



11 March 2022

Dear Parents, Guardians and Caregivers

Oakhill School places great emphasis on pupil's 'becoming' people of significance as they experience the Joy of Learning.

A key imperative in this process is assisting pupils to become active citizens. Citizenship Education is the means whereby you develop an understanding of what it is to be an involved and responsible citizen.

We live in the most unequal country in the world and it is, I believe, beholden upon all of us, teachers, parents and pupils alike, to acknowledge this and to actively work to change this reality. Archbishop Tutu said "Do your little bit of good, where you are; it is these little bits of good put together that overwhelms the world".

Citizenship Education spans a number of social and economic factors and includes, but is not limited to, environmental issues, transformation, diversity, community engagement and involvement.

Many of these issues are also covered in the school's formal curriculum which highlights and gives expression to these imperatives. As important as this is, it must be accompanied by action and physical endeavour.

In a recent College Assembly I expanded on the idea of Ubuntu by highlighting the powerful impact of the everyday greeting in African Culture. The isiZulu greeting of Sawabona or Sanibonani (plural) is far more than merely saying 'hello' or 'how are you'. Translated into English the greeting says 'I see you' and the response, Sikhona, is 'I am here'.

This is deeply meaningful, as with this greeting you do more than say hello, you bring each other into existence. You immediately establish a human connection that celebrates the individual's humanity, value and integrity.

To me, active citizenship is therefore about being human and recognising that it is our humanity that ultimately connects each one of us to the other.

Oakhill School is part and parcel of the greater Knysna Community and as such has a responsibility to be seen as an active role player in our town and it's surrounds.

Historically, through many initiatives the school has supported numerous charities, outreach programmes etc and it excites me to announce that the school is widening its citizenship footprint by building a food

garden on our campus. This food garden will be built during the upcoming holiday and will provide food to the community as part of the greater Knysna food security imperative.

A modern education is a multi-faceted undertaking at the heart of which lies our ability to 'see each other' and by so doing inspiring us to roll up our sleeves and become active citizens who contribute to the greater good of our community.

Equally, the establishment of the Transformation and Diversity Committee is nearing completion and will begin its work shortly. Many thanks to those parents who have expressed a willingness to be involved in this initiative. The duly constituted Transformation and Diversity Committee will include parents, pupils, teachers, staff, board members, alumni and independent experts.

I look forward to being part of this process as together we continue to build a school that truly lives its values, that is relevant, modern and above all human.

It has been a frenetic term with many highs as well as the realisation that we need to shake off our Covid lethargy and become fit for purpose as we return to the rigour and demands of life as we knew it pre Covid.

As always, thank you for your support as together we educate your children.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mr Graham Howarth
Head of School