



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School



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Dates to Remember

February

- **29:** Year 8 Field Trip

March

- **1 - 10:** Year 8 Field Trip
- **11:** CAS Assembly
- **18:** Independence Day Assembly
- **18:** End of Term 3

FROM THE DIRECTOR

AISA

I am often proud to note that WIS is the only International Baccalaureate (IB) World School in Namibia. We are also, I believe, the only authentic international school in the country. We are certainly the only school to operate on a northern hemisphere calendar.

All of this makes us rather special. But it also means that other like-minded schools, making the same journey and facing the same problems, are rather remote.

So our membership of the Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) is very important to us. AISA provides an invaluable forum for African international schools to meet, exchange ideas, share the cost of bringing in professional expertise, coordinate educational, cultural and sporting events, and much more. You can learn more about AISA on their [website](#).



A particularly valuable event is the annual AISA Leadership Conference. Senior administrators from all over the continent come together partly to plan the next AISA year, partly to listen to and benefit from the expert guest speakers (one of whom this year is a former Director of WIS!), and partly to sustain what is such a valuable network of expertise.

Teacher Feature

Michelle Du Preez:
Primary Music



This year the Conference is in Cape Town from the 4th to 6th March and Maggie Reiff and I will be attending it. We will be out of school on Thursday and Friday of next week but back at school on Monday 7th.

With best wishes
Peter MacKenzie

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL PARENTS

Please be advised that from 1st March 2016 the school will charge interest on overdue fees. The rate will be 10% p.a. charged on a monthly basis.

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Thank you to all parents who were able to come and support the Primary Sports Days. The feedback from the children was that it was a great day filled with lots of fun activities. One child even asked, "Can we have another Sports Day tomorrow?"

Student-Led Conferences

This past Tuesday you should have received an email with the Google form to sign up for the upcoming Primary student-led conferences. Thank you to everyone who has signed up so far; the quick response has been appreciated. If you haven't completed the form, please do so by Monday, 29 February. If you didn't receive an email with the Google form, here's the link to the [form](#). You should receive confirmation of the conference time(s) by the end of next week. Your child will bring home an invitation to the conference, that will include the day and time of the conference.

What is the format for the Student-Led Conference for Toddlers?

The Toddlers conferences will be held on Thursday, 17 March. The focus will be, "A day in the life of Toddlers." There will be photo presentations and learning stations set up for parents and their children to play with and enjoy together.

What is the format for the Student-Led Conference for KG1-Year 6?

The students are responsible for leading the conference and sharing their learning with their parents. They may demonstrate their learning through different stations or centres, sharing samples of their work and their portfolios. There will be 3-4 children scheduled at the same time for the conference in the homeroom.

You are strongly encouraged to make time to visit the Specialist classes as these are an equally important part of your child's school experience. The Specialists teachers will also have stations, activities and/or work for your child to show you. A suggested time frame will be given for you and your child to visit the specialist classes either before or after the conference in the homeroom. Your child will be your guide to the various specialist classrooms.

Hi Parents, Students and Friends!
My name is Michelle Du Preez, and I am the Primary School music teacher at WIS. I was born and raised in the beautiful mother city of Cape Town, South Africa.

My earliest recollections of music were the sounds of Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie as my dad is a professional saxophonist and, also, was my first music teacher. I tried playing his saxophone several times and, sadly, failed to produce any sound. Thus, I had to start with the recorder, later the violin, and finally I ended up becoming an oboist.

During my school career, I have always had music as one of my major subjects and the recorder and oboe became my 1st and 2nd instruments during my studies at the University of Cape Town. I have also completed several Royal School of London and Trinity College of London music grades on my instruments. **Continues on page 3**

Teacher Feature continued

Playing in an orchestra and singing in a school choir was my idea of fun and I did this for 5 years whilst at Secondary school.

A highlight of my high school career was performing for the late President Nelson Mandela and meeting the world class violinist, Yehudi Menuhin.

My heart was set on becoming a musician and thankfully my parents were supportive of my career choice. I graduated from the University of Cape town with Bachelor of Music: Education Degree.

After completion of my studies I applied at several schools in Cape Town, the United Kingdom and Namibia. I was contacted by the College of the Arts here in Windhoek for a telephonic interview and thereafter was subsequently offered the job as Lecturer: Oboe and Recorder.

Moving away from Cape Town was not easy choice, as I had several projects running at the New Apostolic Church and was also playing in a professional orchestra.

Nonetheless, I have been living with my husband and 2 children in Windhoek for the past 13 years and looking back now, grasping this opportunity was the best move I could have made.

Continues on page 4

What is my role as a parent during the conference?

The parent’s role is to listen, encourage, show interest, be constructive, be sensitive and to ask questions. This is your child’s time to have your undivided attention. It is a time to celebrate your child’s learning and the accomplishments that he/she has made so far this academic year. During the conference you will also be able to support your child with reflecting on what he/she has done well and what areas can be further developed.

What if I want to talk with the teacher about my child’s progress?

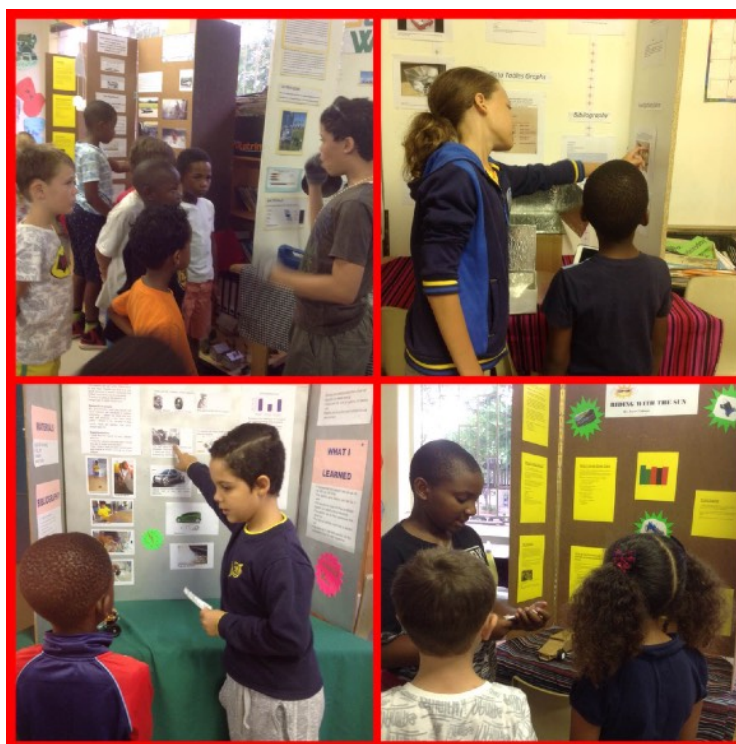
The teacher will be present during the conference, supporting the students as needed. Your child’s showing of his/her learning and work should provide evidence of the progress your child is making. If there are any specific concerns that you would like to discuss with the teacher, please arrange with the teacher for a separate appointment to take place the week prior to the conferences or after the March holiday.

I’m sure you will find the conferences to be a rewarding experience for both you and your child.

Kind regards,
Beth Smith

Year 2

Year 2 visited the Year 6 display about energy.



It was great to see the Year 6 students patiently explaining their projects and listening to the Year 2 students asking questions and making connections to their unit about light.

Teacher Feature continued

I have also had the good fortune to attend the Kammermusik Workshop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which is an international event for all woodwind quintet/ chamber music players.

The workshop takes place annually in Sante Fe and also in Oxford, the UK (every alternate year). Subsequent to this I also accompanied some of the COTA music students on a tour to Germany where we all had the opportunity to play in a mass orchestra with other local music lecturers and their students.

We also had the opportunity to play for the Namibian Ambassador to Germany at the time, Mr Neville Gertze.

As an educator, I believe that it is my responsibility to instill in my students the importance of developing the solid intellectual habits of self-reflection, critical thinking, an intrinsic motivation, and to create space for individual expression.

Due to the fact that I teach young children, I constantly challenge myself to find new ways to teach the most basic components of each of these skills, one at a time, while still trying to create the joy of music within them. I approach every encounter I have with my students as a few moments during which I can impart knowledge and have a positive impact - a chance to nurture, inspire, and encourage.

Continues on page 5

This is Year 2 exploring light in class.



Jan Le Roux

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Sports Day

What is Sports Day good for? Why should I even participate? I don't think I'll come to school on that day. (Some comments we sometimes hear from students or their parents)

On Thursday we had our annual Sports Day. It is an opportunity to participate for your house - for school spirit - an opportunity to have fun and enjoy a day with fellow students.

Sport in school is more than just physical activity. Being active in one way or the other contributes to the general well being and has many other advantages that are much broader than just being physically active. By doing sports in school, all children get an opportunity to be active in one way or the other - for some, this is the only physical activity they get. With today's changing behaviour patterns in young people - spending more and more time on their electronic devices - it becomes even more of a necessity



Teacher Feature continued

Music is not an elite skill for the chosen few to master.

Music belongs to everyone. I teach music so that my students will become more humane... so that they will recognize beauty... so that they will have something to calm them in the night and greet them in the morning... so that they will have something to aid them in their rejoicing, grieving, and, most importantly, in their living.

I teach music because I hope that music will do for them what it did for me.

In the IB Diploma one of the Core Components is CAS where students are expected to participate in a physical activity and leave their comfort zone to learn something new - be it dancing, scuba diving, traditional sports or any activity where they are physically engaged.

Parents should also actively encourage their children's participation in sports. Even for university applications, having been part of sports teams or being able to talk about involvement in sports can give students an advantage to peers who were not actively involved in sport.

to offer the opportunity for physical activity to students.

Being actively involved in sport does contribute to well being, a stronger self-esteem and alertness. In PE in our school, students learn various skills in the different sports they practise - athletics, volleyball, basketball, frisbee were some of the sport disciplines Secondary students practised and learnt in the past months. And when I watch the lessons, almost all students seem to enjoy these PE challenges. Some children regard themselves as not being sporty. However, in a school PE lesson, there is not as much pressure to perform as there is an expectation to learn the skill.



Yesterday was our Secondary Sports Day and it was great seeing everybody involved and enthusiastic. We had some athletic events - seeing the support our kids gave each other for the long distances, accompanying the runners around the field with flags and cheer. The atmosphere was great. Competing and giving an event your best is a good experience and when we see our students putting all they have into a run, a jump a game, we know that it is worth the time spent.

Thank you to parents who came and supported their children. Thank you to teachers and Mr. Jackson-Reed for your efforts to ensure a smooth run of events.

Saturday Morning Dodge-ball Club with Mr Jackson-Read

NEW TIME: 9 AM until 11 AM

Y3 - Y6

All Welcome: Please bring a drink, sports clothes and lots of energy!

Session will be on on the following days

- Saturday 27th February
- Saturday 19th February

WIS MERCHANDISE

The PTA will be selling hats, shirts etc on Thursdays from 13:00 - 13:45 @ the PTA HUT!

Sport day is coming up, please get your house-team shirt.

Primary school will have a number of sporting events coming up for our students during the last semester of the school year.

Please take note of the following dates:

- March - April Small Schools 7 a side Soccer League u/9, u/11, u/13 (Schedule still to be decide between participating schools)
- u/12: Boys Field Hockey (Awaiting schedule from league administrators)

More information will be shared with the WIS community closer to the time.

Thank you especially to our students whose spirit was inspiring and gave us teachers the heartwarming feeling that you are there to enjoy and to support each other.

Congratulations to the Cheetahs who won the athletics events. In second place came the Caracals, Lions third and Leopards came in fourth. The spirit cup will be presented at the CAS assembly in two weeks time.

Please see information with regards to Student Parent Teacher Conferences on the D6. Conferences will be held on the 15th March (14:00 - 16:00), 16th March (14:00 - 16:00) and the 17th March (16:00 - 20:00).

Kind regards,
Maggie Reiff

Secondary School Sports Day

Our secondary school Sports Day was held on Thursday and what an epic sporting festival we had the privilege of witnessing.

Year group allegiances were temporarily forgotten as house groups united for some excellent sporting performance as house groups competed for the coveted trophy.

The days focus was orientated around fun and participation however we make use of every opportunity make every reinforce the components of the learner profile

Learner Profile Components Addressed;

- Principled (showing fair play in sport)
- Balanced (organise our time to meet academic standards and balancing physical well-being)
- Reflective - compare your standard of performance to your competitors and reflect on strengths and weaknesses



Throughout the full program of athletics the children fitness, team work and determination were tested and, as ever our school community collectively met the challenge.

At the conclusion of the athletic component of the day it was the Cheetahs whom had accumulated the most points followed closely by the Caracals, Lions and Leopards. Although the level of competition throughout the day was intense Cheetah house successful amassed an impressive 747 points and were deserved winners.



The day was concluded with a series of matches of Ultimate Frisbee and Volleyball in which we enjoyed further fabulous sporting performances.

A big thank you to all the staff for helped make the day successful and a huge thank you to all the students who produced an excellent display of teamwork and sporting performances.

Mr Jackson-Read

Outdoor Education @ WIS

When looking at the IB attributes, it is impossible to select one that is more important than the others. That does not mean, however, that one can't have a favourite. For me this is no doubt being a "risk-taker". The word itself conjures images of someone base-jumping from the Eiffel tower, another person sitting in the cockpit of a fighter plane, and yet another of a soldier running through the hail of enemy fire in order to save his comrades.

Being a risk-taker, however, is about so much more than this. A person speaking in front of a crowd for the first time, singing a song with notes you know you cannot reach, or even asking that girl/guy out for Valentine's Day all takes a certain amount of courage.

With the Outdoor Education programme at WIS the main aim is to give students the opportunity to push themselves past what they think their own limits are. This is not just accomplished by offering "extreme" activities, but starts the moment we take them out of their comfort zone. Many students, when they go on their first field trip, also spends a night away from home for the first time, or sleep outside, sometimes in a tent, for the first time.

We do not forget that the word "Education" forms part of this programme, however, and without fail every trip we undertake will have aspects of information, skills and values in it. Often the main aim of a Field Trip or Excursions is in fact to enhance a certain aspect that has been dealt with in class. But to me, a successful trip is one which addressed the holistic development of the student.

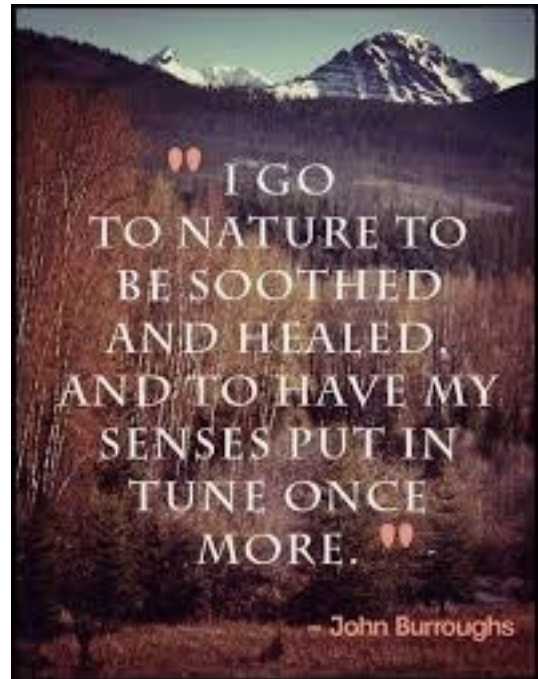
During a students' time at WIS, he or she will be given plenty of opportunities to accompany the school on field trips. There are four trips in which the whole class is expected to take part, namely Years 6, 8, 10 and 12. Each of these trips has different goals, which sometimes overlap.

Every year, we aim to have at least one "big" trip for secondary students. This started last year with the Ski trip to Austria. These trips are not compulsory for anyone, and will often be International Trips. It will be very good if each student could go on at least one of these trips, which is why I am communicating this to you now. The lessons learned, friendships formed, skills learned and personal discoveries made on these trips are priceless, and if each parent could budget to send their students on one of these trips the effects will be lifelong.

With that being said, we wish our Year 8s good luck as they prepare to depart to Okonjima next week. The aim of this trip is Team-Building, Community service and Conservation Education. AT the same time I am busy arranging the trip to Otjikoto Dam for our Scuba students who will be qualifying soon.

For more information on what we are planning, the aims of the trips or even suggestions on future trips, feel free to email me at rsmit@wis.edu.na

Riegardt Smit





WIS Primary School

SNAP & WIN

A GIFT VOUCHER TO Recess Café

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

PHOTO BY OLWEN YEAR 3A

WINNER!



Theme for the picture above: Free Birds

Theme due Thursday at 3pm: Reading Spot

What is it?

This is a digital photography competition where primary students are given a theme every week for their photographs. Students can submit photos they've taken by Thursday 3 pm. Each week's winner will be announced on Friday and receive a N\$20 gift voucher to the WIS Recess Café (aka, The Tuck Shop). Winning photograph will be displayed here every Friday morning.

Please submit your photo by Thursday 3 pm to Mr. Marc. Try to submit file size 500 KB to 5 MB.

nderagon@wis.edu.na or USB flash drive to Room 33

Photo credits: nelatoranos.files.wordpress.com, zazzle.com, Peter Dalton



WIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTER HOUSE SWIM GALA 2016

Year groups: **Year 1-6**

Entry forms on Homeroom teachers class *blogs*

Events

- 25m Freestyle
- 25m Backstroke
- 25m Fun Relay

Date: **11 March 2016**

Venue: **UNAM School of Medicine**
14:30 - 16:30



Visit the Windhoek SPCA's [Facebook page](#) for more information

Kool-Katz Adoption Day

Date: **5 March 2016**

Time: **10:00 - 16:00**

Place: **SPCA Premises - Robert Mugabe Av.**

Find that special **Kool-Kat**
to complete your life!

