



What's on @ PHS

Volume 4: 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians

Welcome to the start of a very strange term! For the first time in my memory we will be having a second term of just over eight weeks followed by a holiday of just under five weeks. Two immediate concerns spring to mind.

Firstly, with the term being short, your child needs to make absolutely sure that he/she is well prepared for the exams that will creep up far sooner than expected. Please make every effort to ensure that they have started their programme of revision already - from Grade 12 to Grade 8. Do NOT let your child in Grade 8 tell you they have nothing to learn! That is simply not true.

Secondly, the long holiday is a cause for some concern for parents in terms of looking after children. Not all parents have the luxury of being able to take five weeks off work and looking after children becomes a logistical nightmare. Please try to make sure your child has a place to go to or is supervised to some extent in the holidays. To let children hang out at shopping malls day after day is not only negligent but also asking for trouble. Try to involve them in at least one meaningful activity or offer their services in some form of community work.

We will be running a Winter School for the Matrics during the holidays to keep their minds active during this time. Further details will be sent to Matrics in a separate letter.

Staff News

We welcome Mrs Michelle Kew to our staff. Mrs Kew has extensive experience in teaching Geography and we wish her well in her time with us.

We also welcome an alumnus of the school, Andrew-John Bethke, to our staff. Mr Bethke is completing his doctoral studies in music and will be



Work on the mini-astro has begun - currently three of the existing tennis court surfaces are being prepared.

helping out in Mrs Hitchings' place after her sudden departure due to illness.

The process of appointing a new Principal is almost completed and we can expect an announcement to be made by 12 May at the latest.

The process to find a new Deputy Principal (in Mr Schenck's post) has started and the advertisement appeared not only in the Vacancy List but also the weekend newspapers.

Grounds and buildings

Work was completed over the holidays in creating a new classroom from two offices and moving the staff workroom. We are still in the process of upgrading the remainder of the classrooms - a process that should be over by the end of this year.

Work has also begun on the Mini-Astro and we hope to have this project completed by the end of May. We will be including floodlighting with this to enable us to make full use of the facility; and the plans look wonderful.

Work on the new Information Resource Centre is scheduled to begin

in the June holidays and a world-class, modern facility is currently being carefully planned.

School shop

Please note the school shop will be closed over the period 28, 29 and 30 April.

School play

The dates for the annual school dramatic production have been changed. This has been brought on by the difficulty in getting performance rights and we have had to move the play run to 22 July - 1 August.

World Cup

In line with many other organisations, we have decided to allow students to wear World Cup soccer tops to school on Fridays, provided they are worn with a full school tracksuit. Only the generic World Cup shirts that advertise the event itself or the student's national team's shirt may be worn. (No Manchester United etc shirts and no England shirts unless you are a British citizen!)

Achievement of students

Johnathan Fitzgerald and Matt Pike were invited to take part in a National Mens Swimming Gala where they were competing against the likes of Roland Schoeman! While they did not get placed in their events, they improved their personal best times and gained enormous experience from the event.

Tracy-Lee Petersen and Lloyd de Kock have been chosen for their respective national U18 hockey teams. This means that we now have three national players in our school.

Grade 8 Council Reps

We congratulate Chad Brache, Ali Khan and Matthew Snyman on their election as the Grade 8 reps on the School Council.

Sports news

It is not often that I write about sports teams but I feel it necessary to highlight the results of the girls' hockey teams in the past weekend's fixtures against Wynberg. I set a goal for our sports teams at the start of the year to beat single-sex schools on a regular basis. It is always difficult for us to do so as we are usually outnumbered 2:1 in terms of students enrolled at the

school but, nonetheless, we need to rise to the challenge. Of the five games played against Wynberg, we won three and drew one, with the U16 girls division unbeaten.

I encourage all sportsmen and women to give their all in the next few weeks as we host our annual Derbies against Westerford and Bergvliet. This year we are introducing an additional derby against Somerset College and the event should be a great success.

I remind parents and students that the Westerford Derby is a compulsory school event for our students. They need to be either at Hartleyvale to watch hockey on Friday evening or at school watching all the sport on Saturday morning. I guarantee that it will be a wonderful experience that they will thoroughly enjoy. To have five or six hundred people together in a place, wearing the same colours and cheering for the same team is an awesome sight indeed and is wonderful for school spirit.

Applications for 2011

I am busy going through almost 500 applications for Grade 8 2011. It is wonderful to see so many sibling applications and the number we have received is almost 100 more than we normally have at this time of year - a good sign of confidence in our great school.

Good luck to all students in the upcoming exams and to all parents who are trying to remain sane during this time!

Regards

Tony Reeler
23 April 2010

If you wish to receive this newsletter electronically, please send an email to dtorrington@phs.org.za so that we can put you onto our electronic database.

A few personal thoughts ...

I had my last PTL meeting the other evening and it was quite strange to realise that this would be the final opportunity to address a group of parents. At that meeting, I stressed the need for students to plan well and to ensure that they were as prepared as they possibly could be for life's challenges such as exams.

I also shared some other words of wisdom I wrote to my godson on the occasion of his 21st birthday. I have repeated some of them below:

- Boys - be nice to girls - always. For that matter, be nice to their mothers. If a mother is on your side you can get away with anything.
- Have good manners, despite what people may think of you. Stand up for people, boys stand back at doors and open doors for girls and girls say "thank you" if someone shows you good manners.
- Learn at least one clean joke for use at family occasions or at work.
- Don't pass on group emails - this is extremely irritating no matter how cute you may think the mail is.
- Do not owe money to anyone except the bank for a bond. For all other needs, save first or borrow from your parents. The interest rate is better and they will often tell you to forget it when it comes to repaying the loan.
- Write "thank you" notes after you have received gifts.
- When life sucks, it is often because your attitude to life sucks. If you can persuade yourself to have a good day, chances are you will.
- Let old people get sentimental about you every now and then. We remember you when you were cute and smelt better and actually do love you most of the time.
- Teach an old person to dance - properly. There are too many middle-aged people who dance badly at parties.