



Hermannsburg Quarterly

Thinking independently since 1856

From the Principal's Desk...

Thinking Independently – a call to anarchy?

In recent months the term 'fake news' has been circulating – news that has been made up by individuals or groups in order to cause sensation, to misinform or just so that the creators could sit back and watch the fireworks. Major news networks and even social media sites have vowed to do their best to identify and eliminate fake news – but it's not easy.

When 'Wikipedia' first started, pretty much anyone could contribute anything – and they very soon discovered that, in order to gain any credibility, there had to be some way of vetting the information being contributed; peer reviewing is now the norm to eliminate bogus and misleading information and to avoid 'wikialities'.

The new president of the United States of America is probably largely responsible for the trending term 'alternative truth', used to indicate his version of reality as opposed to, well, Reality.

Advertising companies are 'legitimate truth-benders' and have been around for generations, convincing us we desperately need something right now that we have been quite happy to do without for years. Some years ago, we were told that a well-known brand of margarine was the only one that was really healthy because it contained 0% cholesterol (and cholesterol is really bad for you). The truth: no margarine contains cholesterol, which is manufactured by our bodies because without it we would die – ask your doctor.

The sheer amount of information available to us in this day and age is staggering. Next time you're feeling poorly, just look up your symptoms online and wonder at the variety of weird and deadly diseases you might be suffering from, for example. Our children are growing up with information overload – never before have humans been bombarded with so many facts per minute as they are subjected to today.

And the overriding question is (or it should be): what is really real? What is verifiable, trustworthy information, and what is misleading trash that can lead us to grief?

And therein lies the crux of the matter: the people who exposed the fake news phenomenon did not blindly accept what they were fed. They questioned, they noticed anomalies, they applied their minds, they sought alternative views ... *they thought independently* and saw through the rubbish to the truth, even if that



Our prefects enjoyed a productive weekend at the Harburg Retreat Centre.

was just to realise that they weren't hearing the truth.

Thinking independently means thinking critically, *for yourself*, and not letting someone else do your thinking for you. It means that, when someone says 'that can't be done' you'd rather find out for yourself. The industrial revolution, Louis Pasteur's 'discovery' of vaccinations, Karl Benz's invention of the internal combustion engine, the Wright brother's repeated and eventually successful flying experiments, are all examples of 'independent thinking'. Martin Luther did not challenge the catholic church because of conformist thinking, but because he thought independently – and this year we celebrate 500 years of the Reformation!

Our children will work at jobs we haven't even got names for today, experience things we haven't yet imagined. We cannot prepare them for this future by only teaching them yesterday's facts – we need to teach them *how* to think, *for themselves*. Here at Hermannsburg we recognised this a long, long time ago (as the history of the school attests), and so we decided to adopt the slogan 'thinking independently since 1856' several years ago.

The Independent Examinations Board (IEB) has also long recognised this, and the syllabi for its new Primary School Initiative will be geared towards problem-solving and critical thinking – the High School syllabi already are, but the focus will be renewed whenever the syllabi are revised. The success of IEB matriculants at universities and in postgraduate research bears testimony to the wisdom of teaching independent thinking.

'Thinking independently' or 'independent thinking', does not give anyone permission to flout rules, ignore good manners or simply to do whatever they wish. Anyone who truly thinks independently, recognises that society needs rules by which we must all abide in order to live alongside each other, that good manners and respect for others oil the wheels of social interaction, and that anarchy leads to chaos that not only prevents progress but would regress society to a previous age.

So, encourage your children to think for themselves

DIARY

FEBRUARY	24 HS Open Day
MARCH	3 Mini-Olympiade
	10 HS Open Day
APRIL	17 Grade 8 Parents' day
	30 Fun Ride
MAY	20 Schulfest (starts 19 May)
	25 Ascension Day Service
JUNE	16 Kindergarten Open Day
JULY	23 High School Parents' day
AUGUST	5 Inter-house Athletics
SEPTEMBER	2 Umvoti Athletics
	8 Kindergarten Opa & Oma Tag
	21 School Play
	23 HMB Golf Day
OCTOBER	3 German Day
	7 Family Fun Day
	13 Grade 12 Awards
NOVEMBER	1 Reformation celebration
	18 Kindergarten Graduation
	25 Birding Big Day
	26 Church service w/ choirs
	30 Primary School Awards
DECEMBER	1 High School Awards

(i.e. independently), to be critical, to question and to seek answers. It can be hard, especially when they challenge our own beliefs and practices, but their world tomorrow will not be our world of today and they need to be equipped to face it, to innovate in it and to be successful in it.

New Faces



Day One: Our Grade 1s with their Zuckertüten.

The year started for our teachers with a two-day think-tank, during which the way forward for this year was discussed in detail, before the *Anreisetag* on Sunday, 15 January. It was good to see so many familiar faces and new faces at the AGM, and to see all the boarders returning, or joining us for the first time.

The Grade 8s enjoyed the induction programme, which was most intensive during the first week, and have settled in well in our High School – we are very pleased at the increased scholar numbers in our High School. Meanwhile, the new Grade 1s – now 17 in number – quickly got used to their new surroundings after receiving the traditional *Zuckertüten* on their arrival.

Several other new faces appeared in other Grades, and we welcome them all to our beautiful school.



Our Grade 8s about to set off for their bonding camp.

Explainers

Our school is affiliated to the Independent Schools' Association of Southern Africa (**ISASA**) and our matriculants write the Independent Examination Board (**IEB**) National Senior Certificate (**NSC**). As a member of ISASA, we will be inspected by the

Independent Quality Assurance Association (**IQAA**) in May this year – the process will start in March, and involves all aspects of the school, from governance to boarding and – of course – our teaching. Previously, we were awarded the 'Seal of Excellence' in 2012 by the German Federal Republic as an 'Excellent German School Abroad' after the intensive *Bundländer Inspektion* (**BLI**). As with the BLI, parents and scholars will be asked for their input by means of questionnaires, which will need to be completed online – more details will follow in due course.

The IEB also ensures quality in our school by monitoring our scholars' portfolios in Grade 12, and by involving us in their Primary School Initiative (**PSI**) – the IEB provides the Subject Assessment Guidelines (**SAG's**) which lay down the details of the syllabi according to which we teach. Furthermore, our teachers are required to belong to cluster groups with other schools, to exchange ideas and to moderate assessments, as well as having to attend national and regional subject conferences every year.

In order to assess whether we are maintaining the proper standards, our Grade 6 and 9 scholars write the International Benchmarking Tests (**IBT's**) – administered by the Australian Council for Educational Research – as well as participating in olympiads (Mathematics, English, Afrikaans and isiZulu immediately come to mind) and international essay competitions. In the Primary School, scholars last year wrote the Core Skills Tests (**CST's**), administered by the IEB.

Of course, being the 'Deutsche Schule' our Grade 10s write the *Deutsches Sprachdiplom* level 1 (**DSD I**), and our Grade 12s the level 2 (**DSD II**) – these are internationally recognised diploma qualifications, opening doors to study in Germany in particular, but also to job opportunities in South Africa.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deutsches_Sprachdiplom_Stufe_I_and_II)

Sports News

The new afternoon format has met with widespread approval, and we are glad that we have been able to provide our scholars with more choices and free time, while not detracting from the time needed for sports practices.



The victorious 1st XI after their match against Wembley College.

CRICKET – We are most pleased to be able to field three High School cricket teams this year! Our 1st XI have done well, winning against Greytown High School (by 9 wickets, Joel Pope taking 5) and Wembley College (by 8 wickets, Sven Klar 5/7 and 45 n.o.). The U15 team lost to Wembley College and Greytown High School (Mondli Gumede 17), but the U14 team won against Greytown High School (by 4 wickets, Jonathan Königkrämer 49) and Wartburg Kirchdorf

School (by 44 runs, FC Uys 33, Jonathan Königkrämer 53 n.o.). Our Primary School team lost to Wembley College, but was victorious against New Hanover Preparatory School (winning by 6 wickets).



Proud age-group champions, victors and victrixes.

SWIMMING – The Inter-house Gala saw 13 records tumble and we congratulate Jarmin Claassens (4) and Lila de Wet (3) in particular on their stellar performances. In the end, Reedback proved the better swimmers on the day, but Bushback put up a spirited display. The good sportsmanship and support shown by both teams was highly commended by spectators, and we look forward to a hotly-contested inter-house athletics meeting later this year.

TENNIS – Our boys won their fixture against Grace College (5–1 on points), but lost to Wembley College (2–4). Our girls are participating in the Smythe League, and also played against Treverton College (winning 4–2 on points). Congratulations to Awande Mbuli, who was selected to play in the Midlands Trials.



ATHLETICS – Julian Königkrämer took part in the Umzinyathi District Primary Schools' Athletics Trials in Dundee (1st in U11 long-jump, 2nd in 70m hurdles). He was then selected to the Umzinyathi Team, competing in the KZN Primary Schools' Athletics Championships in Chatsworth. Despite an injury, he came 5th in the 70m hurdles, but then had to retire due to his injury. Well done, Julian!



The HMB School Trust team, winners of the Corporate Challenge.

Hermannsburg in 1999, has grown year after year, to become a well-loved and popular series-event hosted by four different schools. The Deutsche Schule Hermannsburg would like to say a huge thank you to the organisers, Mr & Mrs Mike & Sonja Terry, along with the rest of the Mudman and Mudskipper committees for yet another superb Mudman; our title sponsors, aQuellé; the many other sponsors and prize-donors; Dr Manfred Kuhn and the rest of our Board of Trustees who support our school so loyally; as well as the many teachers, parents and scholars who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make the day run so smoothly. Don't forget to support the next Mudman in the series, hosted by Epworth at Albert Falls dam, Msinzi, on 5 March. To see the detailed results (including race times) of each event in the Hermannsburg Mudman, please visit our website at www.hermannsburg.co.za/mudman.

In Memoriam



Andrew Bam, husband of Teresa and father of Andrea, Jessica, Kristen and Dean (all enrolled at our school) will be dearly missed after his passing on 6 February. Andrew's support of our school and school activities and, most importantly, his own and so many HMB children, was unwavering. He will always be remembered as the man who knew how to get something done, or who knew

someone, who knew someone, who knew how to get it done. The Parents' Committee and the Schulfest planning committee will never be quite the same without him. No request was too big for him and, more importantly, if he said he would help then you knew he would not let you down. His passing will leave a big void in our Hermannsburg community for many years to come – he certainly left very big shoes to fill! We hold the family in our thoughts and prayers as they take time to come to terms with Andrew's passing and face the challenges that lie ahead.

Mudman

Old-school fun! That's what Mudman is all about - getting dirty, going for a quick dip in the dam, cycling, running, working up a decent sweat, taking in the scenic views, enjoying good food and laughing with friends. What started off 18 years ago as a small fun(d)raiser in



Primary School Challenge winners: Julian Königkrämer, Liam Uys and Siena Kimble

Snippets

DAY-SCHOLAR BUS: Thank you to all our parents who are making the pick-up and drop-off at the bus stop in Greytown hassle-free. Please remember that, once the bus has left, it should not be chased down and cut off by driving crossways in front of it in the middle of rush hour in the main street of Greytown – we simply cannot tolerate such risk to our scholars! Please be on time at the Country Club in the mornings.

SICK NOTES: Thank you to all the parents who conscientiously send their children to school each day, and take them to a physician when they are ill, providing the school with the necessary doctor's note and informing us of any absences. This really helps us to plan and organise effectively.

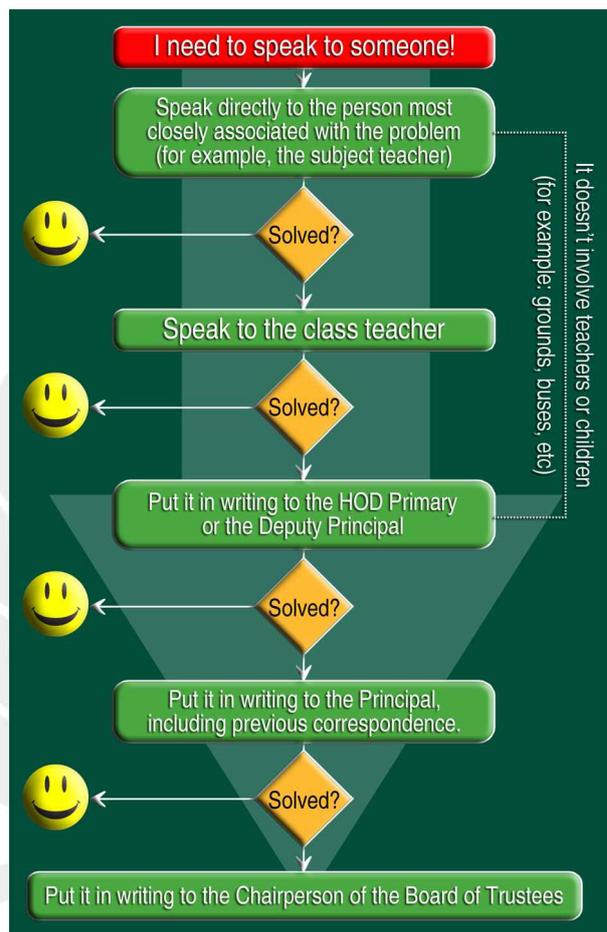
INDEMNITY FORMS & CAMPS: Once again, thank you to all our parents who return indemnity forms promptly, and who respect the deadlines for payments for camps and other excursions. As an independent school we rely on your co-operation to offer all these valuable, educational bonuses which help to make your children's educational experience at our school special, relevant and meaningful. At the end of each year, we try to inform parents as completely as possible about the financial commitments for the next year, and ask that they plan accordingly – your commitment to your children's education is very much appreciated!

SPEEDING CARS: Time and again we observe parents performing low-flying aerobatics down our school road and into our school grounds, recklessly ignoring the safety of our scholars and pedestrians – including Kindergarten and Primary School scholars. Yes, we are also frustrated by the potholes, but trying to levitate your car across them by driving like the insane is neither safe nor helpful! We again appeal to everyone to respect the speed limits approaching and around the school – when in doubt, do not exceed 25 km/h – and to adhere to the one-way system when dropping off or collecting children.

FLIGHT & BUS TICKETS: We appeal to all parents who book bus tickets or air tickets for their children to go home for long weekends and holidays – please make sure that your tickets are booked for the afternoon, so that we can leave Hermannsburg at 11:05 and still make the bus/flight in good time. Return flights and buses must please be booked so that the scholars can be collected by 16:00. This allows us enough time to safely travel in daylight and for the scholars to unpack and enjoy supper before preparing for the coming school day.

UNIFORM: Our day-to-day (informal) multiform continues to find favour, but there are boundaries. The uniform rules are available under the resources tab on the school's D6 School Communicator (www.school-communicator.com/download.php) and we ask that all scholars and their parents respect the boundaries. While some leeway is allowed with the girls' hairstyles, for example, if they interfere with school activities then they are not acceptable and will have to be changed at the scholar's expense.

Channels to Follow



Keeping in Touch

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