

RIDGEWAY COLLEGE



NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents

This last week, my daughter has been doing a short teaching practical in the ECD. She has regaled me each evening with tales of how the children are doing and the things they have said or done that made her smile. She described some of the exercises they do: cutting along lines, playing hopscotch, learning to count. And we forget that those same baby finders that are struggling to cut along a zigzag line will, in 9 years or less, be entering Grade 8. Learning is rapid and exciting in the ECD. Like sponges, these little people absorb knowledge and find pleasure in the smallest tasks. One boy was tired and kept dozing off. After a while, he realized that his eyes were clearly visible to the teacher who kept waking him up, so he pulled his mask up to cover them!

And then they get to High School. And I hear how tired they are and how the day was just "okay". That saddens me. I know that a part of this malaise is the profound impact that COVID has had on us all (in one way or another). Part of it is the "normal" routines of school being strange and disrupted, yet I can't help but think of children crying out for a functional school and teachers who are present and willing to teach their hearts out each day. Education cannot just be about routines and tests. My aim this year to add the sparkle and put the pleasure back into learning, as I see in the ECD. To this end, we are getting our extra-mural programme running again as well as some sporting events that comply with Health and Safety regulations. We started Fitness February this month and will soon post videos and photos of some of the competitions being run.

The end of last week also brought great sadness. There are very few parents who call or mail me and with those that do, I make every effort to establish a connection with them. One such father was Modise Sikhosana. He was a man of integrity and insight and I enjoyed talking to him. I was devastated to learn of his passing on Friday. Our sincere sympathies to his family and to Kgotso, his son. Later that night I learned that a teacher from my home surrounds in KZN had been killed in the most tragic motor vehicle accident, as was his daughter. Last week, I asked a group of pupils to raise their hands if they had lost a friend or a family member to COVID.

More than half had.

Life is fragile. And sometimes fleeting. Grief is real and the need to be kind and patient with one another is needed now more than ever. So too is the need to find joy in each day, be it in solving a Maths problem or having tea with a grandmother. The children in the ECD have reminded me that we need to laugh and play, chase butterflies and live each day with gratitude. Below is a link to a video on our Facebook page of some Grade 8s being interviewed on their first week. Take a look. Thanks to our Marketing and Media Council member, Nyandano, for pulling it together.

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2061506597330868&id=486813474800196



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