



Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter



Dihlabeng Christian School

Produced by New Life Church Biggin Hill. UK. Tel: 01959 571667

No.35

Email: dcssponsorship@newlifebh.org.uk or office@dihlabengschool.com

Dec 2024

School Web site: <http://www.dihlabengschool.com>



www.facebook.com/pages/Dihlabeng-Christian-School Click on the 'Like' button to receive regular updates



Important Change: We have our email address to: dcssponsorship@newlife.org.uk

We will endeavour to use this new email address for all correspondence in the future. However, if you contact us on our personal email address, that we have previously used, we will not ignore you!

Please add this new address to your contacts to avoid correspondence going into SPAM. Carol and Alan Goodson.

Dear DCS Family,

Another year has gone by in a blink! 2024 was vibrant, busy and fun-filled. We had a number of successes, including one of our athletes competing at the South African National Championship and some of our Grade 6 learners experiencing the ocean for the very first time. We also upgraded our vegetable garden so that the Grade 4 class could have a more permanent place to grow their veggies. Our teachers pushed themselves and enabled their learners to perform well in the end-of-year exams.



Antrie Mlangeni Grade 6

On a personal note, I was privileged to attend two conferences in the second half of the year. I went to the Principals' Conference run by the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA). This was my first time at the event and it was very enriching, both in terms of my own learning and in terms of networking and meeting other professionals. Hopefully, I can use some of what I learnt to help our school improve even further.

In November, I went to Dubai for a Regions Beyond International Conference, also for the first time. I came back from there with fresh faith and a renewed sense of the hand of God upon all that we are doing here in Clarens.



Teacher Rabson with Grade 4's Veggie Garden



As we look forward to 2025, we know that it will be just as vibrant and busy as 2024. It will also include some festivities as we celebrate our 25th birthday! We are excited about pursuing the purposes of God for all of our young learners, this year, and we want to thank all of you for enabling us, through your generous support and prayers.

Much love and God bless.

Andy Woodage.



Nativity 2024 On 20th November the children from Foundation Phase, Grades RR to 3 performed our annual nativity play. This time it was 'The Sleepy Shepherd'. The youngest children took the parts of all the usual characters, with Grade 2 providing narration and Grade 3 playing musical instruments. The singing of all the children was outstanding! Their joy was infectious, and their confidence a credit to their teachers. Well done children!

To get the evening off to a good start, we held our Christmas Festive Market. A new innovation this year was a raffle for Christmas Hampers, which were filled with items donated by the children. Refreshments and many other homemade items were on sale.



Elize Ferreira - Grade R Teacher

We are very sad to be losing one of our valued members of staff at the end of this year. Elize Ferreira has been with us at DCS since 2020. She came to us first as our Grade 1 teacher, then took on the Grade R Butterflies class in 2022, when Carolyn Revill left. The children have flourished under her calm kind tutoring. Her classroom is always busy with learning going on through play and social interaction, as well as focused intentional learning. She will be very much missed by the children and staff alike.



Elize is embarking on an adventure of a lifetime, pursuing a dream with Global Challenge (www.globalchallenge.org), a Christian organisation based in Jeffery's Bay, South Africa. Global Challenge trains and equips young adults for Christian mission overseas. Elize is preparing for a One Year Expedition which could take her to South America, Asia or elsewhere in Africa. We wish her every success and blessing, and we will follow her progress with interest. Elize, thank you for all you have done for the children of DCS.



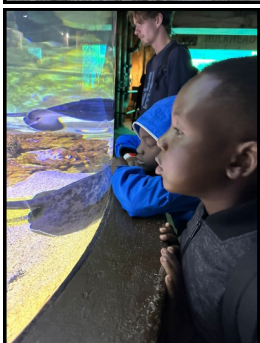
Two other members of staff are also leaving us. Constance Nyefolo (left) has only been with us for 2024, teaching Afrikaans. In her first year of teaching, she has grown in her ability to provide innovative and enjoyable lessons for her learners. She is moving on to a job in Johannesburg, teaching Grade 5 in a school similar to DCS. We wish her every success, and we will miss her.



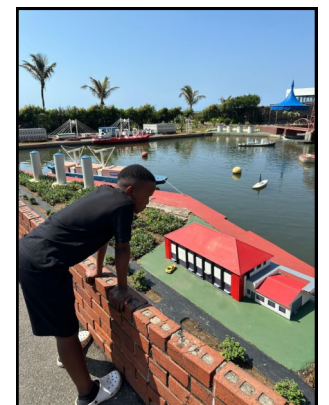
Nicholas Payne (seen right, with some of our Grade 7 learners at their Prom evening) has been with us for the last 2.5 years, teaching mainly Grade 5, and a few lessons with other Grades. Originally from the USA, he, his wife Deanne and their two children are relocating back to the States. We wish them well in their new home, and every success.



Grade 6 Trip to Durban Our Grade 6 learners would like to thank all those who contributed to the fundraising to make this trip possible. From 16th to 20th September Grade 6 stayed at the ATKV Natalia Camp, just south of Durban. They were treated to their main meals each day in the restaurant, and a programme of visits including:



'Croc World', where they were able to handle reptiles and snakes, and learn all about them. 'Mini Town', a model village of parts of Durban. 'Ushaka Aquarium', with its magnificent array of sea life, and its wonderful dolphin show. The Water Park, next to Ushaka, with water slides and flumes. As well as all this, they had the lovely facilities of Natalia Camp; a beautiful swimming pool and access to the beach, and the ocean, just through the gate. It was a wonderful and unforgettable experience for



'Thank you' to all who contributed, and the staff and volunteers who went with them.

New Life Church - Fundraising 2024 - Carol and Alan Goodson

Each year at New Life Church we aim to do a fund raising activity for DCS. This year we became aware of the need for First Aid equipment and supplies, which are relatively expensive in SA. The school provides First Aid care for the children, often helping with more than just cuts and bruises. Children living in poor, cramped circumstances often suffer from skin complaints, minor illnesses and injuries, such as burns, which may go untreated due to lack of funds and resources at home. The school tries to provide good reliable care. Also, Fiona Knight, a volunteer qualified nurse, who is living and serving in Clarens with the church and school, has recently embarked on some health education sessions for the children, and their parents/guardians. To support this initiative, and the day to day first aid service offered by the school office, we organised a fundraising Quiz Night at NLC, in October 2024. The content of the quiz was all

related to health, medical topics and first aid. It was well attended by over 60 people and was a great success, especially the 'last man standing' version of 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes'! In total we raised over £1,300.00 from the quiz night, and other donations. We also collected a

large quantity of donated first aid supplies to be taken, in our suitcases, to the school. The whole evening was great fun and we would like to thank all the church members and visitors who came along to support the evening. A special thank you to Dave Wraight, from NLC, who helped make it all possible with his exceptional IT and tech skills. Fiona and the DCS children will be well supplied for 2025.



Special Needs and Vulnerable Children at DCS

Our special needs work, and some of our initiatives to support vulnerable children, are headed up by Yolanda Van Den Broek. Yolanda is a qualified teacher from England who has worked as a volunteer at DCS for many years. Yolanda coordinates this aspect of the school which includes, Occupational Therapy, Counselling, Horse Therapy, one to one and small group work. All the classroom based activities and outside interventions, run alongside our daily Feeding Scheme and other initiatives such as taking children to the opticians and helping make applications for other specialised schools. We are so very grateful to Yolanda for all her hard work, we are very blessed to have her.

We have a number of sponsors within our sponsorship programme who donate regularly and specifically to this area of the school's work. We would especially like to thank them; their contributions and generosity enables us to help so many children for whom learning is not so easy.

This article gives a summary, written by Yolanda, of all that has taken place in 2024. It is an impressive account of coordinated activities.

Occupational Therapy: *This year the OT has focused on working with children in the Foundation Phase (Grades RR to 3). She worked with 12 children weekly over three terms before going on maternity leave at the end of Term 3.*

Counselling: *We have tried to follow the process of getting a referral form completed by the person who has highlighted a concern. A permission letter is then sent home. Once the child has completed 10 sessions with our trained counsellor, a review sheet is filled in by the child, the counsellor and the child's class teacher. This is then used to try and discern whether the child needs to continue to see the counsellor or not. 11 children have had a course of sessions with the counsellor this year.*

Horse Therapy: *Over the course of 3 terms about 15 children have received Horse Therapy. We have often been limited by transport and have only been able to take one group of four, so we have rotated the groups to ensure that each child got a few sessions each term.*

One to One and Small Group Work: *I have worked with a small number children on a 1:1 basis when the needs of the child are quite different to others in the class. I have worked regularly with two Grade 4 children who were working at a much lower level than the rest of the class in both English and Maths.*

They also received lots of extra support from one of the gap year students who volunteered at the school on Thursdays and Fridays. In FP I have worked with a number of groups focusing on phonics and handwriting.

In each of the IP classes I have taken a group of less able learners for spelling. This has enabled me to consolidate their phonics and tailor the spelling program to meet their needs.

I have worked with groups from the IP to help them with Maths vocabulary and basic skills. I have also overseen the Gr6 reading time twice a week to free the teacher up to work with a group who needed extra input with Maths.

Outside support: *Kathryn is a Special Needs teacher from the UK. She lives and works in Clarens. She has supported me this year by carrying out benchmarking reading assessments across the school to check that children are reading books at the appropriate level.*

Opticians: *5 children were taken to Specsavers to have their eyes checked. 3 were given glasses and one needs to be referred to the Eye Clinic at the hospital.*

Applications to Special Schools: *2 children were taken to Maluti Hoogland Skool, in Bethlehem, for assessment and have both been given places for next year. 1 child will be moving to a special school for the blind.*



Yolanda with some of our Special Needs/Feeding Scheme Children



Grade 7 Trophy Winners

At the end of the year we celebrated with our Grade 7s and others recipients of awards at our Awards Presentation Evening. Those in Grade 7 receiving awards were, from left to right:

Malerole Mahlaba, Bill Robbins Award for Progress. **Malefetsane Mokoena**, Creativity Award. **Kaitlyn Thateng**, IP Sportswoman. **Mpho Ofobi**, Exemplary Behaviour Award. **Siyabonga Nhlapo**, Care and Kindness Award. **Oarabile Mofokeng**, Moshoeshoe Sesotho Award. **Zoe Siviter**, IP Top Achiever Award and Basson Maths Award. **Palesa Mokoena**, Performing Arts Award. **Mokena Radebe**, Principal's Prize 2024.

Prize winners from other Grades are shown separately, with their respective achievements.



Joseph Mokoena
Grade 3. FP
Sportsperson
Award



Tebello Mokoena
Grade 3. FP Top
Achiever



Katleho Seshoeshoe
Grade 5. Oliver
Family Good
Fellowship Award



Antrie Mlangeni
(left), IP Sportsman
2024.

Modiehi Mokoena
(right), Perseverance
Award 2024.



Prizes and Awards 2024

Book Prize Winners

At the end of each year at DCS, two children from each Grade, a boy and a girl, receive a prize of a book. These are given at the discretion of the teachers for various reasons; not always academic. The children in Grades RR and Grade R each receive a gift of a book at Prize Giving. If you sponsor a child, maybe their name is amongst the prize winners.

These are the names of the children in Grades 1- 7 who received the Book Prizes for 2024: Grade 1, **Boitumelo Mokoena** (girl) and **Lesedi Mwangi** (boy). Grade 2, **Karabelo Lengoabala** (girl) and **Thabo Mofokeng** (boy). Grade 3, **Tebello Mokoena** (girl) and **Sbongakonke Mabla** (boy). Grade 4, **Faith Letsela** (girl) and **David Clark** (boy). Grade 5, **Charmain Van Greunen** (girl) and **Katleho Seshoeshoe** (boy). Grade 6, **Cara Roos** (girl) and **Retshidisitswe Ramonotse** (boy). Grade 7, **Matemoho Mofokeng** (girl) and **Morena Mashinini** (boy).



Head Boy and Head Girl 2025

At the end of Term 4 we announced our new Head Girl and Head Boy, plus their Deputies, for 2025. These are chosen from the Grade 6 class of 2024.

They are as follows: Head Boy, **Mojalefa Mokoena**, centre right, and Deputy Head Boy, **Michael Clark**, right. Head Girl, **Nompilo Khoza**, centre left, and Deputy Head Girl, **Cara Roos**, left. The Head Girl and Head Boy blazers were passed on and the children received their badges in our final assembly, ready to take on their duties in January 2025.