trees, planting more trees, stopping harming the food cycle, and we'll play our part in the biodiversity.

Lost - By Ondeya Neri

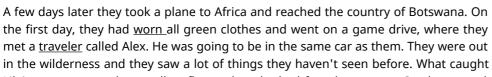
As I stumbled down the <u>worn</u> path, my feet squelched in the mud, beads of sweat dripped down my face, and a large scratch ran along my arm, all inconvenient, but worth it to escape what I was running from. But no matter how uncomfortable I was, I couldn't turn back, not with my life on the line or the dread that I may never return home. And as I came to a place in the road where it finally <u>diverged</u>, I knew I might be far enough away from danger. From a distance, the terrain looked <u>equally</u> challenging to cross, but as I got closer, it appeared that the one on the right was slightly more <u>grassy</u>. In contrast, the one on the left looked <u>trodden</u> and better used, I was tired though, and to me, it made no <u>difference</u>, so I took the more frequented path with a <u>sigh</u> of relief that maybe my troubles had finally come to an end.



Until they hadn't. In fact, looking back, they might have even gotten worse. So now as I'm treading through the <u>undergrowth</u>, the threat of death still looming behind me, I wonder if maybe had I not <u>doubted</u> myself and taken the other path, my circumstances may be different, maybe if I had taken the other path I wouldn't still be a lost <u>traveler</u> to this day.

The Johnsens family trip to Africa - By Lesedi Nyambe

Not so many years ago the Johnsen family went on a trip to Africa. They were a family of four people, the mom and dad Sam and John, and their two kids Lily and Thomas. They loved traveling and were very excited to go to Africa, they were going to go to three countries in Africa.





Lily's eye was a <u>perhaps</u> <u>yellow</u> flower that she had found on a tree. On the second day, they packed and got ready to leave.

The next day they went all the way to South Africa. They <u>knew</u> it was going to be a long trip but John still decided to wear jeans and a long sleeve shirt. In South Africa, they thought there was a big <u>difference</u> compared to Botswana. They had a lot more fun in South Africa <u>hence</u> they did not only stay there for two days but a week. They all <u>equally</u> enjoyed their stay there but they now had to leave for their last stop, Zambia where they went to a hotel for a few days. They didn't quite like their stay there because when they walked in they found a food that had been <u>trodden</u> into the carpet.

They enjoyed their stay in Africa but had to go back to London. All of them had a lot of fun but thought that South Africa had the better <u>claim</u> and should have spent <u>less</u> time in Zambia.

Orange River Field Trip

Denied first by the pandemic. Denied again in 2022 by elevated river levels and flooding. There was a fear that the current Grade 10 and 11s were never going to get a chance to paddle the Orange River. However, in January 2023 we managed to secure the dates and a wonderfully enthusiastic cohort ventured south to spend a week negotiating the route from Noordoewer to West of Aussenkehr. The river conditions made for an exciting adventure as we paddled the 80 km through 52-degree heat.

This is one of the experiences that has a defining impact on young people and I was personally hugely grateful to have had the privilege and opportunity to lead the trip with the superb support from Ms. Hedwig and Mr. Forrest.



Orange River Comments from students Grade 10 and 11. Keasha

My enduring memory from the trip was when we went through the sjambok even though it was nerve wracking we all made it through with no capsized boats.

Chuma

My enduring memory from this trip is having eaten the most amazing food everyday without fail. I enjoyed the everlasting company, all the laughs, jokes and tears that were shared during this journey. A token of appreciation to Mr. Forrest, Mr. Tom and Ms. Hedwig for being with us every step (or must I say "every paddle") of the way. Beginnings are usually scary and endings are usually sad but it's everything in between that makes it worthwhile. This experience was truly something wild and raw that I will never forget.

Alisa

My enduring memory from the trip is, feeling a great sense of fear of capsizing, which fortunately didn't happen. Some other great memories were searching for the shade to escape the roasting hot sun and avoiding sunburn during midday hours, watching some of the boys sleep walk ,the amazing speeches and songs from the last dinner, screaming at Mr Tom on the canoe and finally getting to learn more about everyone.

Peva

My favourite memory from this trip was when we all got the hang of rowing and were working well with our rowing partners. We were able to keep up with one another, splash each other with water and really live in the moment and enjoy the scenery. Nonetheless the trip was a roller coaster of emotions but filled with lots of lessons. Getting back into the boat after a stop always took a bit of extra encouragement from myself and others, however, we made it!

Allan

My enduring memory from the trip is the bonding that we all shared from the mainland to the rapids of the river, the jokes, games, challenges and even the sense of adventure that is to be enjoyed rowing. Getting to know those around you that you don't often converse with can be very thrilling too.

Ben-Timothy

My enduring memory from the trip is the camaraderie I believe we all achieved through taking on this tough challenge regardless of prior experience. In particular, I enjoyed the last night of singing when the certificates were being dealt out. And when the catfish nibbled at my toes.

Andries

For me my enduring memory will be the bonds I formed and strengthened on the trip, sharing stories, fears and hopes and ultimately, feeling that I myself and those who shared our emotions, ultimately became more human from it.

Laura

Thank you so much for putting together such an incredible experience! The trip was an adventure that I'm sure we'll all remember.

Although I was terrified holding onto the branch after my first capsize, I think that experience really pushed me out of my comfort zone. Surviving that and getting back to the group is probably my favourite memory of the trip. I felt so relieved and grateful arriving at the shore while everyone cheered. I honestly thought that everyone had gone ahead and I would have to catch up. Seeing everyone together waiting for me made me realise that we were all one big team. I then realised that mine wasn't even the only boat who capsized that afternoon which only reminded me that we were all in this together.

Having said that, there were so many amazing moments on this trip like sleeping under the stars, paddling through rapids and just simply letting yourself float and get taken by the current in the river. I absolutely loved getting to know everyone, spending time in the wilderness and pushing ourselves. I really think this trip brought us all closer together making us a strong team.

Taboka

The memories I cherish from this trip above many other great memories, are

1. Getting back on the river with my original rowing partner (Chuma) after capsizing the previous day, it was scary and I was slightly anxious but we supported and understood each other and were able to go the rest of the way with one another with no other mishaps. Our communication and friendship grew greater through this trip.

2. Playing like a child with Allen, Jeremy and Fiona, as if we went back to childhood we played in the water and with mud having the time of our lives truly a cherished memory.

Aimee

I don't have a specific memory that I cherished because I enjoyed every single moment from the jokes shared, people capsizing and being there for each other, swimming in the river to telling jokes at night and chatting with the guides.

What was special about this trip for me was how we all bonded as a team despite not knowing each other that well, we stuck together like a family.

Jeskia

A few moments that I will remember from the Orange River trip are the night that Mr. Forrest played the didgeridoo and told us stories and when we had just finished the trip and were eating lunch together. We were all very relieved!

WIS Grade 9 Drama

Class work featured in ISTA's Scene magazine

The Grade 9 Drama class is honoured to have our work published in ISTA's (International Schools Theatre Association) Scene magazine. The experiments we carried out in our Drama class stemmed from our building on an Oshiwambo clapping rhythm that we learned to do. We used the clapping rhythm to devise theatre, using the rhythm and beat of the clap to inform our imaginations and then create a scene of theatre.

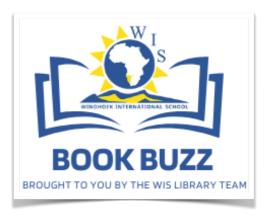
What the exercise taught us is how to work together, express ourselves and most importantly to draw our creativity from the everyday occurrences that take place around us. I am grateful to be made aware of the wealth around me from which I can draw from in order to create theatre. Please read our article (Theatre for Freedom) on page 62 of ISTA December issue of Scene - Theatre in the world.

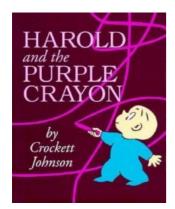


Iyalo Kalili for the Grade 9 Drama class & Ms Kate Matzopoulos

WIS Book Buzz

There's something so enchanting about book adaptations. To vividly imagine the scenes in our heads is one thing, but viewing someone else's interpretation (even better if the writer is directly involved in the production) is entirely different. With all book adaptations, it's either a hit or a miss. While the Harry Potter movies and books fascinate audiences simultaneously, the Percy Jackson movies missed the mark. Here are two books that will release their movies this year.

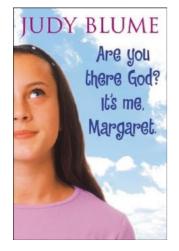




'Harold and the Purple Crayon' - In theaters June 30, 2023

Based on the 1955 children's book of the same name by Crockett Johnson, Harold and the Purple Crayon will star Zachary Levi, Zooey Deschanel, Lil Rel Howery and Ravi Patel

A timeless classic, Harold and the Purple Crayon tells the story of a four-year-old kid, Harold, who possesses a magic purple crayon. One fine day, Harold decides to go for a walk in the moonlight. He draws himself a landscape full of surprises and excitement. The crayon accompanies Harold through forests, across the oceans, and past dragons before Harold safely returns to bed, tucked away in dreamland.



'Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret' - In theaters April 28, 2023

Fans of the 1970 novel, Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret, by Judy Blume will be glad to know it's among the books that will be movies in 2023. The film features Abby Ryder Fortson as Margaret Simon and Rachel McAdams as Barbara Simon

Lover of long hair, tuna fish, the smell of rain, and all things pink, Margaret Simon is almost twelve. She's just moved from New York City to Farbook, New Jersey. She's afraid she won't fit in with her new friends, Nancy, Gretchen, and Janie. So imagine her glee when they form a secret club to talk about private subjects like boys, bras, and getting their first periods. But things go haywire when they realize Margaret doesn't have religion. But they don't know that Margaret has a unique relationship with God.

Will you watch these book adaptations? Let us know by sending an email to jwashington@wis.edu.na or mneftali@wis.edu.na. Also, if you'd like to suggest a book for our library collection, you can do so by visiting this link BOOK SUGGESTION FORM.

Celebrating our students' experiences



Weya Kalili (Grade 11) and Iyalo Kalili (Grade 9B), were chosen to represent Namibia in dance workshops in Los Angeles in December. Along with that they both qualified to dance in the Disney Parade along with children from countries ranging from Canada, Australia, Europe and the Americas.

They took part in a gruelling two week workshop with various choreographers in LA followed by a week in Disneyland where they were orientated backstage and trained to perform in the parade.

This must have been an amazing experience for Weya and Iyalo. WIS congratulates you and is proud of your accomplishments.

HIP HOP DANCE WORKSHOP

We are about to kick off this season with a bang. The much anticipated Dance Workshop is officially happening. Your instructors will be two seasoned choreographers who are going to show you the basics of dancing and by the end of the session, you'll have learnt a whole choreography to take home and show your family and friends. This workshop is open to everyone with two feet, whether you can dance or not. It's gonna be a vibe.

We can't wait to see you all on the dance floor. Bring a friend, everyone is welcome. All important details are on the poster. For more information, contact Keanu or Caitlin.



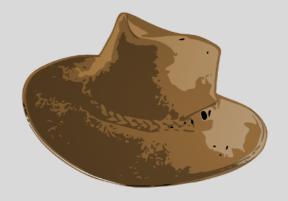


Save the Date!!!

For the Middle School Western Cowboy and Cowgirl dance!







Grade 6, 7 and 8

You better be there, howdy!

WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL DAY

SAVE THE DATE! 11 MARCH 2023

14:00 - 18:30









WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE INFO SOON!

Private Bag 16007, Pioneers Park, Windhoek | Scheppmann Street, Pioneers Park EXT. 1, Windhoek | Tel: +264 61 241 783 | Fax: +264 61 243 127 | E-mail | Website











