



ELKANAH HOUSE

Weekly Newsletter

P R E - P R I M A R Y

T: 021 554 8620 - michelleb@elkanah.co.za



8 February

Dear Parents

At a recent meeting of IEB Primary School principals, we explored a UNESCO report detailing global research on what made a school "happy". In a world which seems to place too high a value on material success, personal comparison and giving children "competitive edge", this report tackles the growing concern that children are not spending enough time just "being".

Examining extensive studies of children between the ages of 8 -12 on the key components to sustaining happiness, the overwhelming contributing finding was that children who spend time with people they love are the happiest. This time could be with parents, friends or even their beloved pets. When children were asked to choose between being a child who has access to any material item they need or being able to spend time with a parent, almost every child chose more time with parents.

Other factors contributing to a general sense of well-being and happiness also included being outdoors and engaging in fun, simple activities. Once upon a time, childhood was filled with endless days spent outside. Imaginations ran wild and children made their own fun with nothing but a few Matchbox cars and an old cardboard box. They played, they learned, and they socialized. But most of all, they had fun! Other tips to happiness include eating on time, getting enough sleep, feeling heard and giving our children unconditional love.

Interestingly, very few children mentioned their material possessions when asked about what makes them happy. There is most certainly a lesson for us as parents in these findings. Many children indicated that they felt stressed by taking part in too many extramural activities (although many of them were not capable of self regulating these activities). For some

Dates to Diarise

14 February
Friendship Day

19 - 23 March
Environmental
Week

Book Sale Dates

19 and 20 March
The Book People

22 and 23 March
Rural Child
Foundation



Recycling and Sandwich Pals

13 February
Swallows

20 February
Kingfishers

6 March
Weavers

13 March
Bishops

20 March
Sunbirds

27 March
Sugarbirds

children, life has become too scripted, leaving very little time for spontaneity.

Others felt worried and pressurised by the idea of having to perform and reach high grades academically, while others felt overwhelmed by not winning in their sports teams.

As a school, we also have a part to play in promoting happiness for our children by:

- * Encouraging parental involvement and a strong sense of belonging to a community
- * Creating a sense of family in the school environment
- * Actively promoting and instilling positive values, attitudes and practices
- * Engaging in social outreach activities, promoting empathy and understanding of belonging to a "bigger community"
- * Promoting and growing an understanding of other cultures both within and outside the school context
- * Valuing mistakes as part of the learning process
- * Teaching students to ask questions
- * Enforcing a realistic homework policy, giving our children space to engage in other activities or just time to play.
- * Giving our children regular and constructive feedback

For most of us a simple measure of a happy school is when a child wakes up eager to get to school each day. I am proud to say that gauging the happy smiles and cheery high fives we receive every day as our children enter through our doors, we must be doing something right!

Despite the challenges of drought, building projects and other unforeseen challenges which may occur, the smiling faces, laughter in the playground and positive engagement in the classroom, tells the story of a happy school. What a privilege we have, as children and adults, to be part of this community.

Pippa Sinclair

Lunch Pals

In South Africa, there are too many children going to school everyday hungry. We have partnered with Melkbos Care Centre to enable our pupils to provide sandwiches for children in need.

If possible, we would like the sandwiches provided to have a high protein content so we suggest sandwiches made of brown or whole wheat bread, containing peanut butter, cheese, Bovril/marmite, or jam. We would also like to add a piece of fruit to the lunch.

Each class will be allocated a day in a week where they are given the opportunity to supply the sandwiches and fruit. Your class rep will be in touch in order to communicate this date with you.

For more information on Melkbos Care Centre visit: www.ubunye.org



Rogz Academy Books and Beyond NPO

Make a difference in a child's life by helping them learn to read! Rogz Academy Books and Beyond NPO are looking for volunteers for our English Literacy Programme at Sophakama Primary School in Dunoon. Sessions are on a Tuesday and a Thursday from 12h15–14h00, every week during the school term. Volunteers should have complete proficiency in English; be keen to work with children; and be able to attend sessions regularly and punctually. Training and resources are provided. Please contact Tracy Farquhar (Cell: 082 572 1322) if you are interested or visit <http://www.rogz.com/rogz-academy-books-and-beyond/> for more information.

Friendship Day 14 February

At Elkanah House, we focus strongly on developing social skills and equipping our children with the tools to get along with their peers. Skills such as being able to effectively communicate, collaborate, connect and build lasting relationships are not only vital life skills but also essential for a balanced and happy life.

We plan to use 14 February as an opportunity to celebrate friendship and we call it Friendship Day. Next Wednesday, the children are encouraged to wear civvies and can dress in red/pink or white clothing. (If Wednesday is your child's PhysEd or sports day, their clothing needs to be suitable for active fun.) In order to highlight the significance of this day, our teachers have planned some inspiring activities around friendship.

Hats

Please ensure that your child has a cap or floppy hat which can be left at school. Children need to wear their sun hats during outside and break time. Aftercare children need to bring an extra hat to use and leave at aftercare.



ELKANAH HOUSE

SCHOOL CALENDAR

2018

TERM 1

18 January 2018 - 28 March 2018

17 January 2018

•

Open day in Grade 000 - 3 (new pupils only)
Open day at Senior Primary (Grade 4 & new pupils)
High School (All pupils grades 7 - 12)

TERM 2

17 April 2018 - 22 June 2018

TERM 3

17 July 2018 - 21 September 2018

TERM 4

9 October 2018 - 7 December 2018

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Wednesday, 21 March 2018 (Human Rights Day)

Friday, 30 March 2018 (Good Friday)

Monday, 2 April 2018 (Family Day)

Friday, 27 April 2018 (Freedom Day)

Monday, 30 April 2018 (School Holiday - aftercare closed)

Tuesday, 1 May 2018 (Workers Day)

Thursday, 9 August 2018 (Women's Day)

Friday, 10 August 2018 (School Holiday - aftercare closed)

Monday, 24 September 2018 (Heritage Day)

OUTINGS

Pre-Primary Term One 2018

Chameleons, Dolphins and Hedgehogs

16 February - Beach Outing

16 March - Kirstenbosch Outing

23 March - Prince and Princess day

Badgers, Otters and Giraffes

20 February - Kirstenbosch Outing

Whole School

14 February - Friendship Day

19 - 23 March - Environmental Week

Future date:

19 September - Grandparents Day



ELKANAH HOUSE



ELKANAH HOUSE



how to guide

School **WhatsApp** groups are a great way to assist with our busy, oversubscribed schedules if they are used effectively and respect is shown to all participants in the group in terms of the content it is used for.

Follow this simple *how to guide* to keep it relevant

the how to

- Initial communication to arrange events/assistance only
- Share information relevant to the group not shared by other communication/teachers
- Notify parents of school outing/sport cancellations when nothing received by the school
- Take any additional questions/comments offline
- Send a message directly to the Group Admin to add anybody

what not to do

- A question/reminder about something covered already causes interruptions to a few people, be considerate
- Don't use the group to catch up on general news from other parents
- Don't respond to initial messages with a thank you or comment
- Please do not send reminders about the colour of shoes, socks and daily admin which has been communicated
- This is a communication tool and not a platform to be used for "loose" updates as we do on Facebook and Twitter

