



Founded 1922

HERSCHEL SENIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

No. 9 – 10 September 2021

Spring greetings to you all!

My apologies firstly, for not getting the newsletter out on Friday 10 September, as per schedule.

Last week, our Jewish families celebrated Rosh Hashana (the Jewish New Year) between Monday 6 and Wednesday, 8 September and we wished them Shanah Tovah in their celebration of this significant day in their faith. I hope that all families observing the holiday enjoyed their celebrations and found richness and meaning through the traditions and family occasions experienced at this special time.

In this regard I wish to offer my sincere apology for not extending Herschel's best wishes to Muslim families who observed Muharram (Islamic New Year) on the 10 August. This was an oversight on my part, and I am grateful to a parent who pointed this out to me so that I could address it. I would like to reiterate that in light of our focus on promoting and supporting a genuine sense of belonging at Herschel, this omission is especially regrettable. My sincere apologies for not extending best wishes to all of our Muslim families in marking such an important celebration. I hope that your celebrations were much enjoyed and that the time spent in marking this significant occasion was special.

We welcomed Monde Sibizo to the position of Estate Manager on 1 September. Monde has taken up residence in the Estate Manager's House and has spent the past two weeks meeting everyone and finding his way around the campus.

I hope that you enjoy the Q&A wherein you will learn a little more about him. We hope that Monde enjoys his time at Herschel and that he feels at home here soon.

On Wednesday 8 September the Parent Education Group met to finalise contributions for the upcoming theme for the Parent Portal. The theme is Mental Health. It was very reassuring listening to the conversation and discussion taking place in the Parent Education Group where so many insightful and relevant ideas and resources were shared and discussed. Please visit the Parent Portal to view the material and to read articles that appeal to you across a range of topics and issues. The pandemic has definitely had a significant impact on issues pertaining to mental health, as has the #BlackLivesMatter movement, social media anti-racism campaigns, and the general challenges that face us globally and nationally.

At a time such as this where we find ourselves navigating uncharted times and where uncertainty and adaptability go hand in hand, it is important to be conscious of how the people close to us are doing. In order to really know this, we need to be present. The busyness of life can at times be consuming and this renders us vulnerable just as it does the members of our family and friendship groups. Checking in to see how people we love are doing, takes time and requires intention. There can be no compromise in this space – it requires being present and paying close attention.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the parents who give of their time and expertise to help in creating a portal that we can all tap into in order to learn more and to equip ourselves with the skills and knowledge needed to be supportive, self-aware and authentic in our vulnerability and in our relationships.

The matrices have completed their preliminaries and we hope that this practice that precedes the Final NSC Examinations has been fruitful for them, allowing them to diagnose areas requiring attention and to feel affirmed in achieving well where they have done so. With the matric dance having been postponed until October, we hope that they can 'press pause', focus on completing the curriculum and hopefully attend their dance before the rites of passage including Grade 12 Prize-Giving and Valedictory take them to the start of the final National Senior Certificate examinations in November. One is always reminded at this stage in the year of how little time there is left!

On a final note, it was a treat to watch the U14A and U16C hockey teams enjoying their games against St Cyprian's on Friday evening, before attending the Fusion Supper Concert (without the supper part)! It served as a reminder to me of how school life should be!

The Fusion Supper Concert was phenomenal! Kudos to Kevin Smuts and this talented group of singers who put together a repertoire that was absolutely wonderful and included a range of genre. I was particularly blown away by the sheer talent of tight harmonies in beautiful voices, especially by the three Grade 12s who sang a special farewell song.

Thank you to Sibulele Sodayise, Rachael Mol and Noa Duckitt for your incredible commitment to Fusion and for enriching us through the beautiful harmonies that you have created. You will be missed!

Wishing you all a safe, healthy and productive week ahead.

Heather Goedeke

VERLIE OOSTHUIZEN, Social Media and POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act) Lawyer will give an online presentation on 21 September 2021 for Students at 14:00 and for Parents at 18:00. The presentation will focus on the legalities and responsible use of social media platforms. We will send a Zoom link / invitation to all parents closer to the date.





Introducing Monde Sibizo

The 1st September traditionally signifies the start of Spring and new beginnings, certainly in the plant world, so this seemed an opportune time for our new Estate Manager, Monde Sibizo, to also start his tenure at Herschel.

Monde joins us from Rallim Preparatory School in Sunningdale, where he was Estate Manager since 2019. Having always had a love for plants and the outdoors, Monde studied Horticulture at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. His work experiences also include landscaping, irrigation and the maintenance of parks and golf courses.

Monde's pride in his work is clear, with his philosophy being that everyone that enters the school sees the gardens and grounds first. "Soil is life. Plants are life. If our grounds are beautiful and well maintained, it will be clear to everyone that the people who look after them are passionate about what they do, and that they do it with love."

He is looking forward to him and "his team of guys" transforming the campus. He is also passionate about educating the students about growing vegetables and starting their own vegetable gardens, and, in the process, perhaps instilling the love of plants to a budding horticulturist.

Monde has three children, two boys aged 2 and 4, and a 9-year-old daughter. In his spare time, you can find him...yes, you guessed it...in the garden, or busying himself with DIY projects. He also enjoys welding and building and refurbishing furniture.

We wish Monde a happy and productive chapter at Herschel.



Speaking of Spring, our Astro looked like it had been covered in snow after the recent heavy hail storm.

SAIIC Quiz

Last Thursday our Herschel team comprising of Kate Forrest, Jorja Van Schalkwyk, Romy Myers, Nina Kabalin and Ruby Moller participated in the South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIC) quiz. Due to Covid restrictions this year, the quiz was held online.

In preparation for the quiz, the team had to read and prepare 3 newspaper articles daily over a two-week period. The articles covered political, economic, environmental and social issues in the international arena.

The quiz took place last Thursday afternoon online. All participants had to respond to 80 multiple choice questions which were presented in a similar fashion to Kahoot or Quizzes.

Not only did participants have to know the answer but speed of delivery was all important as they had seconds to respond in order to get their answer in first. This raised the pace and stakes of the quiz considerably.



In total there were 92 participants from 20 schools in the Western Cape. We are extremely proud of all 5 Herschel students and we would like to commend them on the time and effort they invested in the process.

They were individually placed as follows: Jorja was placed 26th; Romy was placed 35th; Ruby 37th and Nina 50th.

Specific congratulations go to Kate Forrest who was placed 2nd in the competition. Well done, Kate! An incredible accomplishment! Her prize for second place included vouchers to the value of R2000 and a tablet. Kate will also be part of a ceremony next week congratulating the top 10 learners of the quiz. Well done to you all!

Sports Round Up

Interhouse netball results

This was played last Thursday, and the results were as follows:

4th Carter

3rd Rolt

2nd Jagger

1st Merriman



HOCKEY

9 hockey matches against Rustenburg were played last Friday. Congratulations to all teams on some excellent hockey and good results:

8 of our teams won. A special mention must go to our U/16D team who won 7-0.

Hockey Matches last week

U/16A played Springfield 1st team and won 4 – 0.

U/16B played Springfield U/16A team and won 7 – 0.

U/14A played Springfield U/14A and lost 2 – 4.

U/14B played Springfield U/14B and won 2-0.

We have 7 teams playing against St Cyprians on Friday, 10 September, in the last fixtures of the season.

Western Province Hockey trials were completed last week, and the names of the teams/squads have been announced.

Congratulations to the following girls:

U/14 - a squad of 32 players was selected:

Aasiyah Bailey, Kirsten Böttger, Kelly Cadiz, Samantha Flint, Hannah Henderson

WP U/16A:

Mia Andrew, Mbali Antony, Emma Clarke, Alexa Knott, Leya Patel

WP U/16B:

Amy Gordon, Zara-Leigh Oliphant

Non-Travelling Reserves:

Cate Lea, Emily van Heerden

WP U/18A:

Frances Bolton, Jodie Collins, Olivia Dearnaley, Grace Goodwin, Emma Lea

WP U/18B:

Georgina Stewart, Nina Vermaak

Non-Travelling reserve:

Maya Fourie

SQUASH

Last Monday we played Rustenburg. It was a combined 2nd and 3rd team who played Rustenburg 1st team.

Herschel won 11/7.

Then, on Friday the 1st team played Bishops.

Herschel lost 9-11.

Two weeks ago, there was the Western Province Youth closed tournament. There were 8 entrants of which 6 were Herschel girls. This shows the strength of our squash at the moment.

The results considered all the matches that were played throughout the weekend. Congratulations to Jessica Brown who ended up in 1st position.

WP Squash Teams

Congratulations to the following girls who have been selected for Western Province teams:

U/19

Rebecca Glanvill, Jessica Brown, Caitlin Howie

U/16

Rachel Howie, Kirsten Stevens, Zoë Arenhold



We posed the following questions to our Senior students:

What does Music/Art/Drama add to my day?

What does it add to my education?

What does Music add to my day?

Music is my safe space away from the rush of the day. It is a very tranquil space where we learn and laugh. It feels more like home than anywhere else in the school for me.

Music acts as a break from the chaos in my day. Music allows me to break away from strictly academic subjects that have such strict structure and strenuous requirements.

Music is by far one of my most relaxed and fun subjects, and the small class really bonds over the years and creates a little family. Music allows me to think in a different way and provides an opportunity to be creative each day.

Music is an essential subject! It is necessary in my day. I see it as the subject that stands out from the rest because of all of the different aspects of it. There is much to enjoy such as aural and practical which are my personal favourites.

What does Music add to my education?

You learn how to further your understanding of music in general through the theory, aural and history of music that is taught. The class has a relaxed atmosphere and isn't linear or pressured. It is a creative, mathematical and historical subject!

I find the subject very interesting. The many components the subject is made of are all worthwhile skills to learn. The subject also brings me great joy as I learn to create music. I particularly enjoy the history of music, learning about the different eras and musical techniques. It has taught me to be adaptable and has developed the way I think.

Music is a subject that allows me to be creative and academic at the same time as it makes use of so many different ways of thinking.

I am passionate about music and would like to do it every day. I think that subject music offers enrichment that one cannot get from only playing an instrument (i.e. through harmony and GMK). Music plays a big role in my education, whether that be through learning about composers from bygone eras or composing my own pieces, I always learn something new that will be applicable to many parts of my life.

What does Art add to my day?

When I walk into the art class, I feel a sense of relief. During the day I'm not able to take a moment for myself, to stop and think about anything other than sin and cos ratios or how atoms bond. During practical lessons my mindset shifts completely, and I can recompose my thoughts and feelings and even channel them into what I am creating. Often, when I'm painting, I am also dancing and moving my body, breaking the behind-the-desk rhythm. Art is so beneficial to me during the day because it allows me to release, in a way that no other subject does.

It allows me to break away from stereotypes. It allows me to contemplate the problem, to raise questions rather than rush to a solution. When I am working on a practical project, I am working from a blank start and creating something of my own. I am not expected to deliver a message in a manner that others want to hear – instead, I am encouraged to find my own voice, my own responses.

It is my voice and my hands that are at work in the art room. I can get my hands dirty if I want to, I can keep them clean if I prefer. I can use my visual voice loudly or I can choose to fill it with nuance and gentleness.

During the school day, art gives me a break from my subjects. It gives me a time to relax and gives me time to focus on something I truly love. Herschel as a whole is amazing but without art I don't think I would love it as much. Representing Herschel as an art student makes me so grateful.

Having art during the school day allows you to unwind from any other subjects that may have caused stress while expressing your emotions onto your painting. It allows for a space where you do not need to feel judged or under pressure but rather is a place where you can be alone in your own thoughts.

It is okay for there to be different intentions behind one's choices in the art room. I can make decisions for myself and am not bound to one expectation. This freedom brings excitement into my learning as with my choices come risks and responsibilities.

What does Art add to my education?

In stark contrast to the safety of the quadratic formula and rote learnt plural possessive rules, in an Art lesson, I have no choice but to be brave, personal and passionate. I suppose this is because vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation. Fear is good. Like insecurity, fear is an indicator. Fear tells us what we have to do. Amid History tests and Mathematics tutorials, I wonder why I bother spending time on painting, pastels and oils? Yet, I remind myself how images are as important as numbers. Indeed - can calculus move one to tears? Can plural possessives express explosive feelings? Good art resonates with and challenges the viewer, not only the creator. The medium doesn't matter. The intent does.

Whether we're doing theory or practical, I know that I'm going to be using my mind in a different way. Art allows me to stretch my mind and think unconventionally. The thinking process taught in VCS develops an analytical approach to situations where you are able to objectively make comparisons and identify specific details. This skill is seen to be exceptionally important in many other aspects of my schooling career and in life too. Art practicals are probably my favourite form of assessment because they really test your creative ability. Increasingly, possible employers are searching for applicants who are able to think with a different mindset and take a creative approach to finding solutions. Art adds so much not only to schooling education, but even to my schooling experience and has a positive impact on my outlook of life.

It adds the ability to make decisions and see them through. I will be able to brainstorm, probe and analyse. These are all crucial aspects of critical thinking. In the current world creative critical thinkers are needed and Art is a subject that will help me to become that person. Art has also taught me about managing my time and energy.

I understand from taking Art that when I use my visual voice, I can have an impact on other people. So it has taught me to be responsible about what I choose to say and how I choose to say it. Even though we do not do much collaborative work in the Art room, we are very aware of the impact that we have on the people around us.

What does Drama add to my day?

Drama is a lesson that I look forward to everyday and a place that I always feel comfortable. There is not a lesson where I haven't laughed or felt unable to express myself truthfully.

Drama adds creativity and freedom to my day. It is the subject that allows me to learn on my terms, so I enjoy more than most.

Drama allows me to reflect and understand my emotions as well as other people's as we are taught to analyse and understand others in drama. It is my safe space in my day.

Drama is the time in my day where I can feel at home and be myself. When I am having a bad day, I always look forward to drama as it brings a smile to my face. It is a place where I can be myself and express myself without fear of judgement, and my class is like a little family.

Drama is definitely my favourite lesson of the day as I never know what to expect which makes me excited to attend every day. Drama never puts any pressure on me to perform in a certain way, which is often when the best work is produced and what I love about doing it every day.

Drama is known to be a happy and positive space. It is almost a safe space, where one can remove their mask and be their authentic and true selves. It is ironic because normally drama is known for acting but this is a space where you can feel comfortable in your own skin. There is no right or wrong answer, drama is a non-judgmental space which allows you to express yourself and be comfortable with who you are.

Drama is a creative space where I feel the freedom to express myself through performances and discussions. I feel close to every one of my classmates and look forward to learning more and more each day.

What does Drama add to my education?

Drama adds something fun and different to my education - it gives me a practical side to my learning and enables me to grow as a person. Without drama school would be too written, but Drama gives me the education of being who I am and who I want to be.

Through education, drama adds authenticity. I can learn what I am capable of producing on my own through drama. I think that is what every subject should try to achieve.

Drama is the one class that I look forward to in my day, because it is the one class where my mind is at ease. It has taught me skills like analysing and interpreting things differently and also self-confidence.

Drama is a helpful subject to learn the art of communication and teamwork. There is no other subject where I feel like I can truly connect with other people and understand their thoughts and decisions. It is definitely a very valuable life lesson that I can adapt to personal relationships, and which helps me form new ones.

Drama teaches me continuation, as if you don't work throughout the term, you will regret it come test week. It teaches us how to act, history of theatre, South African theatre and how to act on video. It also teaches us to come out of our shells and be fearless.

Drama is the only lesson where one can freely express oneself. In this space, we partake in controversial conversations where we learn from each other, allowing students to critically assess how the world is constantly changing and how certain prominent themes are being dealt with in performance.

Drama is a lesson that I have always appreciated. Not only has drama enabled me to get a better understanding of who I am as a person, but I have learned some extremely helpful tools that I can use in my everyday life.