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2020
JULY

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CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

RON BOON

THE CHANGING WORLD – WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR OUR STUDENTS?

Covid-19 has seriously affected South Africa, the global economy and the lives of tens of millions of people. Massive unemployment is a consequence of the pandemic. So what does the future hold from an employment perspective? An associated question, then, is what skills and what knowledge are relevant to allow an individual to improve their prospects of employment moving into the future?

The rise of the digital world has seen several companies make huge strides, but some old, well-established and respected companies have collapsed. Why?

Let's relate for a moment to Kodak, a company that was a world leader in the field of photography. Kodak was the first company to move into digital cameras and initially they were regarded as leaders within this new market. They were so advanced that Kodak even made digital cameras for competitive companies entering the digital camera market. Another example of their advancement is the fact that in one of the countries in which they operated, Kodak found a way to share their digital photographs by what, years later, was to become known as the 'cloud'. They knew that the internet, which was at the time a new invention, could facilitate the sharing of digital photographs. They worked out how to share a digital photograph to the 'cloud' and they then sent the receiver a code that allowed them to view the photographs that had been shared. In effect, in 1996 Kodak had invented what was 14 years later to be launched as Instagram. In 2012, Kodak filed for bankruptcy protection.

Considering the above-described advances, Kodak cannot be faulted on their ability to innovate. What then went wrong? Perhaps they did not truly understand the value of their innovation? Perhaps their management team did not understand the value of the new technology that their teams had created? Perhaps the new digital developments did not fit within the structures of an old and staid organisational structure? Perhaps management did not grasp the logic of how to adapt and make things happen in their unfamiliar and changed environment.

What should we be taking notice of as we move into the new world impacted by Covid-19? Before the impact of Covid there were already concerns linked to elements such as robots replacing humans in selected industries. Now there are even fewer jobs and robots remain a threat!

Identifying and cultivating the right skills for our new world is key to future success. This comment is relevant to all age groups and all stages of working life, but since this article is linked to education and Rundle College, let's dwell on the younger generation.

Technological advances will continue to evolve at a rapid rate. We need to recognise, accept and understand these changes to allow us to make objective decisions. When one is young, does one need to choose a career or should one rather be focused on improving problem-solving abilities? Effective problem solving can assist in many fields. Problem solving that is linked to areas of specific interest will further inspire the individual and improve the basic problem-solving skill. Problem solving is a transferable skill that can cover any number of fields of interest and career options. It is a skill that is not necessarily influenced by technology, but rather by a combination of factors.

Think about today's 'green' world. Whether one is an engineer or an environmentalist, those involved need to be able to communicate effectively, understand basic concepts and solve problems that will emerge linked to an evolving industry. Young people must embrace the tech world and be tech-savvy. They need a combination of technical expertise and problem-solving skills. They must be taught that an effective network, too, is critical to success in life and in business. This will leave the door open to a variety of career options moving into the future.

The Cambridge Assessment International Education syllabus taught at Rundle College is built around improving problem-solving abilities. Our students are advantaged and we as leaders need to stay at the cutting edge of global developments to ensure that our students continue to be advantaged.

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Term 3 at the high school started very well with students from IGCSE to AS and A levels attending classes at school combined with some online support sessions. The Checkpoint classes are still having to do online lessons due to the limitations of the classroom sizes and social distancing requirements. It has been fantastic to see the return of the students and hear the sounds of learning through the school again.

Internal exams are taking place this term, obviously this has been moved because of the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Usually we would have had these taking place at the end of Term 2 but this way, we are able to have the exams taking place at school for the IGCSE and up cohort to ensure a reliable set of results for students. In the event of further disruptions to the external Cambridge exams in October and November this year, we need to have a robust set of results, combined with thorough rigorous assessments from assignments or in-class judgements and observations in order to support any judgement on prescribed or predicted grades from Cambridge should the exams be cancelled again.

Many matric students have already started applying at universities and some have already received provisional acceptance for their degree courses next year. I was reading a report from the Universities and College Services in the UK where they have reported a decrease in the number of international applications. This of course, is not really a surprise but my logic then suggests that the number of local applications to South African universities will then rise by default. This means that additional pressure is then put on the grades obtained by students in order to meet the requirements and stand out from the crowd. This, then, only reinforces the importance of attending classes, whether face to face or online in order to maximize your score.

I have already met with a number of students this past week as well as with a few online during the holidays. Please do feel free to either call or make an appointment to see me at school if you want to discuss options for applying to go to college or university next year.

Again, I want to thank the parent body as a whole. They have been incredibly supportive over this testing period. The exams will once again put additional pressure on all of us and we need to try to remain focused and clear in our goals. Please contact either your child's subject tutor or me if you need a little reassurance or simply an opportunity to gain clarity on an issue.

Lastly, I would like to thank the staff at Rundle College for rising to the occasion during this challenging time. It is simply through teamwork that we are where we are today!

DR STUART COLESKY

Progressive Education; Extraordinary People

EMBRACING *Silver Linings*

A New School Term

The Rundle College teachers and staff members are happy to return and embrace classroom teaching once again. Bring on the new school term! Rundle College offers students a combination of in-classroom and online teaching to ensure all the students are prepared for their Cambridge Assessment International Education examinations.

Preparing for Exams

The Rundle College high school students are recharged and ready to continue their Cambridge Assessment International Education after the school holiday. The mid-year exams started on 15 July and run until 7 August for the IG and AS students and from 27 July - 7 August for the Checkpoint 2 and 3 learners.

Academic Excellence

Outstanding academic achievements with 9 Top Student Awards from 2015 – 2019! Yemaya Morley, last year's AS student, achieved the third highest mark in the world for Environmental Management. This is a monumental achievement and we are extremely proud of her. I would also like to thank her family for their obvious support and encouragement. A special word of thanks goes to, Ms. Tana Scott, for her continued belief in Yemaya. Not many people know but this was a process which involved many additional hours and independent study over a number of years to prepare for this. This is now the 4th special achievement that Rundle College has achieved for Environmental Management over the last 5 years. It is also not surprising to note that four of our Environmental Management students from last year have decided to study their BSc in Environmental Studies, yet another accolade to the school and Ms. Scott.

Principal Dr Stuart Colesky

Enjoying Outdoor Living

The KeNako Academy and Rundle College hostel students braved the George peak. A berg wind greeted the students and made the climb tough, but the students persevered to enjoy the spectacular bird's-eye view from the top of the mountain.

Embracing Practical Lab Work

The response to the online Rundle College learning syllabus has been phenomenal. After a term of online learning due to the national lockdown, however, the Rundle College AS students are excited to finally be able to catch up on some practical Biology work. The students recently studied agar and diffusion rates in the school laboratory.



PREPARATORY NEWS

The start of term 3 has never been so exciting. To finally open the school doors to our learners again was an absolute highlight for us as staff, we could not wait to see their happy faces and all be back in the classroom.

The learners have all transitioned so well to being back in the classroom and the school finally has its buzz back. It has been so lovely to walk into the classrooms this past week and see smiling faces back at their desks.

Thank you to all the parents for preparing the students so well for this transition, we could not have done it without your help and support.

While everyone looks happy to be back at school, there are some that have fears and nerves about being in public and back at school. This is absolutely normal considering we are facing a global pandemic and our lives have been turned upside down for the past couple of months.

In addition to checking in on your child's physical health and learning when he/she goes back to school, you should also keep an eye out for signs of stress and anxiety. COVID-19 may be impacting your child's mental health, and it's important to demonstrate that it's normal and OK to feel overwhelmed at times. When in doubt, empathy and support are the way to go.

I would like to encourage parents to gently check in on their children on a regular basis to see how they coping with the situation.

UNICEF gives great advice on how to check in on your children, as follows: It's important to be calm and proactive in your conversations with children – check in with them to see how they are doing. Their emotions will change regularly and you need to show them that's okay.

Whether at school or at home, caregivers can engage children in creative activities, such as playing and drawing, to help them express and communicate any negative feelings they may be experiencing in a safe and supportive environment. This helps children find positive ways to express difficult feelings such as anger, fear or sadness.

As children often take their emotional cues from the key adults in their lives – including parents and teachers – it is important that adults manage their own emotions well and remain calm, listen to children's concerns, speak kindly and reassure them.

We as teachers always have your children's best interests at heart and we care for them deeply. While we are excited to be back at school and have some form of normality in our lives, we are taking every necessary precaution to protect your children to the best of our ability.

We look forward to rest of term 3 and what it has to offer. The CP 1 students will be writing their first set of exams. These will take place during the week of 27 July – 31 July. The learners have received their exam timetable and we wish them all the best for these exams.

SHARON ELAN-PUTTICK

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Preparatory Teachers Embrace New School Term

The Rundle College teachers and staff members were excited to have their happy, fun-loving and boisterous students return to school on the first day of the third school term. Selected grades will be allowed on certain days to attend school whilst online schooling still remains in place to ensure the safety regulations set out by the Department of Education are adhered to. It is wonderful to have the students back at school.

Following Rules and Setting Good Examples

Thank you to the Rundle College staff members and teachers that ensure the safety regulations set out by the Government are adhered to. The students safety is the school's first priority.

Welcome to the Rundle Family Ms Gayle Hedges

Ms Hedges was born and educated in South Wales in the UK and moved to South Africa with her family in 2019. Her initial degree (BSc hon) was in Industrial Biology and Biotechnology from South Bank Polytechnic in London. After a year working in a clinical pathology lab, she decided test tubes were not for her and got a position working as a Residential Social Worker in a school for visually impaired children.

She then did her Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) specialising in Upper Primary grades. She spent eight years teaching the Primary Curriculum in London and a further ten years teaching the full English and Welsh Primary Curriculum in Wales. During that time Ms Hedges taught in a range of Primary Schools, both mainstream and Special Educational Needs. She taught Foundation Phase for several years but most of her experience is teaching the Upper Primary Curriculum. She was also responsible for the coordination of art and science curriculums. Ms Hedges regularly attended courses to keep herself up to date with the latest teaching initiatives, curriculum developments and child protection measures. She is also a qualified swimming teacher.

Her strengths as a teacher would be her patience and questioning skills. Her aim is to keep learning as she teaches.

After teaching online during the second term of school, Ms Hedges was absolutely thrilled to meet and greet her students and the Rundle staff members in person. Welcome to the Rundle College family, Ms Hedges. Wishing you great success in your new teaching position.

Blowing Bubbles for Science

The Grade 4 and 5 Rundle College students learnt all about the science behind blowing bubbles and how each bubble is made of three very thin layers: soap; water; and another layer of soap with air trapped on the inside of the soapy, three-layer film. A bubble pops when the water that is trapped between the layers of soap evaporates.



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NURTURING SUCCESS

Did you know that the way a parent helps their child with their school work can result in whether their child becomes a successful and contributing member of society or not?



An old Chinese proverb says, 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.' In other words: it is better to teach people how to do something themselves than to just do it for them. This also can be true for parents helping their children with their school work.

While helping a child is paramount and the parent might have only noble intentions, they could, unbeknown to them, be breaking down their child's confidence and making them into a needy, dependent person who struggles to get direction and find their place in society.

Of course there is the other outcome, as I have mentioned, where the child becomes a positive and contributing member of society. How come, in some cases, children have become successful with no or very little help from their parents and in other cases the children lack independence and success having had all the help they could get?

We may ask ourselves, how does this work? We know that a young tree needs certain conditions to grow, like good soil, sun and water, but it is up to the tree to grow. So it is for our children. Parents are required to provide and make sure all the conditions are right by guiding and allowing their child to grow into independence. Our role as parents is to encourage and not to take the responsibility from the child.

Children need to be taught and encouraged to think and act independently and to take responsibility for their own work and outcomes. While a well-meaning parent may be acting out of kindness to help their child more than necessary (especially when their child is throwing their toys out their cot, so to speak) they are actually robbing their child of the joy of self-achievement and success and their child will always feel dependent on their parents or they will not have the confidence to achieve things by themselves because they will always feel they cannot match up to their parents.

A child also needs to know that there are always consequences to their actions. If they make a big effort, they will get big results and if they make a little effort they will reap minimal results. If allowed to grow into independence they will discover early on that they are the author of their success and will become self-motivated. And who doesn't like success?

MS VAN AS



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