

No. 19

Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter

June 2016

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Howard and Suzanne Kirby

This year we are very pleased to welcome Howard and Suzanne Kirby from Lewes, Sussex who have joined us for 2016 as volunteers, both at DCS and Dihlabeng Church. Howard is a retired architect who ran his own business in the UK and Suzanne worked as an administrator for the NHS but has also had previous experience as a Learning Support Assistant. At the school Suzanne is supporting Grade 5, working alongside their teacher Adriani Basson and Howard is managing the Feeding Scheme, running a Homework Club on Tuesday afternoons and generally helping out with site maintenance. We are very grateful to them for their commitment and courage in leaving their UK home and family to come and serve with us. They have both already become an important part of the Dihlabeng Family.



Howard and Suzanne Kirby from Lewes, Sussex



Visit to DCS by Terri Menham and Friends

In March this year DCS had a visit from Terri Menham, her husband Steve and his sister and brother-in-law, Karen and Tony. Terri (seen on the left hand side of the photo) is the former head teacher of Red Oaks Primary School, Swindon who have had a long relationship with the children and staff of DCS. The two schools were partnered for a number of years under the Global Partnership Scheme, through the British School's Council. Terri and Steve have visited DCS several times before but this was the first visit to South Africa for Karen and Tony. They spent the morning enjoying the children's company and also took the children's assembly in which Karen, a professional singer, taught the children a new song. Terri, Steve, Karen and Tony plan to return to the school again in November.

Teacher Advert

Intermediate Phase/Key Stage Two Teacher for 2017/2018

We are still in need of a qualified full time class teacher for our Intermediate Phase (Key Stage Two). Ideally this would be a volunteer post from the UK and requires a minimum 2 year commitment. A volunteer visa to South Africa will be required. The South African school year runs from January to December.

If you are at all interested in serving at DCS, either long term or short term, please contact us by the email address or the UK phone number at the top of the Newsletter or contact the school direct on:

dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za

If you know someone who you feel may be interested, please pass this information to them.

For more information about the school visit: **www.dihlabengschool.com**

Sports At DCS

Athletics

Sports activities in Term 1 at DCS focus on athletics, in which the school takes part in the Provincial Inter-Schools Athletics Championships for the Free State. This begins with teams from all schools surrounding the Bethlehem area (our nearest large town) taking part in the preliminary rounds at Goble Park Stadium, in Bethlehem. All the usual events of running, jumping and throwing form the competition. We sent a total of 27 children, 8 from Foundation Phase (Grades 1–3) and 19 from Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 - 7), 13 of them got through to the second round in the running, high jump and long jump events, 8 got through to the third round in high jump, long jump and the 1200m, and one of the girls, Manthati Mokoena, a girl in Grade 4, competing in the long jump, got through as far as the Free State Provincial Primary Schools round, which was held in Bloemfontein. She came fourth, only missing going to the South African National competition by one place. We are extremely proud of all the children who competed, especially Manthati, who had trained and been coached on a very simple long jump pit, which we had installed at the edge of our playing field.

Thank you to our Grade 4 teacher Anyway Muviyi and our assistant Mathandela Nhlapo for organising and supervising the children through these events.



Manthati Mokoena Grade 4 in action during the long jump competition in Blomfontein and left, at school.

Mini-Marathon Runners



On March 5th three of our Intermediate boys took part in the Junior race of the Surrender Hill Marathon, which is an internationally recognised marathon run each year, starting in Clarens. From there it winds its way out through the mountains, finishing at Surrender Hill, which is about 10kms outside Clarens. The boys, shown in the picture, from the right are, Sam Mota (Grade 7), Katleho Mokoena and Thapelo Mokoena (cousins from Grade 5). They trained for the event with Sam's father, an experienced marathon runner. They finished in very commendable positions: Katleho came 4th, Thapelo 6th and Sam came 8th. They were each awarded a medal. Well done boys!

Term 2 Football and Netball Achievements

In Term 2 the sports focus is on Football and Netball. DCS has both under 11 football and netball teams, and under 13 football and netball teams. The teams all play the other local schools in a small league. Our under 11 teams both played three matches and each won one match. Our under 13 football team played two matches but sadly lost both of them. However, our under 13 netball team played two matches and won both of them with an impressive total goal score of 27. Well done girls, and well done to our assistant Jeanett Mokoena who coaches the under 13s and Lizzie Mbele who trains the under 11s. Our commiserations go to the boys, although we are still proud of their efforts. Thank you to Andy Woodage, Anyway Muviyi, Mathandela Nhlapo and John Mokoena for their help in training the soccer teams and organising all the fixtures.



Our sports field after heavy rain. The grass struggles to grow because of over-use and the soil is quickly eroded.

Redevelopment of DCS Sports Field

The main fundraising focus at DCS for this year is towards the redevelopment of our sports field. As you will see from the photos, and as you will know if you have visited the school, we only have a hard beaten earth field on which to carry out all our sports activities. After heavy rain this can be reduced to a muddy quagmire.



The area to be redeveloped, from the retaining wall on the left to where the ground falls away down a steep slope.

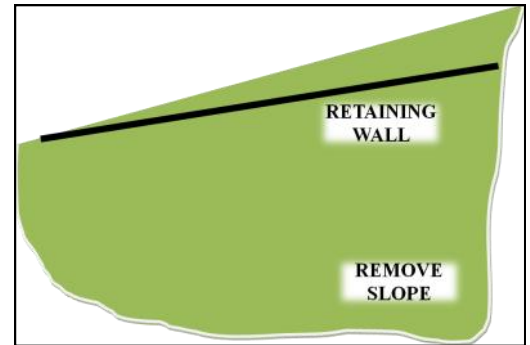
In South Africa sport plays a very important part in the education of all young people and it is pivotal in bringing together children from all races and backgrounds. This is at the heart of our school's ethos and vision. For those children from the poorer sectors of the community, the opportunity to develop their sports skills, compete and achieve at the same sporting events as other more fortunate children is essential in building character, self esteem and a sense of achievement. As reported on the previous page, we have seen what the children can achieve given improved facilities and minimum coaching.

Andy Woodage, our Grade 6 teacher is championing this project. The approximate cost to get the project underway is estimated at R200,000.00 or approximately £10,000.00. A charitable organisation in Switzerland has offered to match whatever the school is able to raise. We have therefore set ourselves the goal of raising R100,000.00 by the middle of this year. At the time of writing this Newsletter we have almost reached that target, having received donations from several sources and individuals, and as a result of our own fundraising at the Autumn Fair, Film Night and other smaller events.

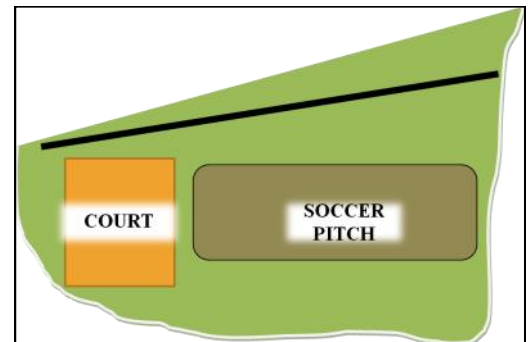
The three diagrams on the right show the stages of the proposed redevelopment. This will give us an all weather court for netball/basketball/tennis, a grass soccer pitch and, in time, a long jump pit/cricket practice area. Our next step is to get a proper site survey done and tender for the work.

Our initial costing and fundraising will get this project started but we will need to raise much more to complete it with proper fencing, nets and equipment. Should you wish to make a donation towards this project, please visit our website: www.dihlabengschool.com for details of how to make a payment or contact the school by email: dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za or contact **New Life Church**, Biggin Hill (details as on the front of the Newsletter). One of our fundraisers, Jonathan Marshall has already raised funds for us this year for this project and other school based activities. Donations can be made via his fundraising page on Give.net. Please go to: <https://my.give.net/dihlabenghalfmarathon2016>

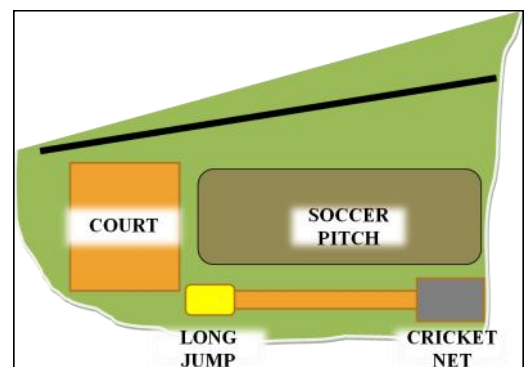
As a school we are very excited about this project and are looking forward to all the future benefits and opportunities it will bring to the children and the school. As a team we are all fully behind Andy as he oversees this ambitious enterprise.



Stage 1. To build a stronger retaining wall, thereby also creating stepped seating for spectators and excavate the entire field area to lower and flatten the field, to create a much larger area.



Stage 2. To create an all purpose court for netball, basketball and tennis with an all weather surface and fencing, and recreate a grassed soccer pitch area.



Stage 3. In time - to develop facilities for cricket practice with proper fencing and netting, also a long jump pit.

Fundraising in Terms 1 and 2

Autumn Fair 2016

Our Autumn Fair was held on Thursday 17th March. This year the fund raising focus has been the redevelopment of our Sports Field (see next page). All the children were busy with their teachers making and producing wonderful items for sale. The event was also attended by friends from overseas who were attending the international conference being held at Dihlabeng Church. As well as a big variety of stalls and refreshments the morning also included singing from our school choirs, led by teacher Anyway Muviyi and dancing which was coordinated by our assistant Mathandela Nhlapo. Overall that morning we raised just over R8,000.00 A fantastic effort by the children and staff.



Lovely items for sale at the Autumn Fair all made by the children (and staff!)



Family Fun Night Our Term 2 fundraiser was a Family Fun Night organised by Andy Woodage for all members of the Clarens community. This was a social time with popcorn and sweets, followed by a movie, which was enjoyed by all. There such a wonderful atmosphere and feeling of family that we plan to do it again next term. We raised over R3,000.00.

Running for DCS

Rosie Gaughan and Alarna Hills, both 8 years old ran the Children's Mini-Mile as part of the Brighton Marathon on 16th April this year. Rosie and Alarna from Ringmer, East Sussex, are friends with Mya and Alia Meggison-Hill, who are spending 2016 in Clarens and attending DCS. They wanted to support the school and succeeded in raising £100.00 The money will be shared between Grades 1–7 and used to buy some new books for their class libraries.

We have also had donations from Andy Collins, who ran the Brighton Half Marathon and Jonathan Marshall who once again ran the Coventry Half Marathon to raise money, part of which will go towards the redevelopment of our sports field. Thank you to all our 'runners', as well as to many others who have given donations both large and small to the school this year so far for both specific projects and general funds. We are very grateful.



Rosie (left) and Alarna (right)
Fabulous Fundraisers for DCS
Thank you girls!



Children Needing Sponsorship

Most of you will know that our child sponsorship programme provides the school fees for the majority of the children at DCS, it also makes up over one third of the school's regular income. At present we have 15 children on our registers who are in need of sponsorship support. If you are interested in becoming a child sponsor or would like more information please visit our website at: www.dihlabengschool.com where you will find a response page there. Alternatively, contact New Life Church, Biggin Hill (details on this Newsletter) in the UK or email: dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za in South Africa.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

