



BELLAVISTA

NEWSLETTER

HUMILITY - HUMANITY - HUMOUR

17 January 2022

Dear parents

Assume Positive Intent



Inspired by the life of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, our theme for the school year is

'humility, humanity and humour'.

Each word speaks to its own meaning and carries much potential for our teaching and learning together this year.

Bubble bath, a good read and time out really are no longer the self-care solution for the battering that was 2020 and 2021. We approach this third year of global disruption with cautious optimism that it could be a better year, a kinder year, a year when perhaps we can move away from all the frustration, loss and trauma of the experiences we have endured, personally and collectively. The jury is out regarding the pattern and trend of the pandemic – 'endemic'; 'milder'; 'decline'; 'learning to live with it', 'not so soon', all catch phrases bandied about in the media, across our meal tables and when we meet. The scientists behind the knowledge will carve it all out in due course no doubt. Notwithstanding, whilst whispers of hope energise and imbue optimism in us, the reality is that healing, wellness and recovery are still a long road ahead and the journey is not promised as easy. It will be with grace and kindness that we find and offer strength to one another as each picks up a life that is different, transitioning and changed from the world as we know it, within and without.

With **humility**, we must accept that the experiences through which a colleague, friend, family member or other has prevailed are not the same as ours. With mental health data illuminating escalating suicide and self-harm over the last twelve months (some studies report [depressive and anxiety symptoms in children and adolescents that have doubled](#) in the past eighteen months) we can reasonably assume that any person you or I encounter is experiencing stress or distress. Thus, their functioning, in terms of reliability, performance or plain good manners, is probably the best they can muster at this time. We must exercise grace.

It is within our **humanity** - *ubuntu, I am because we are* – that we can help each other in ways that may not even be spoken. A gentle word. Quietly listening. Holding back.

Delaying gratification. Considering another point of view. Given it is safe to say we are all operating at some level of hypervigilance – *fight/ flight/ freeze* – we cannot rely on instinctive kindness in the heat of any moment. We can, however, pre-determine to self-regulate before we engage. Write that email, but send it tomorrow when you've read and checked your tone. Call that person out, but choose not to humiliate him in front of others. Hold off on gossip and complaint about others. Be patient. Offer a second chance. Kindness is an expression of our humanity.

Humour, the third component of our theme, is a powerful weapon to heal. Not only does a hearty laugh release all the feel good hormones we need in our pent up bodies, but seeing the funny side of a situation breaks tension, relieves intensity and often spurs positive action. South Africans are renowned for this capacity. Once Zapiro's cartoon of the day is published memes fly, jokes abound and we find a way, not to trivialize, but to get through even the most horrid of circumstances as a nation. Choose to watch a TV series that brings lightness of being. Read a silly book. Talk nonsense with your friends. Chuckle with your children. Work through series of knock-knock jokes. Give yourself permission to laugh.

Practically, and deliberately, let's determine between us at school to **assume positive intent** as we engage one another. Yes, the protocols for Covid-19 remain tedious, but adherence to the rules serves the right intention – to keep us ALL safe. Yes, the teacher corrected your child who was up to mischief and junior was upset, but her actions serve the right intention – she cares enough to care. Yes, a parent may fly off the handle, but the intention to protect their child is pure even if regulation was lacking. If we can assume positive intent as our start point in our home-school partnership, and engender the spirit of humility, humanity and humour amongst us, we **will** have a kinder year. Of that I am sure.

Nuts and bolts

Gates

Please be aware that the **school takes responsibility for your child at 07h50**. If you leave your child on the pavement before the supervision starting at this time, you are neglecting your child's safety. If your commute sees you arrive earlier, please wait with your child until a staff member is in attendance. Our start of day time will be reviewed periodically through the year, aiming always to keep support staff off travelling peak hour traffic and prioritising the sanitization protocols morning and afternoon on site.

Cocurricular Programme

Grade 3-7 begin their cocurricular programme this week and finish school at 15h00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from this week. You can collect your child at the same gate as you drop.

Ongoing protocols

By separate copy, please see a reminder of the general Covid-19 protocols in relation to isolation and quarantine. If there are staff away for testing or self-isolation following a risk assessment, please note that we will endeavour to make an internal substitution for the period rather than introduce someone external to the staff on campus.

Parent Connect

This evening, 17th January 2022 at 18h00, is our **Parent Orientation** evening on Zoom. After an introduction by myself you will move to breakaway groups per your child's grade to discuss the practicalities of the running of the classroom and organisational expectations on your child.

Meeting ID: 945 1189 5012
Passcode: Bellavista

Into February, your child's therapy team will set up an appointment to meet with you to discuss therapy goals for 2022 and also any assessment feedback.

Parents can reach those working with their child on their school email address: firstname.surname@bellavista.org.za Whilst no member of staff is obligated to share their mobile number, they do with their best intention. Please use this respectfully. Remember, in the course of the day, you want your child's teacher or therapist to be working with the children, not looking at their Whatsapp messages. Any communication you need to get to the teacher in the morning should be via the school office: 0117885454.

Private extramurals

Various providers commenced their services this week and have a place or two available:

- Our fabulous coaches from Fielding Dreams run a high intensity, daily performance training as an additional option for children each morning of the week at 07h00. Information follows via the app.
- Upstage Concepts is a private drama academy who offer group lessons to interested children on Monday afternoons. Please see attached flyer [here](#).
- Tulla Eckhardt, a musician and vocal coach well known to our school, has times available to work on vocal training and singing. Her contact details are: 0726275556
- A Robotics Club for children in Grade 5-7 is open as a private activity on Monday afternoons 14h15-15h45. A flyer is attached [here](#).

A note from the PA

Wow, what a start to the year!! Firstly thank you, thank you, thank you for all your generous drop off donations of uniforms (from any and all schools and in any condition), kids and adult clothes and anything else you thought our little

Kwezwe might benefit from. Your generosity has made it possible to redistribute these items in the following ways:

- Making the option of gently worn BV uniforms available to our BV parents;
- We collected 3 big black bags full of not so gently worn BV uniforms for our a school outside of South Africa.
- We collected another 3 big black bags full of plain uniform items (grey socks, shorts and pants) and other clothing which our staff and Kwezwe have been hugely appreciative of.

Last week's distribution for donations of second hand uniforms to our very generous BV parents has raised in excess of R8000. We are getting very close to our financial goal which will allow us to redo the Kwezwe sports field which is so desperately needed. Please continue to drop off items with Trevor at the main gate. Fehmida Johnson and Julie-Ann Mclintock are available any time to assist with uniform requirements from the list attached. We will be onsite again at the school during the last week of the term, date to be confirmed.

Enjoy the week!