



Wellington Preparatory School

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10 June 2011
Newsletter 10 of 2011

Dear Parents and Friends

FAREWELL

It is with sadness that we are saying goodbye to Charlotte and Hugo Selbach who are leaving the school today to return to Germany. We would like to wish Charlotte, Hugo and their parents Danny and Christiaan all the very best for the new challenges that await them overseas.

Dance success

Thanks to the hard work of our fundraising committee and the generosity and support of most parents, the dance was an unqualified success. Not only did we make a profit just short of R30 000, a school record to date, but everyone seemed to have a huge amount of fun.

I have said it before but it bears repeating, we have one of the most dedicated and committed fundraising committees. A heartfelt and special thank you to these wonderful ladies: Marcelle Warwick, Rene May, Juanita Aubin, Maria Bellmunt, Ashmiranda Morris, Shabnam Gaffoor and our teachers Lena-mari Marx, Ronél van Heerden and Chrisna Faure (although Chrisna no longer teaches full time, she is extremely committed to the school). I cannot even begin to tell you how many countless hours were spent on meetings, procuring donations, setting up the hall on the Friday and Saturday and working into the wee hours of Sunday to pack away.

The dance was also a success because of the support of the parents and friends of the school. In the end we sold 170 tickets and many parents were very generous with their monetary donations. In addition, so many of you kindly donated prizes and wine which is listed on the last page. I know that the fundraising committee went to great trouble compiling the list, but with a list this long invariably someone is left off. If we left off your name, please let us know so we can include it in the next newsletter (we have not included monetary donations).

A few of the masks and table decorations went missing after the evening. If you or your friends took something in error, please return it to the school office as we will have to pay for all the table decorations not returned.

16 – 17 JUNE

Please remember that there will not be any school on 16 and 17 June. Youth Day is on 16 June and Friday 17th is a school holiday.

Hockey time change

Because our hockey numbers have grown, we have decided, on a trial basis, to split the two groups into three as follows:

Grade 1 and 2: 12h45 to 13h30

Grade 3 and 4: 13h30 to 14h15

Grade 5, 6, 7 : 14h15 to 15h15

This will only apply to the practise this Tuesday 14 June. If it is successful, we may change the times permanently.

Hockey has been running for almost a full term, regretfully if your child has still not joined in it is too late. It becomes extremely disruptive for the coach if 5 or 6 new children join in each week. We will obviously make exceptions for children who joined the school during the course of the term or who may join the school next term.

SENIOR PRIMARY PRESSURE AND EXAMS

Recently, a group of senior primary parents raised concerns regarding the amount of work that is given in the higher standards and also questioned the need for formal exams twice a year. In order to answer their concerns and concerns that others might have, we need to look at aspects of our philosophy and goals.

Our primary goal is to supply each child with a balanced education in a nurturing environment. We believe that with smaller classes and a more informal approach, we are able to achieve this goal. I must emphasize however, that our standards are high.

Our secondary goal is to prepare children for high school. This goal becomes critical in the latter stages of junior school, Grade 6 and 7 in particular. We are very proud of the fact that our 'old boys and girls' are, on the whole, doing well at high schools like Paarl Boys, La Rochelle and Hugenote. It is for this reason that we follow the broad dictates of the state schools curriculum and that we have two sets of formal exams. Now to answer those two concerns:

1. Why have exams?

In the top high schools in our area, learners are writing between 12 and 14 weeks worth of exams! (2 to 3 weeks in the 1st and 3rd terms and 3 to 4 weeks in the second and fourth terms). Our school only has two weeks of exams, one week in June and one in November. We feel that this is the absolute minimum to prepare our children for the pressure of high school exams. I am aware that some junior schools only start formal exams in Grade 7, but we do not agree with this philosophy. For my sins, I was a high school teacher and Grade 8 head at a school in Cape Town and it is my experience that children who are not exposed to the pressures of exams in junior school struggle to cope with them in high school.

2. Are we setting too much work?

If you ask most parents whose children have entered high school, all of them will tell you that the volume of work increases tremendously from Grade 7 to Grade 8. It is also true that there is a big jump from Grade 5 to Grade 6 and from Grade 6 to Grade 7. Whilst we do everything in our power to prepare children for the increased workload, we can't take it away completely or our children will not cope with the pressures of high school.

Some possible reasons why children are struggling:

When children are struggling to cope with the amount of homework or the exams it is often for one of these reasons:

1. As far as homework is concerned, from Grade 4 your child should be doing between 1 and 2 hours of homework a day. If your child is doing more than that it may be because:
 - a) He or she didn't do his or her homework earlier in the week and has to catch up.
 - b) He or she is working too slowly in class and has to therefore catch up classwork at home.
 - c) Children leave projects and orals that they have weeks to prepare for until the last minute and therefore put pressure on themselves.

If your child is regularly doing more than 2 hours of homework a day, please make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher at the PTA meeting scheduled for next term to find out why.

2. As far as the exams are concerned, some children still feel that they can study for half an hour for an exam. There is no homework during exam week and school finishes at 12h30 to give children time to study. At least 2 hours a day is the norm, although it should be divided into sets of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour with breaks in between.
3. Some children are struggling because too much pressure is being put on them at home. Unrealistic expectations and offers of huge rewards for good results can often be counterproductive.

I will confess that this has been a particularly difficult and stressful term due to all the holidays and the fact that it is a little shorter than usual. This has placed added pressure on teachers to finish the work prior to the exams. In conclusion, I would like to say that we are not, nor will we ever be, a Waldorf School. Whilst we try to incorporate certain aspects of their philosophy, we have to be realistic. Our children are going to academic high schools that are exam and results orientated. Whether we agree or disagree with this philosophy is immaterial. It would be remiss of us not to prepare our children for the high school they are most likely to attend.

PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS TERM 3

We will be holding individual parent / teacher meetings on the second Wednesday of next term, **WEDNESDAY 27 JULY**. Time slots must be made ahead of time with Heather in the office. There will be 15 minute slots available starting from the end of the school day until 18h30.

TERM DATES 2012

We are busy finalising the term dates for next year. Our proposed dates are listed below. We will finalise these dates before the end of this term. In the meantime, we would value your input if the dates suit you or not.

TERM	WELLINGTON PREP	WCED
Term 1	11 January – 16 March	11 January – 23 March
Term 2	10 April – 22 June	10 April – 22 June
Term 3	16 July – 21 September	16 July – 28 September
Term 4	8 October – 7 December	8 October – 7 December

Public and school holidays:

Term 1: none
 Term 2: Friday 27 April (Freedom Day)
 Monday 30 April (School holiday)
 Tuesday 1 May (Worker's Day)
 Term 3: Thursday 9 August (Women's Day)
 Friday 10 August (School holiday)
 Term 4: none

Communication sheets

Because the senior primary wrote exams this week and the second term reports will be issued in 2 weeks time, no communication sheets will be sent home today. The next communication sheets will be sent out next term. Only playgroup and Gr 0 will receive communication sheets this week.

Thank you for your continued support,
 Mike Aubin and the WPS team

Grade 0

The Grade 0 class have started practising for the concert and teacher Ronél asked them whether they were enjoying the concert and why:

- Rita: Mmm, because it is fun.
- Buhle: Yes, I want to dance.
- Simba: Yes, it is fun.
- Hima: Ja, I like to dance.
- Jessie: Yes, I like the dancing.
- Maxine: Yes, because it is nice.
- Adelaide: No, there is not enough space!
- Kiara: Yes, I like the steps
- Tristan: Yes, I like the music
- Hannah: No
- Carla: Yes, I like the steps
- Keanan: I like the dance
- Libo: Yes
- Somila: Yes
- Mimi: Yes, I like the dancing
- Oliver: Yes, I just do!

The children enjoyed creating a joint picture of themselves.



SPONSORS

Coffee Shops & Restaurants

Apalachee Spur, Basil & Beetroot, Bean in Love, Florida Farm Stall, Kikka, Kleinevallei Restaurant, Monte Christo, Oude Wellington, Perfect Place, Pescali, Sit@Zomerlust, Wimpy

Guest Houses

Bovlei Valley Retreat, Cascade Manor, Cummings Guest House, Lady Loch Guesthouse

Hair and Beauty Salons

Annique Beauty Salon, Cutting Edge Professional Hair Stylist, Juanri, Vineyard Beauty, Winelands Endermology and Skincare Clinic

Wine Farms

Bakenhof

Boland Cellars Montestell donated by Anderson Family

Boland Cellars gift pack in wooden case donated by Tatiyana Jones Family

Diemersfontein Wine Estate donated by Harley Family

Diemersfontein Wine Estate

E-Wine

KWV donated by Carey Family

Lazanou gift pack donated by Stephanou-Lazarus family

Major's Hill donated by Louw family

Mooi Bly donated by Schoutededen family

Nederburg donated by Chrisna and Bertie Faure

Vineyard Connection wine, gift packs and glasses donated by Rademan family

Catering

Fairview cheese, Paarl Market, Pick n Pay

Almonds donated by Anderson family

Chicken Kebabs prepared by Andrew MacDonald and Charlene Thompson

Chilli bites and samoosas donated by Logie Soobramoney

Choc squares donated by Sam Adshade, Heather Johnson and Juanita Aubin

Deville eggs prepared by Charlene Thompson, eggs donated by Passerini family

Doughnuts prepared by Ashmiranda Morriss

Frikkadels prepared by Lena Marie Marx

Kourambides prepared by Kim Heath, Andrea Visser, Elsje Basson and Andriette Smit

Olives donated by Ronnie Warwick

Olive bread, tapenade and olive oil donated by Volker Goetze, Cascade Manor

Plaasbrood donated by Chrisna Faure

Sherry donated by Mannys Liquors

Spanakopita prepared by Maria Bellmunt

Sweetcorn and Chicken soup donated by Shabnum Gafoor

Sweet potato soup and Aubergine dip prepared by Johan Van Schalkwyk, Stone Kitchen

Water and ice donated by Prinsloo family

Miscellaneous donations

Minimax, Marbles Gift shop, Mikri Gallery, St Omars nursery, Strictly Coffee

Clear shoe boxes and Get-Organized DVD donated by Tracey Foulkes

Frames for paintings to be auctioned, made by Louw Van Heerden

Glass for paintings donated by Excellent Glass

Gift box donated by Diana Pieters

Heinz hamper

Vodka and t-shirt donated by Dawn and Roger Jorgensen