

Newsletter 1/2021

27 January 2021

Dear Parents



A happy new year to you all! Welcome back into the fold of our happy family, and to those families who have just joined us, we hope you feel very welcome. It is our custom to keep you informed about school activities during the year by means of newsletters every second Tuesday. These letters are emailed to you, and we suggest that you file these letters so that you can refer to them whenever you wish to refresh your memory about some matters. On the 'other' Tuesday our deputy, Shereen Stadler, will send you a copy of Snapshot, our one pager celebrating our children's successes in and around school life.

I hope that your family hasn't been affected too badly by Covid during the holidays. Although none of my family have died, at some points I heard of at least one person I knew dying every day. The virus infections certainly have got worse while school wasn't open – far more PNPS families and staff have had the virus than before school closure in 2020. Very sad news is that Dimmitri Giannakis, dad of Joshua in grade 5 and guitar teacher at our school for over 15 years, died of Covid complications last week. Our condolences go to Josh, Jana his wife, and all those pupils who were taught by Dimmitri over the years. He has left a huge hole in our community.

During the holiday I made sure to keep in touch with everybody who could advise the school with the latest scientific and medical information so that our procedures could still be world class. This year we will continue to be advised properly and I know some families weren't happy with some of the procedures we had in 2020, like not having every child at school every day, but management will continue to take advice and act on behalf of the safety of every community member of PNPS. This means that we will not survey parents when changes need to be made; sometimes an executive decision needs to be made, even if it doesn't suit everybody.

Having said that, THANK YOU so much to the 208 families who responded to our survey of 2020! The results will be sent out with this newsletter, so please take time to analyse them: overwhelmingly the families at PNPS felt that the year went well under the circumstances. On the whole, the families at the school felt supported, their children learnt a huge amount and the school felt like a safe place to be! Thank you!

This year's theme is ROCK SOLID! I'm not sure when I will be able to present this as an assembly to the children, but on Monday the staff met and we discussed the fact at PNPS is 'rock solid' – that after 72 years of teaching and supporting families, the school was still able to do so with a 'rock solid' curriculum, 'rock solid' staff and a 'rock solid' financial position.

Staff

Aftercare welcomes a new second in command: Kaylee Kensley!

Term programme

We have been working on a term programme, but the change in the starting date for school has brought about too many changes. The programme is being reviewed again and will be sent once the law is published. Each event we have planned will be subject to rigorous thought and research before it is held, to ensure safety procedures are all in place.

Grade Meetings next week

As in previous years, every grade will have an early evening meeting for parents so that you can meet the teachers, meet other parents and receive specific information regarding the particular grade that your child is in. These meetings will be held online between 17:30 and 19:00:

Grade 7 & 4	Monday 1 February
Grade 1, 2 & 3	Tuesday 2 February
Grade 5 & 6	Wednesday 3 February

School Times for 2021

Term 1

All grades will start school at 8:30 and finish at 14:00, except for the days that grade 3 – 7 pupils stay for an extra hour of sport. These days are:

Monday grade 6 and 7

Tuesday grade 4 and 5

Wednesday grade 3

Grade 1 and 2 sport will be done before they leave school at 14:00.

Grade R will finish at 13:30. There will be no early closing in the first week of this term.

Remember too that we have agreed that grade 1 and 7 will attend school daily this term, with grade 3 – 6, and Red Roots attending 4 days in 5.

Days off are:

Monday grade 4

Tuesday grade 3

Wednesday grade 6

Thursday grade 2

Friday Red Roots and grade 5

School drop offs and collections:

The drive through plan we created last year worked exceptionally well so this will continue this term. Because more children will attend school daily, we have had to curtail the arrival times to still be able to process the children safely. This means that each grade will have a quarter of an hour in each to be dropped off at school: either from 8:00 – 8:15 or from 8:15 – 8:30. Please assist us with this – I know it is inconvenient, but safety is our priority.

8:00 – 8:15 – Grade 2s and Grade 7s – Richmond Avenue Carpark

8:15 – 8:30 – Grade 1s and Grade 3s – Richmond Avenue Carpark

8:00 – 8:30 – Grade 4s, 5s & 6s – Parkchester Avenue – Quad

When you collect work for your children tomorrow, you will find a laminated page with your child's name and a scan code. Please take that and attach it to the bottom right-hand corner of the windscreen of the car you will use to transport your children to school. When you arrive to drop your child, the staff will scan that code, get access immediately into the screening app and therefore the process will be much faster.

Possible School Times for Term 2 - 4

Grade 1	Monday	07:50 - 10:25	10:45 – 12:45	13:10 – 14:15
	Tuesday to Thursday	07:50 – 10:25	10:45 - 12:45	
Grade 2	Monday, Wed & Thurs	07:50 – 10:25	10:45 – 12:45	
	Tuesday	07:50 – 10:25	10:45 – 12:45	13:10 – 14:15
Grade 3	Monday to Thursday	07:50 - 10:25	10:45 - 13:15	13:15– 13:40
Grade 1,2 & 3	Friday	07:50 - 10:25	10:45 – 13:15	
Grade 4 – 7	Monday to Thursday	07:50 - 10:25	10:45 – 12:45	13:10 – 14:45
	Friday	07:50 - 10:25	10:45 - 13:15	

1. Please ensure that pupils arrive at school punctually, before 7:50. The first lesson starts at 7:55 - latecomers miss out on valuable school time and also cause disruption for other children in the class. Regular latecomers will be closely monitored and be expected to make up the time they lose.
2. It is also essential that pupils leave school promptly other than when they are involved in extramural activities. Staff cannot be held responsible for the safety of the children after the end of the school day and we, therefore, request that children leave the school within half an hour after the final bell or within half an hour of their extramurals finishing.

Releasing pupils early from school

Should your child need to leave school before the end of the official school day, please adhere to the following procedure:

- The parent/legal guardian must make the request in writing and indicate clearly the reason for the early release from school, the name of the person who will be collecting your child and the time at which your child will be collected.
- If you have authorised someone else to collect your child, that person will have to produce proof of identity.
- Children should be collected and signed out at the reception office.
- If the staff have any doubt about the identity of the person collecting your child, we will reserve the right to contact you prior to releasing the child.
- We have planned our timetable around the fact that some pupils need to attend mosque on Fridays. Parents of children needing to leave early on a Friday for mosque this year need to write a letter of request to this effect and give it to Erica in the front office. The children may only be released at 12h45 and have to be collected and signed out at the reception office.

When collecting your child early, please allow sufficient time to sign the register in the reception office. Children are not allowed to leave the school and go out to the car because they know that you're coming to collect them.

Aftercare

Our aftercare is fully booked but should you like to be on our waiting list, please email Toni at aftercare@pnps.co.za. Morning care has been discontinued for this year as we need all staff on the afternoon shift.

Tuck Shop – Snax Cafe

The tuckshop will be run by a mom at the school, Carina Steenkamp. You will be able to pre-order lunches and snacks for your children. She can be contacted on the following email address: orderyoursnax@yahoo.com. Carina will also be using Karri. Karri has assured us that all the

information we provide them with will be treated confidentially. To enable the use of Karri for the tuckshop, we will give them the following details:

- your child's name and grade
- the names of both parents
- the email addresses and cell phone numbers of both parents

Sick Pupils

Please do not send your child to school if they are sick in any way. There are so many different symptoms of COVID that any indication of being unwell could be related. Last year our parents were amazing in that they took their children out of school and off to the doctor immediately. Please continue to do so.

Usual Sick Pupil procedure

In the event of a child being unwell during school hours, the class teacher will take the pupil to the office and a decision will be made as to whether the parent should be contacted immediately or whether a rest in the sick room will suffice. Children are not permitted to telephone their parents, to ask to be fetched from school. The reason for this is that we often find that children, for one reason or another, are not feeling well but recover quite quickly after a rest. We would ask for your co-operation in this respect, with our assurance that the child's welfare is of prime concern. **Please ensure that we are kept up to date with contact numbers for the family, including cell phone numbers, in case of emergency. Please include the name and telephone number of another adult who we could contact should you be unavailable.** Parents can update their details on the Edana Parent Portal. Should you have any problems with the parent portal, you can contact Martin Adamson on it@pnps.co.za.



Uniforms

1. A reminder that the uniform shop is available online and will not be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the moment for safety reasons.
2. The uniform shop will be open for a final day before school starts on Friday, 12 February from 09h00 until 12h00.
3. All pupils are expected to wear uniform daily this term, with their hair tied back or clipped out of their faces. No jewellery may be worn with uniform.
4. Because of the necessity to save water, children may come to school wearing their sports kit or school uniform, as long as they adhere to one or the other.
5. We would like to insist that pupils wear hats, sun visors or caps whilst out in the hot sun and these are available from school. Don't forget the block out! Maroon sun visors, school caps and navy cricket hats are available at R55,00, R70 and R115,00 respectively, from the uniform shop.
6. Please spend some time checking the masks your children wear to school – some will need to be replaced because they are worn and some will need the elastic tightening for example.
7. Evening functions: (if these apply later this year) Please ensure that your children wear full school uniform to all evening functions unless told not to do so.

Lynn Hendricks will continue running the school uniform shop this year. If you need to contact her, please email uniform@pnps.co.za.

Lost Property

Lost property is a major problem and we have difficulty storing it. Finding the owners when articles are not marked is time consuming and at times nigh impossible. Items are sorted from the box in the admin passage and marked items are returned to the relevant child. ***Please ensure that all items are clearly marked with first and last names.*** Unmarked articles will be stored separately and

sold for school funds. We keep “precious” lost property (such as purses and watches) in the safe. Please send your child to the office to enquire about lost property like this.

Proposed School Calendar

Duration	No. of weeks	No. of days	No. of public holidays	Actual no. of school days
(25 Jan) (01) 15 February – 23 April	10(12)(13)	50(60)(65)	3	47 (57)(62)
03 May – 09 July	10	50	1	49
26 July – 01 October	10	50	2	48
11 October – 15 (17) December	10	48 (49)	00	48(49)
Total	40(42)(43)	198 (209)(214)	6	192 (203)(208)



Sport

No competitive sport will happen this term and for the foreseeable future except the Interhouse Gala and Interschools Gala. We may not let spectators attend, and both will be held during the morning. All COVID procedures will be adhered to during these events.

Computer policy

All new pupils will receive a computer policy with login details at their first computer lesson this year. Please ensure that after discussing the details with your child, it is signed and returned to Martin Adamson.

School fees

1. For the benefit of new parents to the school, PNPS has a ‘special deal’ for parents every year. If the annual school fee is paid in full before the end of February, the fee is discounted. So, if you wish to save yourself R1 045 per child, pay in full by Friday, 26 February.
2. You have three options for payment – the discounted fee payable before the end of February, 10 monthly payments or 11 monthly payments by debit order. The 10- month option is the one recommended if you aren’t paying your fees in advance – if you don’t have to pay school fees in November, November’s money can be used for your payment of stationery for the following year. All these payments are payable from January to the end of November.
3. Please note that existing debit orders will be automatically adjusted to accommodate the 2021 fees. Should you have an existing debit order and you are now also need to pay aftercare, music or creative and talented payments, please email Crystal at bursar@pnps.co.za to make the necessary adjustment to your debit order or for any school fee queries.
4. The school governing body has decided that payments should be made via debit order. Cash has become dangerous and it costs the school to deposit cash. If you need to pay large amounts of cash, please consider taking it to the bank and depositing it directly into the school’s account. In the case of direct transfers, please let us have confirmation of these transactions to ensure that they are credited correctly. Our bank is Nedbank, Pinelands – current account number 1047018306, branch code 104709.

5. The fee structure for 2021 is as follows:

R26 900 per pupil in Grade R of which R2 300 has already been paid. The monthly payments will be R2 240 from January to October and R2 200 in November.

R22 545 per pupil in Grade 1. The monthly payments will be R2 050 from January to October and R2 045 in November.

R21 245 per pupil in Grade 2-3. The monthly payment will be R1 935 from January to October and R1 895 in November.

R21 935 per pupil in Grade 4. The monthly payments will be R1 995 from January to October and R1 985 in November.

R21 820 per pupil in Grade 5 and 6. The monthly payments will be R1 985 from January to October and R1 970 in November.

R25 516 per pupil in Grade 7. The monthly payments will be R2 320 from January to October and R2 316 in November.

If you settle in full before 28 February 2020, an 'early bird' discount of R1 045 will apply.

This fee does not include stationery, voluntary camps or tours.

Pupil Diaries

Children in Grades 3 – 7 have been given diaries which they will be using throughout this year. In the diary you will find a copy of our Code of Conduct. After reading this, please sign and remove the confirmation form and send it back to the class teacher. Grade 1 and 2 parents will receive information via email.

Lockers

As a result of congestion around lockers, we will not allow the use of these in the first term. We will revisit this towards the end of term 1.

Birthday Special

To celebrate your child's birthday, he/she will be allowed to attend school wearing civvies on their birthday, or the day closest to that day should their birthday be a holiday or weekend. If pupils celebrate birthdays during the holidays, they can choose to wear civvies during the week before or after the holiday, but not on the first day of term or final day. Please ensure that when your children wear civvies to school, you are happy with the clothing they wear. Please don't allow revealing clothing to be worn; it's not appropriate at school.



Applications 2022

We have already received applications for 2022 but the WCED online system will also have to be completed. Red Roots is now the entry point for Pinelands North which means that Red Roots' children will not have to re-apply to our school. This also means however that if your child attends another preschool in Pinelands, they will not be guaranteed a place in grade 1.

A reminder that school families are not automatically accepted at Pinelands North – the more popular the school gets, the harder it gets to enter the school, even if families reside in Pinelands! Applications will open on 26 February and close on 26 March 2020.

Yearbook/School magazine 2020

What an outstanding advertisement for the school! As principal of this amazing place, last years' yearbook makes me very proud. If you didn't get your copy last year, a few precious copies are available at R195 from the finance office.

Music

Any children who would like to start with music lessons this year, should email Thomas de Bruin at music@pnps.co.za for an application form. Please visit our website or contact Thomas too if you need to know what musical options your children have at PNPS.

Early Act

Early Act is beginning the year by raising funds for the SPCA. In each classroom, and at reception, are donation tins. Please bring donations to school - any amount will make a huge difference to the lives of the animals. Early Act is also looking for ice-cream tubs (with lids) and egg cartons. These can be brought to Megan Culligan in 1C.

Recycling

At the moment the school's recycling programme is on hold due to COVID regulations.

Visitors to the school

1. No visitors are allowed in the school building currently. Should you need to drop something off at school, please call Erica in advance and she will make arrangements for this to happen.
2. After school starts each day the gates and doors at the back of the school are locked, and the only way to enter the school is through the front 'official' entrance. Pupils who arrive at school late will also need to come in the front gate.
3. We ask that you use only the front gate during school hours.

MySchool Programme

Remember to use your card at stores advertised – the school gets a cut of all you purchase and swipe with your card. If you don't have a card, or have had one in the name of another school, contact Erica for forms to get you registered with us. If there is a parent willing to assist with our MySchool Programme please contact Erica in this regard, too.

Yours sincerely



ANN MORTON
Principal