



Woodlands International College

Junior College Newsletter

27 September 2019

Dear Woodlands Family,

First off, thank you to Ms Gray, our extremely capable deputy principal, for standing in for me while I was away at the SAHISA (South African Heads of Independent Schools Association) conference with Mr Van Niekerk of the Senior College. I especially enjoyed her newsletter contribution, and the wonderful poem she shared with us all.

One of the ideas we workshopped at the Conference was that of the identity of a school. So what is our College's identity? Well, I have been exploring this idea from before I joined the Woodlands family at the beginning of 2018. What is it that makes us special or different? I have chatted to many children, many parents and even teachers about this idea, and these are some of their thoughts...

Firstly, our children appear to be a little more confident in general. They seem to have the confidence to talk to other children, or adults, or teachers very easily, and always with respect. When I thought about why, I came to the conclusion that it may have to do with our Drama programme (an inspired addition to our curriculum by my predecessor Mrs Middlewick) where every child from grade 1 to 6 has the opportunity to express themselves and grow their confidence in a supportive, nurturing environment. They practise skits or plays or even just expression of emotions in front of a small group of friends or classmates, followed by their entire class, and then possibly in front of the grade or entire school.

Secondly, the idea or concept that every child has an individual place in our Woodlands family. This can be seen in our general approach that if a child would like to participate in an activity, be it sport or cultural, then they can participate. A place will be made for them in a team or group or whatever. Also, the fact that we have smaller classes and the teachers (and principal) know the names of almost every child at the school also adds to the idea of individuality.

Thirdly, the concept that the wealth of the child's parents is not a factor in terms of the social standing of the child, is very important to us. We are well aware that many parents at our College, make other sacrifices (money, time) in order to place and keep their children at our College.

Fourthly, our wide curriculum which also includes Art and Zulu and Music and Afrikaans and Computers

and Physical Education, also adds to a unique identity.

I believe that all of these factors contribute to a special, unique identity at Woodlands College.

So remember, never, ever, give up.

Dr G Pienaar