



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School



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Dates to Remember

September 2017

- **16:** WIS Bazaar
- **18:** Board Meeting
- **18 - 22:** Year 12 Field Trip
- **25:** Lower Primary School
- Photo Day
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- Photo Day
- **27:** Upper Primary School
- Photo Day

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Reports

"Don't know much about History..."

(If your musical education is letting you down, watch [this](#).)

I wonder what Sam Cooke's school in 1960 required of students for an A grade. Memorising a lot of facts, I suppose.

Nowadays our problem is not having enough facts to hand but knowing what to do with the masses of information at our fingertips. Analysis, synthesis, and interpretation count for far more than memorisation. Collaboration and communication are critical talents and skills and schools can (and do) teach them. Creativity and imagination are understood to be fundamental to successful human endeavour. The list goes on.

But how do you capture all this on a report card?

Attainment: 76%

Effort: B+

Johnny has tried really well this term and I am pleased with his progress.

What does that actually *mean*?!

Education evolves and so must the ways schools assess, record, and report students' achievements and progress. So we are reviewing and revising our reporting practices. Shortly, we will share with parents and students the revised formats and explain why they are a more meaningful way of tracking the journey that students are making.

Perhaps Sam Cooke was an A student after all but his teachers just didn't know it?

Peter MacKenzie



Teacher Feature

Patrick Farrell: Secondary Mathematics Teacher

It is a pleasure to be back at WIS teaching Mathematics! I love teaching Maths and I believe that it is a subject that all students can grow to appreciate. In my classes I hope to encourage this. I believe that a mind exercised by Maths is a mind more capable of all types of reasoning and thought. If I could have one wish it would be that the common perception that "Maths is very difficult" never enter a young child's mind. This perception can become a daunting obstacle in later years.

I attained a Bachelor of Arts from LeMoyne College in Syracuse NY, majoring in Mathematics. After working as an actuary for ten years I joined the US Peace Corps and came to Namibia in 1998 to teach mathematics. I soon fell in love with Namibia the country, and with a certain very special Namibian. Nearly 20 years later, I am still here and have been blessed with a wonderful family along the way.

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PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

The Importance of Staff Work Days

As you know, students did not have school this past Monday due to the Staff Work Day. While this day off for students may have been an inconvenience for many parents as it meant having to find child care, it was an important day for the Staff. Staff Work Days or Professional Development Days are common practice in international schools.

Some might ask, *Why can't these days be held on a Saturday?* Actually, there are times when these days are held on a Saturday. However, teachers already work hard, put in long hours during the week and often work on weekends. Taking a regular school day allows for teachers to be rested, fresh and focused on the agenda for the day.

Why take a day in the middle of the term? As of Monday, school had been in session for five weeks. This time period allowed for routines to be established, teachers to know the learners in their classes and children to be settled into the school year.

The outcome of having a Staff Work Day during the early part of the school year allows the opportunity for collaborative planning, discussion, learning and reflecting on one's practice that ultimately improves the teaching and learning environment for students. An unintentional side benefit of a day off for students, is that it provides an extra day to get rested. With the recent change in weather, there have been many absences due to illness and this day gave the children a chance to recharge their batteries. I don't think it was my imagination that the children seemed more energetic upon their return to school on Tuesday.

So what did the Primary teachers and teaching assistants do during the Staff Work Day?

We began the day with a whole staff meeting. It is rare that the whole staff has time to meet to discuss items relevant to the whole staff. The rest of the day was devoted to the needs of our specific sections of the school. For the Primary School, half of the day was spent collaborating in Year levels and with specialist teachers planning for the next unit of inquiry and reflecting on the first unit of inquiry. The TAs also took part in a workshop led by Ms Johanna. The latter half of the day was spent reviewing a draft of the new progress report and giving feedback. (Since we will now be using iSams - our information system - to issue reports, we are taking this opportunity to revise the semester progress report to make the report clearer and less wordy.) In addition to the progress report review, teachers were introduced to MAP Growth Testing (Measures of Academic Progress) which the students in Years 2-6 will be taking in November. (More information about the MAP Growth testing will be coming soon.)

As you hopefully can see, it was a full and varied day and certainly time well spent. The work that we accomplished on Monday, will ultimately have a positive impact on your children's learning. These Staff Work or Professional Development Days are thoughtfully planned out on the calendar. There are two more Staff Work Days planned for this academic year: Friday, 17 November and Monday, 8 January.

Regards,
Beth Smith

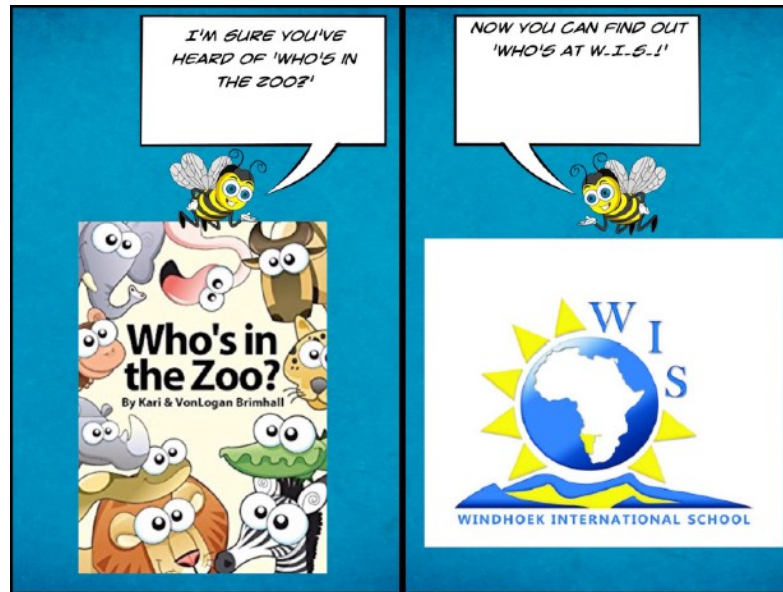
Teacher Feature continued

In my time in Namibia I have taught Mathematics at three different government schools, a private school in Rundu, and done much tutoring. I also taught at WIS in 2013 and 2014. My experiences in Namibia have been very enriching, and I feel fortunate to be in such a beautiful and welcoming country.

WIS plays a very important role in our family's life. (I have done the drive back and forth from home to school so many times that I am sure I could do it in my sleep - maybe I have done.) We currently have a child in primary, one in middle school, and one in high school. Our oldest went through the IB at WIS in 2014/2016. She is now a volunteer in Orlando FL, assisting in a middle school Mathematics class, and so goes the circle of life.

I have many pastimes, but my main hobby now is playing the fiddle. I play Appalachian Mountain fiddle tunes almost exclusively. Many people ask, "what's the difference between a violin and a fiddle?" There are many answers. One of my favourites: a violin has strings and a fiddle has "strangs". I hope you feel free to introduce yourself to me if you see me around school or in town, and if you happen to play the banjo I reckon we'll become fast friends!

Who's at WIS?



As part of our "Who We Are" unit, Year 2 decided to get to know members of our school community.

2B had a brainstorm about what questions they would like to ask. In pairs, they interviewed, took photos, drew pictures, uploaded their findings in "My Story" and recorded comments.

Click on the following names if you would like to know more about these staff members.

[Mr D.](#) [Ms Jacky F.](#) [Ms Beth](#) [Ms Avril](#) [Ms Sabina](#) [Ms Meriam](#) [Ms Sharon](#)

[Ms Kathleen](#) [Ms Genie](#) [Ms Carol](#) [Mr Silvestor](#) [Ms Catherine](#)



Jan le Roux

FROM OUR PAD

You are invited to our first exhibition of the year of "Who we Are" in primary art. These pictures are portraits/figure drawings of each child in the whole of primary KG1-Year 6. In art, this exemplifies the concept of *proportion* (size of the head in comparison to the body for example) and *spatial awareness* (where the head, arms, legs, etc are in comparison to the body). By viewing all these artworks you will be able to see the general development of each year group and how the students perceive these two concepts as they grow older.

As this is an exhibition of **all the primary students**, we will have four viewings! We start on Friday 15th and run through to Wednesday 20th September **only at drop off time**. Please pop into the art room, at your convenience, on any of these days and do come with your child and talk to her/him about it.



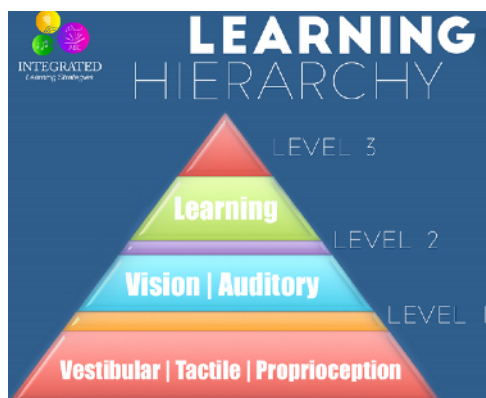
Venue: Primary Art Room #41

When: Friday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 15th - 20th September

Time: Drop-off time 7.10 - 7.45am

We look forward to seeing you again.

Ms Genie and Ms Sigrid



MULTI SENSORY LEARNING

Dear Parents

Thanks again to parents who joined us for the PYP Workshops. One of our main focus topics was on: Play Based Multi Sensory Learning.

In the Early Years section of the PYP (Toddlers, KG 1, KG 2 and Year 1) students explore, inquire and interact with the world around them through their senses. We believe in a "whole child" approach.

What does this mean?

It is an understanding that in the first 5 - 6 years of life children need time and opportunity to develop; this includes Physical development (Gross motor, Fine motor, Spatial awareness and Balance), Language acquisition, Mathematical understanding and problem solving skills, Conceptual understanding of the world around them, Creative development and Personal, Social Emotional development.

To follow up this workshop we have supplied more information for parents about how children learn through their senses. This also gives you practical ideas and strategies that you can try out at home. Please also don't forget to check the [PYP Blog](#) for more information.

The following link gives parents in-depth information on what Multi-Sensory Learning is and how it supports children's development.

Please click this link: [The Importance of Multi Sensory Learning](#)

Kind regards

Avril van Zyl (PYP Coordinator) and Ms Ronel Bosch (Learning Support Coordinator)

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Student Parent Teacher Conferences 3 & 4 October 2017 Secondary School



We are half through the first term of the academic year. Soon we'll enjoy the first break of the year.

This is a good time to give parents/guardians the opportunity to talk to subject teachers about their child's progress so far. Student Parent Teacher Conferences in October are scheduled for this reason. These discussions will give parents some feedback on their child's progress in the first weeks of the academic year and it will also give students an opportunity to get some feedback from their teachers about their progress so far.

The Student Parent Teacher Conferences are an opportunity for you as parents together with your child, to discuss your child's progress with each subject teacher.

Before the December holiday, you will receive a written report to inform you about your child's academic progress as well as commenting on his/her commitment and input into the different subjects.

As the student is the key stakeholder in the process and it is about their education, we expect students to join their parents for these conferences. It is not ideal to discuss student progress if the person who it concerns is not present. We therefore expect your son/daughter to join you for these conferences so that this can be a truly consultative process involving all parties.

Some parents/guardians will further receive individual invitation emails to sign up for specific subjects. We appeal to those families to take these invitations seriously and make every possible effort to meet with the teachers who requested a meeting.

Please take note of the following regarding the Student Parent Teacher Conferences at the end of this term:

- **Dates for Student Parent Teacher Conferences:**
 - **Tuesday, 3rd October 2017 - 17:00 - 20:00**
 - **Wednesday, 4th October 2017 - 14:30 - 17:30**
- **Venue: Portuguese Language Centre (all subjects)**
- **Learning Support:** If your child is supported by our LS Department and you would like to discuss her/his progress with the LS teachers, please arrange a meeting with them individually.
- **Signing up:** We have purchased an electronic sign up feature that we are in the process of trialling. More information with regards to that will be sent to you soon.
 - You can sign up with your child's/children's teachers in 10-minute slots.
 - If you have two or three children in Secondary School, please sign up for separate slots for each child so that there is sufficient time to discuss each child's progress with the teacher.
 - When signing up, please write the name of the student and the year group (e.g. Malia Year 7B).
 - Reminder: Invitations to attend Student Parent Teacher Conferences will be sent to parents/guardians when the school feels that it is important to share some information with the parents/guardians at this point in time to assist students to improve certain areas of their approach to school. Parents are urged to sign up with the teachers - students should know which subjects are of concern.
 - **Please make every possible attempt to see your child's teachers, should you receive an individual invitation from school to attend Student Parent Teacher Conferences.**
 - Please sign up with your child's subject teachers only. Should you want to see one of the Coordinators or the Homeroom teacher, please make a separate appointment with them via email either before or after the October break.
- Please note:

Teachers' availability:

The Year 10 classes are on the Orange River field trip during the week 1 - 5 October. Teachers accompanying these students are therefore not available for the conferences. However, you are invited to contact these teachers if you would like to meet them either before or after the October break. The following teachers are on the Orange River field trip:

- Mr. Riegardt Smit
- Mr. Tom Jackson-Read
- Ms. Urte Dorgeloh
- Ms. Heike Rubbert (Mayer)

Part-time teachers will be available on one of the two days:

- **Ms. Vieira** will be available on Wednesday for Portuguese Language students.
- **Mrs. Krappmann** will be available on Wednesday for German Foreign Language students.
- **Mr. Farrell** will be available for Year 10 Mathematics and Year 7 Mathematics on **Tuesday, 3rd of October from 17:00 - 20:00.**

- E-mail addresses of all teachers are posted on the D6 – Contacts.

Regards,

Maggie Reiff

Sports News!

The Senior Boys Basketball contested an intensely competitive semifinal against the Blue Devils at UNAM on Friday evening. The highly successful league campaign has seen the WIS senior boys play a series of high level matches, hosted at UNAM over the last three months. Sadly, this is where the campaign concluded as the Blue Devil gained the ascendancy in the penultimate quarter of the match and managed to hold on to the lead up until the final whistle.

Final School WIS Senior Boys 76 Blue Devil 88

The boys will be competing in a series of Inter School Matches in the forthcoming months. We look forward to sharing our success stories with you in future editions of the Oryx.

If your child is interested in developing their basketball skills new players are welcome. Junior Practice is Thursday Afternoon at school 1.45 to 2.45 Senior Practice is 2.45 - 4.00. Tuesday is at WIS and Thursday is at UNAM (depending of Sports hall Availability).

Boys and Girls are welcome to both Junior and Senior sessions.



The U11 Boys ready to take on SKW in this weekend's Hopsol League Fixture.



Secondary Student Council

On Thursday, 31st August the Secondary Student Council voted to elect new presidents to take over from the former presidents, Alicia Reiff and Selina Kinne. From the organization of a Masquerade Ball, in collaboration with DHPS, held earlier this year to the donations made to the Osire Refugee Camp, it is clear that these two have made their mark on the council. Our new presidents are Thyra Eyselink and Gabrielle de Freitas who are both Year 12 students.



I spoke to Thyra Eysselinck on Wednesday to hear her thoughts as the new leader of the student voice. Motivated by her desire to make school a more enjoyable place and experience for students she described to me plans of empowering fellow students. I found Thyra to be a young lady with a vivid imagination and a vibrant personality that drew all manner of people to her. Outgoing and bubbly, Thyra’s best trait is her ability to communicate with people.

Her fellow president Gabrielle de Freitas, referred to often as Gabie, is a quiet, soft spoken person. She aspires to contributing to the creation of a better image of the school in our community, as an organised educational centre, making significant contributions to society. She expects to pursue her new agenda with her naturally persevering attitude.

With a new executive in place, it is clear that the Student Council is ready to embark on innovative strategies to improve student morale and performance. The Council will also promote conducive student-staff relations. With hard work, determination and passion, I believe the new Student Council can make the school proud.

Afua Brantuo
Writer of the Student Council

WIS Bazaar

16 September

**Buy, Sell, Re-use, Recycle.
 Enjoy, Browse, Eat & Play**

What to Sell?



Unwanted Toys

Buy one get one free deals.



Fancy Shoes

Make an attractive display.
 Make sure that they are clean.



Meals & Snacks

Provide food in containers for take aways.
 Create an eating area if possible.



Clothes

Display your Items.
 Make attractive discounts.

**3 BOXES OF 'SCRAP-STUFF',
A FEW
HOT-GLUE-GUNS
=
90 MINUTES OF FUN,
PRODUCTIVE TIME, EXPLORING
SPACE AND DEVELOPING
3D THINKING**

YEAR 9 ART: INTRODUCTION TO SCULPTURE

