



WOODRIDGE PREPARATORY

more than a school...an experience



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Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to
the soul and healing to the bones
Proverbs 16:24



FROM THE HEADMASTER

Despite another rain-interrupted week and a winter season that is now well underway, our campus continues to buzz with energy. Whether it has been sporting fixtures, Slipper Day fun, outdoor learning opportunities, or simply the daily rhythm of school life, I am continually struck by the joy, resilience, and enthusiasm of our children and staff. The weather may occasionally alter our plans, but it never dampens the spirit of our community.

As we move through a particularly busy term, it is worth pausing to reflect on the role each of us plays in shaping the environment around our children. Educational author Haim Ginott famously wrote that teachers create the "weather" in the classroom. I would suggest that, as a school community, we all help create the "water" in which our children swim each day. The words we choose, the example we set, the way we speak about others, and the kindness we show all contribute to the culture our children experience and ultimately learn from.

In this edition, Mr Ndumiso Mtshali explores the important themes of kindness, intentionality, and the impact that meanness and unkind behaviour can have on individuals and communities. His editorial serves as a timely reminder that creating a caring and compassionate culture is not the responsibility of a few, but the privilege and responsibility of us all.

YOURS SINCERELY

Clifford Reed



FROM THE DEPUTY HEADMASTER

KINDNESS IS A CHOICE

A group of children is standing together on Bobart. This is nothing unusual. There is laughter, running around, the Grade 5s are playing soccer (rather enthusiastically), Grade 6s are sitting and giggling, and the familiar noise of a busy school day continues around the campus. It is just another normal day.

One child is not really part of the group. Not in an obvious way. They are just slightly outside the circle. A comment is made. Then another. A few children laugh. Someone smiles a little too long. The child responds, but the moment has already shifted against them, Ma'am or Sir is too far away, tending to other children. Before long, the group moves on. The child walks away as if nothing happened. Many children learn to do exactly that when they are not sure they can say how they feel. What is unsettling about this scene is not that it happens. It is how often it happens. We often think of kindness as something a child either has or does not have. *But kindness is not a personality trait. It is a choice.*

It is found in the small moments of everyday life. It is choosing not to say something hurtful. It is including someone when it would be easier not to. It is deciding not to laugh at a joke made at someone else's expense. It is choosing not to pass on a message, rumour, or image that could hurt someone else. Most acts of kindness are small. That is why they are so easy to miss. The same is true of bullying.

When we hear the word "bullying", we often think of obvious acts of cruelty. In reality, bullying is often much quieter. It can be exclusion that becomes a habit. It can be jokes that stop being funny for the person on the receiving end.

It can be a repeated behaviour that slowly becomes accepted as normal. Most hurtful situations in schools are not created by one big moment. They happen because smaller moments are allowed to continue.

This is where the bystander comes in. Many people think that bystanders are neutral. They are simply watching, not taking part. But group dynamics do not really work that way. *Silence sends a message. Laughter sends a message. Looking away sends a message.*

Often, what happens next is more important than the original comment or action. A moment can quickly fade away, or it can grow into something much more harmful. The difference is often the response of the people around it, right then and there. This can be difficult for children.

Every child wants to *belong*. Sometimes they know something is wrong, but they also know that speaking up may come with a social cost. They may worry about being laughed at, excluded, or becoming the next target themselves.

That is why knowing what is right is only part of the challenge. Children also need encouragement, support, and practice in doing what is right. Kindness is not simply being a "nice person". It is making good choices when there is pressure not to. Sometimes it looks like refusing to join in. Sometimes it means changing the subject. Sometimes it means inviting someone into a game or conversation. Sometimes it means standing beside someone who is having a difficult day. These actions are often quiet and unnoticed. *A child chooses not to pass on a message. A child sits next to someone alone. A child refuses to laugh. A child speaks up.*

Small choices. Big impact. The same can be said for integrity. Integrity is simply doing what is right, even when it is easier not to. In schools, integrity rarely looks dramatic. It looks like walking away from behaviour that feels wrong. It looks like telling a trusted adult when something has gone too far. It looks like refusing to take part when someone else is being targeted.

These actions may not earn applause. Often, nobody notices them at all. But they matter. Children are always watching the adults around them. They notice what we challenge, what we ignore, and what we allow. When parents and teachers consistently model respect, speak kindly about others, and respond to unkind behaviour in calm and clear ways, children learn an important lesson:

Kindness is not optional. Not because it is written on a poster or printed in a handbook, but because it is part of who we are, the Woodridge community. The strength of Woodridge is not measured by the absence of unkind moments. Every community outside of us will have them. The real measure is what happens next.

Do we allow those moments to grow, or do we interrupt them?

Most of the time, that interruption is not dramatic. It is simply a child making a choice. A choice not to laugh. A choice not to join in. A choice to do the right thing. And more often than we realise, that choice changes everything.

YOURS SINCERELY

Ndumiso Mtshali

COMPASSIONATE CARLOS



DERBY

vs.

PORT ALFRED

Every move is a challenge. Every second is an experience...



We spent another wonderful Saturday on our beautiful campus, hosting Port Alfred High School and the United Through Sport Foundation for hockey, rugby, and netball fixtures against our Prep pupils.

The day was made even more special by our Grade 1 and 2 pupils joining us for internal tag rugby and netball.

YOURS SINCERELY

Anda Sakube



Access the photographs here:
[FLICK.KR](https://www.flickr.com/photos/woodridgeprep/)





DERBY *highlights*



focussed





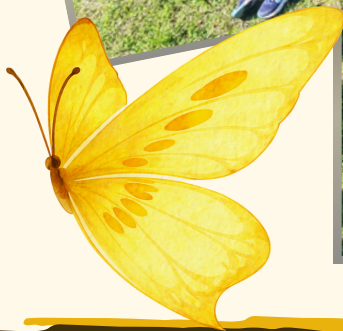
The Grade 1 pupils had an amazing lesson outdoors. They explored their 5 senses!

OUR FIVE SENSES

At Woodridge Preparatory School, some of the most meaningful learning happens beyond the classroom walls. Our outdoor lesson on the five senses was filled with wonder, laughter, and the simple joy of discovery as our Grade 1 learners explored the world around them through sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste.

From listening to the rustling trees and birdsong to feeling different textures beneath their fingertips, every moment became an opportunity for connection, curiosity, and growth.

These are the experiences that create lasting memories, the small moments where confidence grows, friendships deepen, and children learn to see the beauty in the world around them.



Partnering with Parents in a Digital Age

The digital world isn't waiting. Equip yourself with the knowledge to guide your child with confidence.

Join us for "Young Brains in a Digital World" as we explore the academic, social, and emotional impact of technology on today's children and discover practical strategies to support healthy digital habits.

YOUNG BRAINS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Thursday 25 June
15h30-16:30



RESCHEDULED!

*Navigating the academic, social, and emotional impacts of
hyper-connected childhoods.*

Presented by Jenna Louw and Yolanda van der Westhuizen

RSVP

[CLICK HERE TO RSVP TO THE DIGITAL WORKSHOP](#)



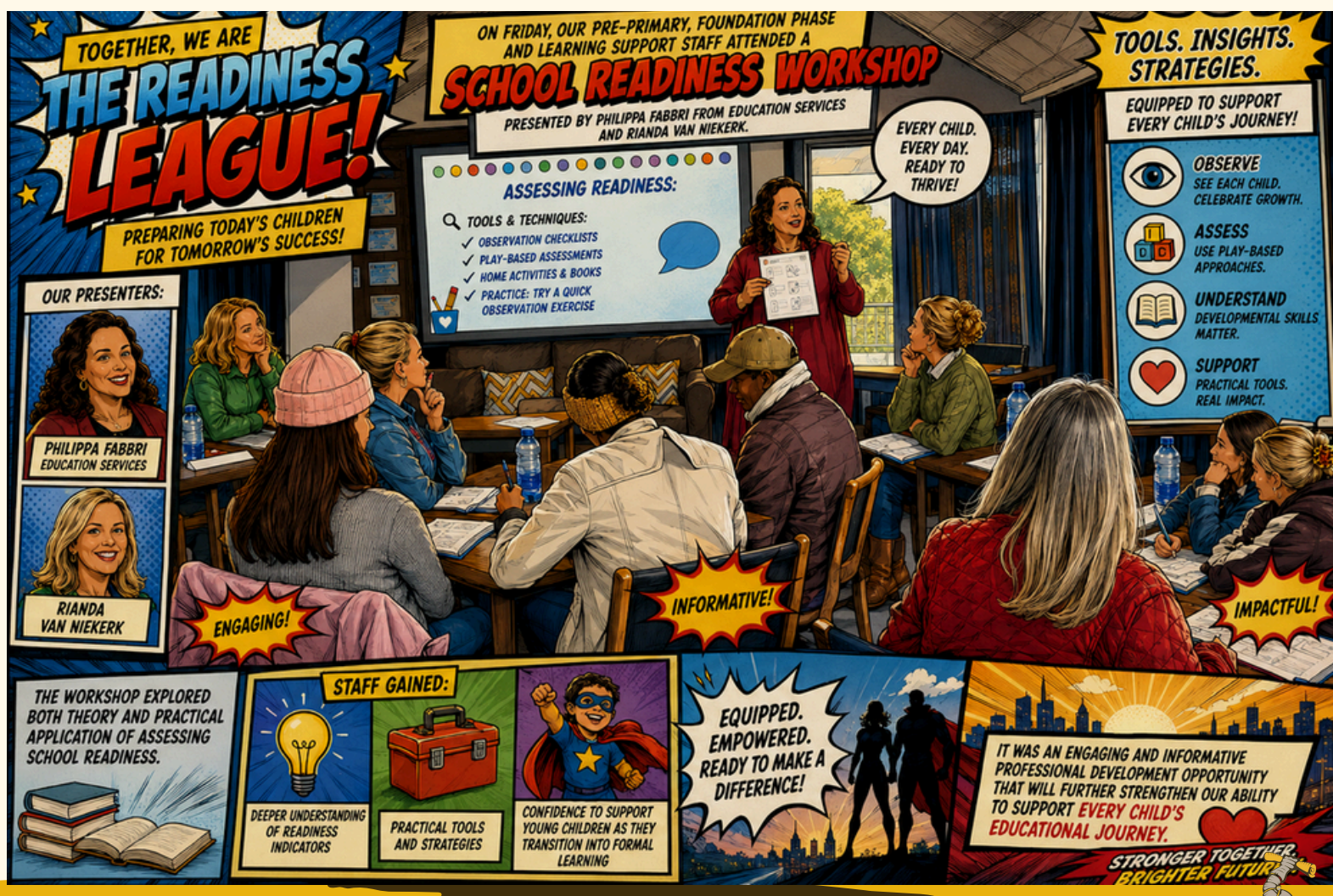
SCHOOL READINESS WORKSHOP



Our Pre-Primary, Foundation Phase and Learning Support staff attended a School Readiness Workshop presented by Philippa Fabbri from Education Services and Rianda van Niekerk.

The workshop explored both the theory and practical application of assessing school readiness, providing valuable insights into the developmental skills children need to thrive in the classroom.

Staff gained a deeper understanding of readiness indicators and were equipped with practical tools and strategies to support young children as they transition into formal learning. It was an engaging and informative professional development opportunity that will further strengthen our ability to support every child's educational journey.



GRADE 7 EMS WOODRIDGE PREPARATORY



PROFIT
R196 100

BONANGO TRADERS

Our Grade 7 pupils recently participated in an engaging business workshop presented by the Johannesburg School of Finance.

Through an interactive trading game, they applied their EMS and financial literacy knowledge in a practical and enjoyable way while preparing for their upcoming examinations.



These young entrepreneurs refused to let anyone tell them otherwise, delivering an incredible performance in the annual Grade 7–9 Entrepreneurship Challenge. 📁

Not only did they secure TWO spots on the National Leaderboard, but they also came just R14 short of breaking the national record!

An outstanding achievement filled with determination, teamwork, and entrepreneurial excellence. The future of business is certainly bright at Woodridge!



Citrus Farm Visit



Our visit to Whyte Citrus Farm was truly magical. What we had been learning in class came to life as pupils experienced citrus farming firsthand—from how oranges are grown and harvested to their journey from farm to table. Every moment was filled with curiosity, excitement, and discovery.

The outing gave our pupils a chance to connect learning to real-life experiences, ask thoughtful questions and appreciate the effort behind agriculture. Watching their wonder as they explored, was really special.

Thank you to the Whyte Citrus Farm team for an unforgettable day that inspired and delighted our pupils.
Grade 4 Teachers



STULTING MUSIC *FESTIVAL*

Congratulations to the following pupils on their outstanding performances at the Stulting Music Festival, where they were awarded Gold certificates while competing against learners from more than 40 schools and music studios:

~Mikayla Moller
~Ariya Pillay
~Ava du Preez
~Kira Koekemoer
~Ella Stutterheim
~Ruby Stutterheim



A wonderful achievement—well done to all participants for their dedication and outstanding musical excellence. Keep flying the Woodridge flag high and continue to shine with pride in all your performances.

**MIKAYLA MOLLER****ARIYA PILLAY****AVA DU PREEZ****KIRA KOEKEMOER****RUBY STUTTERHEIM****ELLA STUTTERHEIM**