




25 June 2015

Dear Parents,

I am aware that you have been bombarded with information in the last while. Please read what is relevant to you from this newsletter and if you stop reading at this point, I wish you a restful and fulfilling holiday with your beautiful children. Your children have had an outstanding term and I am continually humbled by the positive way they respond to challenges. We have enjoyed an affirming interaction with schools in the region on the sports field this term and I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing your kids thrive on the field of play or behind the chess board. Children thrive and grow in this learning environment and I am particularly impressed with the self-disciplined approach of our students during this examination period.


Our academic faculty also continue to make positive innovations to our curriculum and I am confident that your sons and daughters continue to be prepared for life after school. We monitor all our students once they leave and there are many affirming stories of success at University and beyond. We have placed some of these stories on our webpage under the Old Oaks section and I would encourage you to read them at your own leisure. I have included one particularly exciting story below, which continues to prove that an Oakhill Matric can fulfil any dream:

OAKHILL SCHOOL
a tried-and-tested independent education



Oakhill IEB Matriculant (2010)
achieves full scholarship to Cambridge University, England

Oakhill Celebrates
TOP INTERNATIONAL STUDENT



MATTHEW MYERS
recipient of the
Skye-Cambridge Scholarship
for an
MPhil in Engineering
for Sustainable Development
at the University of Cambridge
covering his full cost of study
and living expenses

Oakhill Matric students have consistently achieved 100% IEB Matric pass rate over 22 years, with 94% University Bachelor Degree entrance.
An IEB education can get you to Cambridge University and other International Universities.

Other current international students proudly celebrated by Oakhill
Penelope Ceillier (2013) Degree in Britain and France
Maren Seydack (2011) MBChB in Germany

Founded in 1992, Oakhill School has firmly established itself with an outstanding and consistently proven academic record, and an excellent reputation for sports, music, art and drama.

For admissions contact Oakhill School
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Oakhill is an Independent Examinations Board (IEB) school, as are the majority of Independent Schools in South Africa. This exam is benchmarked internationally and as a result our Matrics are eligible to apply to any University in the world. In fact we have a number of students studying abroad at the present time. Most Oakhill students study at South African Universities, the favourites being UCT, and Stellenbosch. All of them thrive in this environment simply because they have been encouraged to be critical thinkers in our rigorous academic environment.

Oakhill has a proud Matric record and has averages in every subject which are comparable to the National IEB average.

I have included the comparison I do annually for your interest and you can click on the link for my full evaluation of our Matric results should you wish.

<http://www.oakhill.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014-Headmasters-matric-analysis.pdf>



Seven Year Matric result comparison

	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Candidates	25		24		29		30		50		40		38	
Passes	25	100	24	100	29	100	30	100	50	100	40	100	38	100
Bachelor Degree	22	88	22	91.6	27	93	26	87	47	94	35	88	35	92
Diploma	2	8	1	4	2	7	4	13	3	6	5	12	2	5
HC	1	4	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
NSC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Distinctions	33		40		55		59		79		70		75	
Distinctions per candidate	1.13		1.66		1.89		1.96		1.58		1.75		1.97	

As can be seen from the table above we continue to improve our distinctions per candidate year on year. We have also improved our conversion rate of 'B' symbols to 'A' symbols but need to focus on converting even more. What is encouraging is that **74% of our candidates received at least one 'A' symbol**. 50% received two or more, 29% received three or more and 24% of students received 4 or more distinctions. This certainly gives future matriculants and their parents the assurance that, should their children put in the effort they are capable of achieving the results they deserve at Oakhill.

	Level 7 (A)	Level 6 (B)	Level 5 (C)	Level 4 (D)	Level 3 (E)
2008	33	39	51	34	17
2009	40	52	38	26	9
2010	55	55	58	27	11
2011	59	64	39	27	23
2012	79	92	101	58	28
2013	70	84	63	49	25
2014	75	79	57	35	18

James Cooney, a Matric at Oakhill delivered an amazing speech at assembly some time back, entitled, 'My South Africa'. It was a rousing and emotional call to all South African's to see the beauty and uniqueness around us. If you want to hear it you will have to join us at Celebration of Excellence at the end of the year but this train of thought



certainly got me thinking about the Oakhill that attracted me and my family here, 7 years ago. Knysna certainly has its challenges as a small town, and I would challenge all of us to question our innate pessimism and desire for rumour and gossip. Those who peddle this substandard level of thinking or even give it any credibility without verifying the truth certainly do not do themselves, their children or anyone else any favours. We encourage our students to be critical thinkers. We encourage them to question information. We encourage them to verify the source of information and we encourage them to make their own opinions based on ALL the facts. Yet there are times when we model the total opposite by accepting rumour and gossip as fact. **Once again, I would encourage any parent to make an appointment with me should you want to chat about or clarify any issue pertaining to your children or the school.** Oakhill is a special place where great ideas are discussed and challenged. Eleanor Roosevelt said: *Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.* Oakhill certainly discusses great ideas which are forward-looking and impact on the lives of your children in a positive fashion. James Cooney could have spoken about Oakhill like he has about South Africa – perhaps it would go something like this:

My Oakhill is robust and resilient

My Oakhill strives for what is just and fair

My Oakhill sees young men and women thriving in the joy of learning

My Oakhill sees boys and girls engaged and inquisitive, exploring and discovering

My Oakhill is the UCT graduate who has been given a full scholarship to Cambridge University

My Oakhill is the young Grade 8 who ended second last in his class but through determination and perseverance is now the second highest achiever in Matric

My Oakhill is the Grade 6 girl who raised money for 'Save the Rhino' foundation

My Oakhill is the student who works at PAWS each week

My Oakhill is Grade 10's playing marbles with Grade 2's

My Oakhill is the family who sponsor an underprivileged child at Oakhill School

My Oakhill is the mother who buys a pair of hockey boots for someone who cannot afford them

My Oakhill is the Old Oak who pops in to say thank you to his teachers for giving him the skills he needs at University

My Oakhill is the one that builds a home for a ground staff member

My Oakhill is the students who spend time at Epilepsy South Africa, helping those in need

My Oakhill is the Little Oaks ugly bug ball

My Oakhill celebrates diversity in the Little Oaks Children of the world day

My Oakhill is not negative

My Oakhill is not winning at all costs

My Oakhill is not fuelled by rumour and gossip

My Oakhill is not unkind, angry and vindictive

My Oakhill takes no pleasure in others' misfortune

My Oakhill leads, makes mistakes, forgives and strives for excellence

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My Oakhill is genuine, kind and loving

My Oakhill sees no point in being the best at the expense of others

My Oakhill makes a difference and believes that all of us have the capacity for greatness

My Oakhill cares about you and your future

My Oakhill is the future!

I am sure you have heard the cliché: *Education is a journey not a race* but it is a truism as well. All our children are individuals in their own right and, as I reminded dad's at the Father's Day Breakfast last week, we should question our own thinking about education, as often our decisions and thoughts default to outdated stereotypes which we know, intuitively, did not work for us as children. **We live in exciting times but they are also challenging and schools and parents need to partner now more than ever to ensure we create an environment which will allow young men and women to collaborate, be critical thinkers and be confident enough to follow their passion.**

Many parents have come forward to help with the **#matchamillion challenge** and for this we are grateful. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to impact our children's lives! Oakhill has already managed to raise R3.5m, and we encourage parents to get involved with this challenge. Follow the link on our web site with up-to-date information and all the exciting opportunities to achieve \$1m. You can select details on how you can actively get involved and help contribute: <http://www.oakhill.co.za/matchamillion/>. Please continue to share these exciting offers with friends, family and any others who may be interested and let us know if you have any other further opportunities you would like us to consider.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Tiaan Skey (Bus driver) and John Lewis (Groundsman) on the birth of their daughters and we wish Hanette Boucher every blessing as she departs on maternity leave to prepare for her second child. Many of you will be participating in the Oyster Festival Events and we wish you all the best as you compete and many of you will be travelling with your families and we wish you a safe journey. Enjoy the rest with your children and I assure you we look forward to welcoming them back to Term 3 on Tuesday the 21st of July.

All the best,

Shane Kidwell
HEADMASTER