

22 January 2020

Dear Oakhill Parents and Friends

Welcome to the start of the new school year. We extend an especially warm welcome to all the new families at Oakhill and wish them every joy as they experience this wonderful school. I trust that this will be a positive, productive and enjoyable year for you and yours. If you found yourself a little lacking in motivation for the year ahead then I suggest that, next time, you tap into the abundant energy and enthusiasm that accompanied the children as they returned to our campus for the start of the year. If we were able to somehow capture and store this energy then we may well solve our nation's energy crisis.

It is wonderful to see how our children have embraced the new year and how quickly they have settled into a good rhythm. To those children who have found the change daunting, I commend them for their resilience and I encourage them to embrace and explore new opportunities, friendships and possibilities. One young girl in Grade 1 returned home following the first day of school very disappointed that she did not get any homework - how things change as they get older!

Staffing

A special welcome goes to Mr Wayne Purchase (College Head) who has already been very busy in the life of the school and who has already impressed with his wealth of experience, expertise and warm nature. Mrs Erika Revington (Educational Psychologist and Counsellor) has joined the Prep School and we are excited about the many strengths she brings to this role. Mr Andile Ntaba, Mr Justin Damons and Mrs Leah Ponella join our intern programme and we are looking forward to working with these fine young people who have a real passion for teaching and coaching children.

Congratulations to Mrs Delaine Mentoor (Prep Director of Sport) and her husband Danvor on the birth of their son Kristian. Mrs Mentoor will be on maternity leave this term and we wish her a very special time with her family. Mr Lumko Mart, along with the sports department and myself will be managing Delaine's responsibilities this term.

College Matric Results

Congratulations to the 2019 Matric group who have made our school proud with an outstanding set of results. The College teachers as well as the greater Oakhill teaching community are to be commended on their contribution to this success. For more details on the Matric results please follow this link: [2019 Matric Results](#).

Wholehearted Living

During our staff development prior to the start of term we looked at Wholehearted Living and the importance of values and value based learning. The workshop which is based on Brene Brown's work is intended to help



us focus more intentionally on becoming more courageous, compassionate and connected. We will be looking to integrate many of these elements into our teaching and learning as we move forward.

At the first assembly of the year I challenged the prep school to strive to become a World Champion School by applying some values and lessons learnt from the Springbok's success last year. The keys to their success was simplified into the following 5 points:

1. Believe you can be better
2. Respect others
3. Help others
4. Include others
5. Work hard

By applying these principles we hope to be the best Oakhill team we can be and perhaps even a World Champion School.

Co-Curricular

Wet weather programme

In the event of inclement weather we will be adopting a wet weather programme for outdoor activities. This means that practices will continue during inclement weather with classroom based sessions at school applying. Children will be supervised by coaches throughout the scheduled session. Parents will be permitted to collect their children earlier during the wet weather programme should they wish.

In the event of matches being cancelled due to inclement weather children will be accommodated in the afternoon supervision / homework programme until they can be collected.

Support

As we embark on another busy sporting year I would like to remind us all of some practical and important guidelines for supporting our children. These guidelines were shared by our Head of School in the first half of last year and remain very important to us:

- Focus on the child's efforts and performance rather than the overall outcome of the event. This assists the child in setting realistic goals relating to his/her ability by reducing the emphasis on being the best.
- Teach children that an honest effort is as important as victory, so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
- Encourage children to always respond according to the rules.
- Refrain from 'touchline coaching'.
- Never ridicule or shout at a child for making a mistake.

- Remember children are involved in sport/productions for their enjoyment and growth, not ours.
- Acknowledge good play by both teams and a good call either way.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- Never blame defeat on poor/unfair officiating; follow due protocol to report or address it. We can't control poor officiating in the moment but we can control how we play/react in the moment, which always has more influence on the game than officiating.
- Teach players to be humble in victory and dignified in defeat.

I recently discovered the following quote by Knute Rockne and would like to share it with all of us who love sports and games: ***“One man practicing sportsmanship is far better than one hundred teaching it”***

Looking ahead

Please take note of some special upcoming events this term:

22 January	- IP Meet and Greet
31 January	- Inter House Athletics
6-8 February	- Oakhill Chukka Water Polo Festival
12 February	- IP Test Cycle Commences
9 March	- Prep Winter Co-curricular activities commence
11-12 March	- FP Production
13 March	- Little Oaks Ugly Bug Ball

To keep up to date with these and other events please see the Weekly Link or download the [Prep Calendar](#).

Have a wonderful term and thank you for your continued support of our school.

Kind regards



James Cross
Head of Prep