



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

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Dates to Remember

September

27 - September - 2 October: Orange River Field Trip - Year 10

30 - Primary Parent Teacher Conferences

30 September - 1 October: Secondary Parent Teacher Conferences

October

1 - World Math Day Practice Period Starts

2 - Primary and Secondary Assembly and End of Term 1



FROM THE DIRECTOR

WIS @ 25

On Thursday 24th January 1991 *The Namibian* ran a story under the headline **International school gets off the ground**. It reported that the previous day "Education Minister Nahas Angula joined the school's Board of Directors, administrators, teachers, parents, pupils for the opening ceremony."

The school, which had actually opened on Monday the 21st, enrolled 127 children aged from five to fourteen from 23 countries.

Today that school - our school - has more students from even more countries and includes children from two to eighteen.

And it also remains proud to be what the Botswanan

International school gets off the ground

THE Windhoek International School (WIS) was officially opened yesterday on the premises of Van Rhijn primary school in Windhoek West.

Education Minister Nahas Angula joined the school's board of directors, administrators, teachers, parents and pupils for the opening ceremony. He said he hoped Van Rhijn and WIS would not operate as two separate schools but would benefit from each other's presence.

"There should be a cross-fertilisation of ideas between the two schools at Van Rhijn following the national programme and those following the international programme at WIS," he said. The main drawing criticism he had heard from some parents in the country about Namibian schools was not about under-qualified staff but the quality of education. "It was about the culture of Namibian schools," he said. "They did not feel comfortable about sending their children there."

Angula, former Deputy Minister of Education, said the school should not simply be a place of learning. "It should also be an international forum, a meeting of what educational aspirations are."

The school, which has been operating since Monday, has 27 students from 23 different countries. Seventy-seven are the children of expatriate working in the country, who, along with their fellow students from Botswana, will meet through an international forum to discuss the international theme further. At present, only two pupils are from the 141 host country for school with 100 percent of all pupils enrolled for the first time to go to the school. "I think so far the school off the ground has been very satisfactory since

last September. The Ministry of Education was under pressure from Namibia's growing expatriate community and it approached the Afrikaans medium Van Rhijn school for help with classroom space.

Van Rhijn headmaster H. Koorene said providing the decision to settle an international school on the premises of an "ordinary" school was a "great opportunity for our pupils to make friends and to enjoy a multicultural exchange".

WIS chairman of the board of directors, UNDP's David Moshema, observed that the school's international flavour was also reflected in its teachers. Eleven different nationalities were represented on its staff.

The teacher, Japanese-born Yuhiko Kikkio, has a class of 57 girls in eight year class, spanning 10 nationalities.

She takes the children for all subjects except in the physical education and French but had one Monday her pupils have been staying getting to know each other and making friends.

"I've enjoyed it," said Kikkio. "For this is the first international school I've been in and it's very exciting. The lesson now in English and foreign languages do not speak in very well, everyone helps each other and we get them eventually."





Teacher of the week

**Teacher: Thomas Jackson-Read -
Maths and P.E.**

3 minute interview

Mr Jackson-Read joined the school community at start of this academic year. He is currently teaching in the Mathematics department and is the new Secondary PE Teacher.

Interview conducted by Caitlin Y10

Tell us about yourself.

Well - I am 35 years old, I have been a teacher for 13 years, and this is the 4th school I have worked in. I had various part-time jobs when I was younger but I always wanted to have a career that was orientated around Sport or Physical Activities. I arrived in Namibia six weeks ago with my wife Michelle and my two sons. Leo is in Y3 with Ms Christi and Reuben is in Y2 with Ms Jan.

[Continues on next page>](#)

Ambassador, who also spoke at the opening ceremony, called “an international forum”.

I like her choice of words. “An international forum.” Quite so. We are a place where people and peoples from all over the world can come to learn together – as much from each other as from our teachers or text books.

But if you count forward from January 1991 you’ll realise that we will be celebrating our 25th birthday in ... 120 days!

Save the date: Saturday 23rd January 2016.

A committee comprising students, teachers, parents, and others has been convened and will be planning events to commemorate and celebrate our anniversary. If you have any great ideas, please feel free to share them with us.

The Strategic Plan

While we are looking back (with pride) we are also looking forward (with confidence).

Thank you to the many people who contributed earlier in the calendar year to the first drafts of the school’s Strategic Plan. I wasn’t here but I’m told the process was constructive and enlightening. Certainly the draft of the Plan I have seen shows how much thought, time and wisdom went into it.

Many of you will be wondering where we now are. Well, the answer is that I, as the incoming Director, have been asked for my input and, independently of the Strategic Plan but with perfect timing, we have recently received our five-year accreditation report from CIS and NEASC and we are currently working to ensure that the Plan addresses their recommendations too.

But we have undertaken to have a final draft ready for consideration at the next Board meeting on 20th October and it will, of course, be made public immediately thereafter.

With best wishes
Peter MacKenzie

Teacher of the week continued>**Why did you want to come and work at WIS?**

WIS is an exciting place to work and the school has a very exciting future. I have been in Africa for the last four years. I worked at a school called Braeburn Mombasa International School in Kenya. My family and I have really enjoyed living and working in Africa and Namibia is a country that has always intrigued me. I remember watching survival documentaries about the Namib desert and the Skeleton Coast and since then I have always wanted to explore the country. The school itself has been very welcoming and everyone has been really supportive.

What are you most looking forward to during your time at WIS?

I am really looking forward to developing Physical Education and giving students throughout the school an opportunity to participate in regular competitive sport during PE lessons and competing with other school and local teams. My family and I are also very exciting about exploring this magnificent country.

MURALS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL



Year 12 student, Daniela Sandão, will be painting murals throughout the school this year as part of her CAS commitment. (CAS = Creativity, Action, Service.) The first is (almost!) finished and it looks fantastic.



Look out for number 2. She'll be starting it soon.

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

As mentioned in last week's Oryx and as posted on the D-6, the Primary 3-Way Conferences (which include the student, teacher and parent/guardian) will be held Wednesday, 30th September. There will not be a regular school day for the Primary School, meaning that children will come to school accompanied by their parent/guardian and go home once the conferences have finished. Since the conference is about the progress of the student, it is very important for your child to be present at the conference.

Having the conferences during the day allows for more quality conferences as the children are rested and there is more time to visit the specialists teachers, providing an overall understanding of your child's progress. It also allows for more options of times for scheduling the conferences.

News from the Mathematics Department

Here at WIS we understand that many students enjoy using technology in their learning. Whilst technology is being integrated into lessons across the school more and more, we also subscribe to a Mathematics website that all students have access to at home. This website is [Click here](#).

Here students can access lessons to help them consolidate what they have learned in class (or catch up from absence), online worksheets that give them instant feedback on how well they have understood the concepts, and games that make learning fun!

Every student from Year 1 to Year 13 has their own personal login details that ensure they are able to keep a record of any online worksheets they complete. This way parents and teachers can also see their progress.

Some teachers will be using the Myimaths website in their lessons, some may set online homework from it and some may just guide the students to visit certain sections of it as and when appropriate.

However, as parents you can also direct your child to practice their mathematical skills through the use of this wonderful resource.

If your child does not yet know their personal login details then they can ask their teacher who has all the information. There is also a document on the D6 that I advise you to read if you will be using a tablet device. This document explains how to access the website on a tablet device.

So, go visit [Click here](#) and have some Mathemagical fun!

Lian Cohen

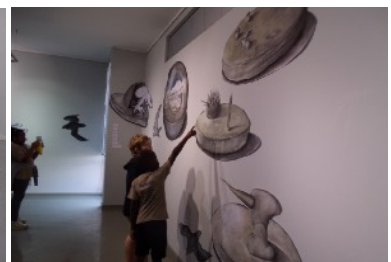
The conferences with the homeroom teacher are held in the child's homeroom classroom and are scheduled for 15 minutes. In addition to the 15 minute conference with the homeroom teacher, I encourage you and your child to plan to visit with the specialist teachers either before or after the conference in the homeroom. With the exception of French, Portuguese and EAL the specialist teachers will be available on a drop-in basis. For a conference with the Language teachers it will be necessary to schedule a conference.

The conference preference sign-up form has been sent to you electronically. The link is also posted on the D-6. Please complete the form by Tuesday, 22 September. Next week your child will bring home an invitation to the conference. The invitation will include the time of the conference(s).

Kind regards,
Beth Smith

PRIMARY ARTS DEPARTMENT

A visit to the National Art Gallery of Namibia (a.k.a. NAGN) with Year 5s was undertaken this week. We visited two Exhibitions: PAN's Ceramics Biennale Exhibition and the International Tulipamwe Exhibition.



Both exhibitions led to finishing off our 6 week Creative Wheel cycle on the Element of Tone (including Colour and Texture) and starting of the new unit of How We Express Ourselves.

Students were engaged in finding artworks pertaining to what we have done in class and using iPads to follow up later in the art class. At the end we had the director of NAGN, Professor Herklaas Viljoen, spend some time with us and also answer questions from the students.

WIS Saturday Ball Club

Fun ball games involving throwing, catching and dodging to develop hand-eye coordination, teamwork, sportsmanship and enthusiasm for sports

Who: WIS Year 2 to Year 6 Students, led by Marc Deragon

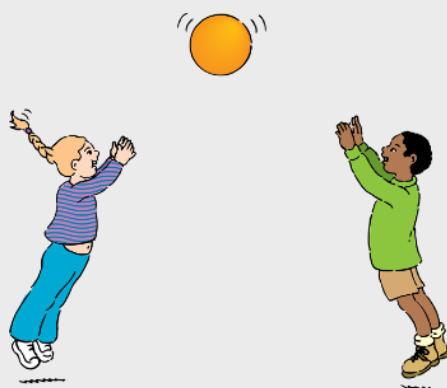
Dates: Saturdays, October 17, 24, 31; November 7, 21, 28

Time: 10 am - 12 pm (just show up; no registration needed)

Location: WIS PE Hall

Fee: N\$100 per child, per day (due Saturdays upon arrival)

Contact: Please direct all questions to Marc mdragon@wis.edu.na



Both exhibitions are still on till 3rd October - do pay a visit with your child/ren.

Genie Albrecht

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

The end of the first term is fast approaching. This means that we have the opportunity to give some feedback to parents with regards to their children's school work in the Student Parent Teacher Conferences. These conferences will take place on the 30th of September and the 1st of October in the afternoon from 14:00 to 19:00 on both days. Parents sign up for 10-minutes slots with their child's subject teachers. At the end of next week, the sign up sheets will be posted in front of the PTA shack at the southern end of the administration building.

We have re-named these conferences **Student** Parent Teacher Conferences because it is very important for us to facilitate a dialogue between the parents, the student and their teachers. Only if the student is actively involved in his/her learning and progress, can the educational experience be a successful one.

More information regarding these conferences will be posted on the D6 in the next days.

We are happy to announce that our new Mathematics and Science teacher for Middle School, Mrs. Urte Dörgeloh, will start at WIS on 1st October. She will come into school the 28th September to ensure a smooth transition. We thank Mr. Ngombe for his willingness to continue at WIS until the end of September.

Mrs. Dörgeloh will also be teaching Mathematics in Middle School. She will be taking over Mr. Jackson-Read's Year 8 Extension class and his Year 9 Foundation class. We wish her a great start at WIS and hope that she will have a positive experience here at WIS.

In order to accommodate these changes, we had to make some changes to the timetable. The new timetable will come into operation on Monday 28th September. The new timetable will be posted on the D6 on Friday the 25th September to avoid any confusion with regards to the change. Students will receive this timetable during their Pastoral Care lessons on Friday 25th.

Kind regards,
Maggie Reiff

SPORTS NEWS

As the sporting world shifts its collective attention to England in preparation for the IRB Rugby World Cup, all Rugby playing nations can look forward to an epic tournament. In anticipation for this magnificent festival of sport, our WIS learners have been spending lesson time playing touch rugby. All our sporting stars can now enjoy this tournament with a greater degree of understanding and appreciation for the game.

Specific mention must go to Jacques Burger as he captains the Namibian team; the boys from Windhoek will need to be at the top of their game as their opening match is against the mighty New Zealand All Blacks.

Turning our attention back to school sport, WIS U13 Footballers enjoyed a fabulous win against SKW U13 team by three goals to one.

The team performed very well in our first home game of the season. Well done to the boys involved and thank you to the parents and staff who stayed to enjoy watching the boys in action.

Thomas Jackson-Read

(See more photos on P.7)



MIDDLE SCHOOL

I currently teach Middle School English and I am the Middle School Coordinator. For those who missed the Back to School Night, I would like to share some of our expectations with you.

We have a packed programme in Middle School and it is important to be organised and focused during lessons. I would like to highlight the importance of homework. Some people might ask, why is homework important? It teaches our students to be more independent, to take responsibility, to improve time-management skills, use different resources and to consolidate concepts that were taught during the day. Homework will be given by each individual subject teacher. Homework will also be posted on Edmodo for students and parents to view. We encourage parents to motivate their children to stay on task and complete homework assignments on time.

Every week on Friday, periods 5 and 6, year groups will go to their homerooms for Pastoral Care lessons. Homeroom teachers will focus on self-awareness and positive self concept, self-management and social awareness, responsible decision-making, conflict resolution and coping with stress. During our Pastoral Care lessons we aim to develop social and emotional well-being in all our students. The goals of these lessons are to manage own emotions and behaviour, show respect for diversity, communicate, interact and build relationships with others and to take responsibility for your actions. Lessons will be planned around acquiring these skills.

Ms. Sharon Gorelick and myself also meet once a week to discuss the well-being of each student in Middle School. Parents will be informed immediately if we feel something is amiss. This enables us to support students and keep parents informed where and when necessary.

This will be the second year for Year 9 students to write the external Cambridge Secondary 1 Checkpoint Examination. The school decided to use this examination to benchmark ourselves internationally and use it as a framework to develop skills and understanding in English, English as a second language, Science and Mathematics. The Year 7 and Year 8 groups will write a progression test, designed by Cambridge but marked internally, using a mark scheme. This will be scheduled for our internal examination in the last week of school. The Year 9 group will write the external exam in April. The Checkpoint exam is externally assessed. The students will receive their results in June. These examinations will only be in English, Science and Mathematics. All the other subjects will be written during the last week of school.

On Thursday, 10th September 2015 the Middle School teachers planned cross-curricular activities for the coming year. This planning session was successful and teachers are excited about

the different collaborative activities planned for various subjects. For example, English meets ICT meets Art - The Year 7 class has already covered different types of writing. They will focus on Narrative Writing and will write their own fable. In ICT they will do their planning for this fable using an online mind map. From there they will brainstorm to write the fable in English, using Namibian animals. They will type it up in ICT again and then create a storyboard based on this fable. This will happen in Term 2. In Term 3 the Year 7's will use the storyboard to design and create their linolining in Art. After finishing their art pieces, the students will compile an e-book based on these fables. We will keep you updated with some of the outcomes of these projects and are confident that this way of learning contributes to a broader more holistic understanding of concepts and application of skills.

For any questions regarding Middle School please feel free to contact me at any time at ajvrensburg@wis.edu.na

Angatha Janse van Rensburg

