



HEADS UP

Newsletter
27 February 2026

Dear Oakhill School Family

Today we celebrate Oakhill's 34th birthday. Although the actual birthday is on 28 February (29 February to be precise) we chose to mark the occasion on Friday with the traditional ice cream treat enjoyed by all our children across the campus.

In February of 1992 Oakhill School opened. The school had grown from an idea sown in the early 1990s by pioneering parents who wanted a good, innovative and inclusive education for their children and who sought to establish a school which expressed "joy in learning" and placed the child at the centre of an integrated and relevant curriculum.



Oakhill's 1st Day at Woodmill Lane 1992

The new school's 54 pupils, ranging in age from six to sixteen, spent the first term of 1992 in a unit of the newly opened Woodmill Lane Mall. In April that year the school moved to its permanent location on the hillside above Knysna, sheltered by Oaks and with a view of the lagoon. The dream was realised.

In 1992 things were a little different. South Africa was moving towards its first democratic elections and was starting to emerge from its period of isolation. A litre of petrol would cost approximately R1,50 while a litre of milk would have cost in the region of R1,80. The rand dollar exchange rate was approximately R3,00 to the dollar. *Aladdin* was the highest grossing film of the year and the film *The Bodyguard* turned Whitney Houston into a movie star.

Making today's birthday celebration even more special was the surprise reveal and reintroduction of our beloved Oakhill mascot, "Allan". This new mascot was funded by the Matric

and Grade 7 groups of 2025 who were very keen to revive this tradition. Our original mascot, introduced in 2013 on the occasion of Oakhill's 21st birthday, was lost in the Knysna Fires of 2017 and we are thrilled to have our friendly and energetic squirrel back with us.

The original mascot was named by the students as part of our 21st birthday celebrations in 2013. The name was a tribute to Oakhill's founding Head, Mr Allan Graham and had been made popular at the time by a talking wild animal clip that had been making the rounds featuring a delightful creature called Alan.



Mr Allan Graham with original Mascot Alan



Mr David Wright and Mr James Cross, our Heads, introducing our revived Mascot Allan

While we have much to celebrate and reflect on we are also excited to look ahead to opportunities for further growth and development. An example of this is the new ablution and tuckshop project at the Oakhill Sports Campus which is nearing completion. We are looking forward to this facility improving and further enriching our experiences at the Oakhill Sports Campus while also allowing us more opportunity for community building.

We can feel proud of how our young school is growing up and remain very grateful to our loyal families past and present for their ongoing support and commitment. This along with the remarkable and hard working team of educators, administrators and support staff ensure that we remain ambitious and yet stay true to the founding principles and vision of Oakhill.

I wish you an enjoyable and restful weekend.
Happy Birthday, Oakhill.

James



Head of School: James Cross