



PREP SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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Issue No 9



Dear Prep School Parents,

At the beginning of the year in my address to you at our Information Evening, I touched on the skills that our children will need to develop throughout their schooling so that they are prepared for the world of work in the 21st Century. In the education world, we call these **'soft' skills**, and whilst they appear to be secondary to the **'hard' skills** we were given at school in the form of actual subjects, they are in fact the most important skills for our children to acquire to thrive in the world that awaits them.

WHAT ARE ESSENTIAL SOFT SKILLS?

So, what do I mean by 'soft skills'? It is the ability to be **resilient** and **adaptable** in an ever-changing, fast-paced world. To be able to **collaborate** and work together, to be able to **communicate**, to develop **critical thinking** and **creative thinking skills**. To know how to **problem-solve**. These are actually the 'essential skills' that are absolutely necessary and one of the key reasons that we, at Broadacres Academy, endeavour to reflect this approach in our learning spaces.

INCORPORATING SOFT SKILLS INTO CURRICULUM DELIVERY

Our curriculum outcomes in each grade are guided by the requirements of the national curriculum, however, our **delivery** of that curriculum is what sets **Broadacres Academy** apart as a modern educational institution. The learning activities on offer in each learning area, in each grade, are carefully thought out and planned to make sure that they are always relevant to the children, reaching and teaching them in the way that they learn.

INQUIRY-BASED AND PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

We use an **inquiry-based** and **project-based** approach to learning, to ensure that we incorporate the necessary academic skills / 'hard' skills, as well as the 'soft' skills that I referred to in the previous paragraph. This is how we



WHERE CHILDREN LEARN, NATURALLY

engage our children actively in the process of learning. There is so much more to learning and education, than **writing tests** and whilst testing is a necessary component of the big picture, it is not the **sole focus to measure a child's ability and understanding.**

I would like to share an extract from Trevor Muir's blog entitled, '**The Epic Classroom**', where he talks about the importance of incorporating 'soft' skills into teaching and learning.

"Young adults struggle with **confidence**. I wonder if having kids take roughly 112 mandatory high-stakes tests between preschool and high school, tests that only measure a sliver of who you really are and what you're really capable of, but are the deciding factor for your future, has anything to do with it. I wonder if that has anything to do with skyrocketing **anxiety** as well?

People are fired for not having **vision**; for thinking they are just a **cog in a machine**? For many students, that's what school is for them. Sit quietly, learn this information, regurgitate it on a test, and then move to the next level. We want millennials to see the big picture and understand why they're doing certain tasks? Maybe this should start with school, and if we can't explain why children are learning a certain subject, then we shouldn't teach it.

People struggle to **communicate**. Well, have we taught them to communicate? Or are they sitting in rows most of the time, not being allowed to talk.

We need to change things up, and I think that starts with us. Stop calling communication, collaboration, critical thinking, work ethic, and confidence "soft skills." Instead, let's call them "**essential skills.**" Because they are essential, arguably more essential than your ability to memorise facts and equations.

"But wait, we can measure someone's ability to memorise facts and equations. We can't do that with those skills."

Oh, is that why we put so much more emphasis on the hard skills, because they're **easier to measure** and keep track of, and compare? Not a good enough reason. Because 92% of talent professionals and hiring managers say **that soft skills are just as important, if not more important, than hard skills.**

Am I saying we should stop teaching the core subjects in school? No! An educated society is a healthier society, and we still need to know how to read, write, solve, observe, experiment, and learn subject matter. But I do think we need to **adjust the benchmarks** a bit, and not just emphasize knowing the information, but also how students obtain it. And present it. And what they do with it.

We need to teach **essential skills**. And the truth is, when students have these fundamental skills, and are confident, creative, critical thinking, hard-working collaborators, you'll find learning that other stuff comes much easier. And they can still do well on those big, bad tests."

- Trevor Muir (Teacher, Author, Storyteller)



HANDS-ON LEARNING

This extract definitely makes one think, doesn't it? Gone are the days of **'teaching at children'**, meaning, 'I teach, and you listen.' In all our classrooms, learning is designed in such a way that our children are **hands-on learners**. Children who learn by doing and being engaged in integrated learning activities daily.

The result of this open-minded, flexible approach to learning, is that **our children remain curious**, driving their own learning. This is fundamentally what children are wired to do. Our staff are there to guide the process of enabling children to continually add to their knowledge and understanding of the world, **creating meaningful and engaging learning experiences**, allowing them to explore, think and ask questions continually.

OUR CLASSROOMS ARE HAPPY SPACES

When I walk around our beautiful school daily, I am reminded that we are definitely getting things right! Our classrooms are **happy spaces** because our children are stimulated and involved in their learning, and there is a **measure of flexibility within our structure**, and this is what learning should be. How different might our own educational journeys have been, if we had been afforded this approach, rather than a bureaucratic system of control and rigidity where everyone was expected to do the same thing, in the same way, at the same time. How **our thinking has evolved** and **changed for the better**, and our children will reap the rewards in the future.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I hope I have given you all some food for thought. As parents, we also need to change the way we think about schooling and learning, and embrace the changes moving forward.

***"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself."** – John Dewey*

Much love,

Tammy

INFORMATION FROM THE OFFICE

- Thank you to all the parents who donated Birthday Books in June. We so appreciate your generosity, and our class libraries are growing steadily, as a result of these donations. Our next **Birthday Book Assembly** takes place on Friday, 26th July, so we have a week to go. If your child celebrated a birthday during the month of July, and you would like to donate a book, please hand it in to Caroline at the office by Wednesday, 24th July at the latest.



- Our annual **100th Day of School Dress-up Day** took place on 28th June. We had such fun dressing up as 100-year old people (children & teachers too), and the children enjoyed hot chocolate, marshmallows and biscuits on the day. Thank you to the parents for the tremendous effort you made with this.
- **Dental Screenings** took place on Wednesday this week and feedback reports will be sent directly to you by Dr Chetty.
- **Mandela Day** was a huge success yesterday. We could not have done this without you – thank you to every parent who sent items for our outreach drive, to feed the sixty builders on site and to send them home with extra food for their families. Thank you for helping us to pay it forward.
- Next week is **Literacy Week for the Prep School**. As per the Term 2 Calendar and my WhatsApp message on the class groups, we have an action-packed week filled with exciting events. On **Monday, 22nd July**, the children must come to school dressed up as a book character. On **Wednesday, 24th July & Thursday, 25th July**, The Travelling Bookshop will be in the upstairs Computer Room in the prep block. Please see details of this further down in my newsletter. We end off the week with a show by Hooked on Books on **Friday, 26th July**.
- **Mid-year Academic Progress Reports** will be emailed to you on **Monday, 22nd July** during the school day. A reminder that follow-up **Parent Interviews** with your child's teacher take place on **Wednesday, 24th July** from 4pm – 7pm in the prep school classrooms. Booking sheets are outside all classrooms and we ask that at least one parent attends this interview to discuss the report.
- **Pyjama Day & Slipper Day** takes place on Wednesday, 7th August in the last week of term. Please look out for details regarding this on the class WhatsApp groups closer to the time.
- We have two and a half weeks of school left until the August holidays. A reminder that **Term 2 ends on Thursday, 8th August at 11am**. There will be **NO AFTERCARE** on this day, so please make the necessary transport arrangements in advance. **Term 3 begins on Tuesday, 10th September**.

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IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE WEEK 22nd July – 26th July

Monday	Literacy Week – Dress-up as a Book Character Mid-year Academic Progress Reports (Grade 0 – 4) emailed to parents
Tuesday	Literacy Week Sports Specific extramural session for any interested Grade 2, 3 & 4 boys and girls. 1.45pm – 2.45pm on the field.
Wednesday	Literacy Week – The Travelling Bookshop will be at Broadacres Academy (please see details further down in the newsletter) Senior Preparatory Choir Practice (Grade 4's) 1.45pm – 2.30pm in the music room Parent Interviews 4pm – 7pm in classrooms
Thursday	Literacy Week – The Travelling Bookshop will be at Broadacres Academy (please see details further down in the newsletter) Sports Specific extramural session for any interested Grade 2, 3 & 4 boys and girls. 1.45pm – 2.45pm on the field.



Friday	<p>Literacy Week – Hooked on Books show 8am – 9am (Grade 0 parents please note that your children need to arrive at school by 7.45am on this day)</p> <p>Birthday Book Assembly (Grade 0 – 4 in the music room with Mrs Letcher)</p> <p>Computer lessons (Extra curricula) with Cathy on Friday afternoons.</p>
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IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE WEEK 29th July – 2nd August

Monday	
Tuesday	Sports Specific extramural session for any interested Grade 2, 3 & 4 boys and girls. 1.45pm – 2.45pm on the field
Wednesday	Senior Preparatory Choir Practice (Grade 4's) 1.45pm – 2.30pm in the music room
Thursday	Sports Specific extramural session for any interested Grade 2, 3 & 4 boys and girls. 1.45pm – 2.45pm on the field
Friday	Assembly (Grade 0 – 4 in the music room with Mrs Letcher)

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE WEEK 5th August – 8th August

Monday	
Tuesday	Sports Specific extramural session for any interested Grade 2, 3 & 4 boys and girls. 1.45pm – 2.45pm on the field.
Wednesday	Senior Preparatory Choir Practice (Grade 4's) 1.45pm – 2.30pm in the music room
Thursday	Term 2 ends at 11am for all grades. NO AFTERCARE on this day.
Friday	School holidays. Term 3 starts on Tuesday, 10th September



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AWESOME BOOK SALE!!!

We will be visiting

Venue: BROADACRES ACADEMY
Date: 25 JULY 2019 - WEDNESDAY
Time: 10H00 – 14H00
Date: 26 JULY 2019 - THURSDAY
Time: 07H30 – 13H30

A huge variety of brand new top quality books.

Price range: Between R25.00 and R350.00
 Contact: JOE 084 588 2309

(Credit/Debit Card Facilities are available)

Yip, see you there!

BIRTHDAYS

PREP SCHOOL BIRTHDAYS			
BIRTHDAY DATE	NAME	SURNAME	CLASS
12 July 2012	OSINACHI	UDOZOH	GRADE 1N
14 July 2009	MIHLA	MARAIS	GRADE 4S
16 July 2012	ANA	DAMIR	GRADE 1V
17 July 2011	TAYA	DU PLOOY	GRADE 2F
23 July 2013	VICTORIA	NNAJI	GRADE 0T
27 July 2012	AMAHLE	DUBE	GRADE 1N
28 July 2008	ETHAN	O'GORMAN	GRADE 4S
AUGUST			
01 August 2012	TASHI	MAROODZA	GRADE 1V
07 August 2012	MELINA	MENIKOU	GRADE 10
08 August 2013	TEAGAN	ISER	GRADE 0Z
09 August 2011	KENNA	FERREIRA	GRADE 2H
15 August 2011	OLIVIA	DEVENISH	GRADE 2F
16 August 2011	MALACHI	ALGEO	GRADE 2H
17 August 2009	ELLE SOPHIE	MAUD	GRADE 4S
23 August 2011	RAYMOND	KAUNDA	GRADE 2H
23 August 2013	REBECCA	MULLER	GRADE 0Z
24 August 2009	KYRO	ALGEO	GRADE 4S
25 August 2011	JOSHUA	CAPPER	GRADE 1V
27 August 2013	AIVA	HAHN	GRADE 0T
27 August 2010	MARLI	JOOSTE	GRADE 3N
30 August 2011	ADAM	POTGIETER	GRADE 2H
31 August 2013	MANQOBA	MHLANGA	GRADE 0T
SEPTEMBER			
06 September 2012	ELIHLE	MBHELE	GRADE 1N
08 September 2009	LILLY	DU PLOOY	GRADE 4S
09 September 2009	ZOE	NIENABER	GRADE 4S
12 September 2012	TOBI	MALAZA	GRADE 1N

STAFF BIRTHDAYS		
NAME	SURNAME	DATE
Patricia	Thengaleni	30-Jul
Portia	Mashaba	31-Jul
Jeannette	Nicholls	08-Aug
Lynne	McDermid	10-Aug
Karen	Nunan	17-Aug
Patricia	Mtshali	01-Sep
Dylan	Cavanagh	08-Sep
Moses	Marwa	08-Sep
Celeste	Roberts	08-Sep
Shadrack	Bembe	09-Sep
Debbie	De Coning	10-Sep

KIDDIE TALK - 😊😊😊

Grade 0

Miss Zweifel's class were practising how to walk and talk if they were 100 years old. They were getting quite rowdy, so she said, **"Quieten down. Old people don't make such a loud noise."** Their response was priceless. They said, **"Old people can't hear, so that have to shout at each other!"**

Grade 1

Mrs Vlietstra heard **Shiloh** (grade 1V) saying to her friend, **"I love colouring in – it's a great stress reliever!"** (precious child)

Grade 2

Megan in Grade 2H said to Mrs Vlietstra after our discussion about kindness in assembly, **"If someone dips from your bucket, they dip from 'theirselves' bucket too!"** (how cute is that!)

