



# OAKHURST NEWS

Newsletter 13 / 2010  
Tuesday, 2 August 2010

Dear Parents

'Giving our Girls the Edge' was the theme of the conference that Ms Eland and I attended last week. The guest speakers included the controversial Prof Jonathan Jansen who gave us his views on preparing our girls for university. We were inspired by a young teacher from Lesotho who told us how she manages to integrate technology into her lessons with her class of 55 pupils and one borrowed laptop at a school with no electricity. I felt ashamed of the irritation I feel when our network is slow!

There was an overwhelming plea from all speakers to encourage our girls to think critically, to engage with topics by encouraging discussions at school and at home and not to become A-grade students who enter university with a head full of knowledge and no idea of how to use it.

It was a conference where we laughed, cried, reflected and, most importantly, networked with Principals and their Deputies from the top girls' schools in South Africa.

## UPDATED DETAILS

It is extremely important that the school has an up to date contact number for parents. We have recently found that parents are not responding to telephone calls from the school, particularly on their cell phones. It concerns me that we cannot make contact with you in an emergency. Please ensure that we are kept informed of changes to contact details. If you are going to be unavailable for any reason, please let us have another number where you or a family member may be contacted in an emergency.

## CIVVIES DAY

On Friday this week the girls will be allowed to wear their civvies to school if they pay a fine of R5. The Grade 7s will also be hosting their Market Day which forms part of the EMS curriculum. There will be a variety of goods for sale ranging in price from 25c to R15. The girls can bring along some pocket money to support the Market Day if they so wish.

## CHOIR

The Oakhurst choir will be performing at a music evening at the Vredelust Primary School. tonight. We wish them well.

## HORIZON MATHS

Tomorrow night the prize giving of the Horizon Maths competition (formerly known as Star maths) will take place

at the Baxter Theatre. The following girls have been invited to attend the prize giving which indicates that they are in the top 200 achievers.

Gr6: Irena Nolte, Taryn Joubert and Grace Nadin

Gr7: Bonnie Mansvelt, Elle Mouton, Kirsten Buchanan, Julie Chandler, Santhuri Pillai, Ashleigh Joubert, Silke Brandt, Ancois Jardin, Carolyn Taylor, Kirsten Bloomer, Jessica Walters, Tasneem Bawa

Well done girls! We are very proud of your achievement.

## ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

Access to the school grounds after 15:00 is via the pedestrian gate only. There is nobody available to open the driveway gate from the admin office thereafter. Girls need to meet you outside the front of the school after extra-mural activities. This is for security reasons as well.

## OAKHURST OUTREACH

We would like to collect the plastic tags that are put around bread bags. These tags are recyclable and the money raised from recycling them can be put towards purchasing a wheelchair for a disabled person. Please collect your tags for us and send them to school. We will then pass them on to the relevant people. Many thanks.

## STAFF TRAINING

We are anxiously awaiting the installation of our interactive whiteboards. We will all need to be trained to use these effectively in the classrooms. This training will take place after school. We do not want to cancel the homework classes that we offer in order to attend this training. It would be appreciated if any parent could offer to sit in a classroom with the older girls while they do their homework on days that the staff training takes place. This would be from 14:45 to 15:45. Please let me know if you are available to assist us.

## GARDEN

A concerned mother has noticed that parents are allowing their younger children to run through our newly planted flower beds in the front of the school. We are trying to get these beds established and the plants are regularly being destroyed by little feet! Please would you keep an eye on the little ones so that we can have a beautiful garden at the entrance to our school in spring. Many thanks.

## THANK YOU

Last week we sent out a request to parents for prizes for our lucky draw later this term. Thank you so much to the

families who have responded. We still need many more prizes to make this a successful and worthwhile fundraiser so please keep your contributions coming in.

## READING

At a recent Principal's meeting we were given the following interesting information regarding reading.

- Research has shown that if a child reads for 20 minutes a day outside of school hours once a week, she can improve her overall marks by 5%.  
If she reads for 20 minutes a day, three times a week, her overall marks can improve by 10%.

Children are reading far less these days and we are seeing the results of this in the quality of the language work that the girls produce. Spelling has deteriorated as children rely on a spell check and don't see the value of spending time using a dictionary. Sms usage plays a big part in poor spelling too.

Reading with understanding is the foundation for success across all learning areas.

We need to keep encouraging our children to read more and spend less time involved in 'screen entertainment'.

## RAMADAAN

We wish all our Muslim families well over the fast which starts next week.

## *Thought for the day*

*Unless you value your own self-esteem, you won't be able to pass it on to others.*

*Angela Deutschmann*

Have a great week.

Jenny van Velden

Principal

