



Hoërskool

LADYSMITH

High School

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26 January 2015

Dear Parents

**(This is a large complex school. A long letter like this one is required to inform you about school matters. Please read it, complete the attached questionnaire, sign it and return the document to the school via your child).**

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a prosperous 2015. May the relationship between school and home once again be to the best advantage of your child.

### **The 2014 Matric Results**

You are probably aware that our 2014 matric results were, once again, excellent. We entered 168 candidates and achieved a 97% pass rate with 83% of our candidates achieving admission to a Bachelor's degree. A total of 226 distinctions were achieved across all subjects. In 12 of the 17 matric subjects our matrics achieved a 100% pass rate. I extend my thanks and sincere congratulations to everyone who contributed to our exceptional results: learners, parents and staff members.

One candidate achieved 7A symbols: VUYO HLONGWANE

### **Top Achievers in alphabetical order (6A'S)**

1. REUBEN MAC DONALD
2. SARAH MCKAY
3. USHENKA ANGATH

### **Top Achievers in alphabetical order (5A'S)**

1. DUNCAN BROWN
2. VINCENZO D'ERAMO
3. COURTNEY FOURIE
4. TASHNIKA GAJOO
5. JOLEEN LAI
6. NTANDO MBANA
7. LUNGA RADEBE

True to our motto - Per Adua Ad Alta - these academic heights were achieved through hard work.

Such high academic standards are closely related to general school administration, particularly with regards to the maintenance of strict, fair and consistent discipline and this is where we must work together.

While this entails an all-inclusive policy, I would like to highlight the following:

1. **The National Education Policy** prescribes a minimum amount of hours teaching time per week. Consequently all learners must be at school by **7:20** and the school day ends at 14:30.

The school closes at **14:30** on a Friday, but all learners who have worked conscientiously leave at 13:00 (as determined by the Code of Conduct). Learners who are sent to detention for whatever reason, or who did not master or complete specific academic work during the week, will remain at school until 14:30 or longer. The entire school will remain at short notice, if there is litter on the school grounds.

If the school closes every week day at 14:30, and at 13:00 on Fridays, we will still have more teaching time over 7 days than that which is prescribed by the department.

2. **At the Annual General Meeting of parents which took place on 25 November 2014, the Resolution was passed that the compulsory school fees for 2015 will be R8 500 per learner.** Our matric results confirm that you definitely get value for your money. Please note the following:
  - 2.1 We can only keep our school fees low if **everyone** who can possibly afford to, do pay their school fees.
  - 2.2 If school fees are paid in full by the end of February 2015, a discount of R500 per learner is given. Alternatively school fees can be paid in 10 equal instalments of R850 from 31 January to 31 October. **NB: This concession will automatically fall away if the payment is not made on the prescribed payment day and the full remaining balance will immediately become payable.**
  - 2.3 We wish to remind you that in terms of Section (41) of The South African School's Act 84 of 1996, you are entitled to apply for exemption from the payment of school fees. Should you wish to apply for exemption because you cannot afford the school fees and are able to provide proof of your inability to pay, the necessary Application for Exemption form can be obtained from the school's office. Several parents are assisted in this way. **These applications must be made before the end of February 2015.**
  - 2.4 Please note that the Governing Body has appointed **Mr D Terblanche** as credit controller to deal confidentially with these matters. The Principal is **not** involved with the collection of school fees or the granting of subsidies.

Ladysmith High School would like to make the payment of school fees as convenient as possible. The School Governing Body made the decision to install a credit card machine at the school. This will help the school and parents by minimizing the use of cash. The machine will accept any master or visa credit or debit cards. The School Governing Body would still prefer payment via bank deposit, debit order or electronic funds transfer (EFT) because then the bank fees can be kept to the minimum.

## 2.5 **School Books 2015**

We confirm that the purchase of school books remains the responsibility of each parent. NB. **Where the state made a certain financial contribution towards books in a certain grade, this money will be used to the exclusive advantage of all the learners.** Every learner has received a list of stationery for 2015. Any newly prescribed text books are ordered by the school and subject teachers will sell or rent them out in their specific classes. **Should a learner not have all the prescribed textbooks and other stationery and learning materials in his/her possession by a specific date, such a learner will not be allowed into the classroom.** Learners will **not** be allowed to borrow any requirements from other learners. Property must please be **clearly** marked. Parents who cannot **afford** a book or other materials, as in the case of subsidization of school fees, must please address a written and confidential letter to Mr Terblanche for financial help. **No** learner will, because of financial reasons, be excluded from the use of books or other facilities.

The Governing Body has also decided once again, to ask every learner to donate **two reams of photocopy paper** (i.e. two packets of 500 sheets of 80 gr paper) to the school before the end of February.

## 3. **The testing and evaluation system for 2015.**

During each test cycle tests will take place during the first hour of the day, followed by a break and then the rest of the school day.

**First Term:** Only **ONE** Test Cycle: Monday, 9 March to Tuesday, 17 March.

**Second Term:** Exams: Wednesday, 17 June to Friday, 26 June.

**Third Term:** Test cycle: Grade 8 – 11: Monday, 17 August to Tuesday, 25 August.

Matric Trials: Thursday, 10 September to Wednesday, 30 September.

**Fourth Term:** Exams: Wednesday, 4 November to Friday, 20 November.

Matrics start the final exam on Monday 19 October 2015

#### 4. **Disciplinary matters**

- 4.1 The Code of Conduct of Ladysmith High School has been revised and rewritten to a large extent in order to streamline the application thereof in practice. Legal advice was obtained to ensure that it is not in conflict with the country's Constitution or any Education Act or regulation. The South African School's Act, Act 84 of 1994, as amended, determines that parents, teachers and learners have to be consulted when the Code of Conduct is drawn up or revised. As it entails a substantial document it cannot, therefore, be sent to every parent for this purpose. It is however, available at the school during office hours for your perusal. The Governing Body will approve this during the first meeting in February 2015.

Some aspects and stipulations are highlighted as follows:

- 4.2 If a learner does not complete and hand in an assignment which has been set for marks, on a specific day and time, 5% will immediately be subtracted and that same assignment must be handed in on the following day in order for the learner to be allowed back into the school.
- 4.3 If a learner is sent out of the class because of serious misconduct, the learner **must** appear in the staff room the following morning. If 50% + 1 of the staff members who teach him/her indicates that they also experience serious behavioural problems in their classroom, the parents will be called to school and the learner will be placed under the parent's care for a period of three days in accordance with the principle of "time-out". The idea is that the parent will, on a one to one basis, do the follow-up work at home, so that it is then possible for the **teacher** to continue in the classroom on a one to 35 basis to provide effective education. No learner has the right to deny other learners of **their** constitutional right to education, through bad behaviour.
- 4.4 If a learner arrives late for school, i.e. is not in the quadrangle at the correct place with his or her register class at 07:30, such a learner will be fined R10 for the first offence which is payable immediately. If the fine is not paid, the learner will sit detention on the first Friday thereafter. Detention will follow automatically on the second transgression and at a third transgression the "time-out" principle will also apply.
- 4.5 Please phone the school if your child is absent from school for **whatever reason**. Furthermore, also write a **letter** of explanation, which your child **must** hand to the register teacher on his/her return to school. An example of such a letter is available from the register teacher. Without this your child will not be allowed back into school the following day. Unfortunately there are learners who will bunk school – often whilst the parents believe that the child is at school. If you do not phone, the Grade Head will have to phone you.
- 4.6 **General appearance**  
The parents of this school voted by an overwhelming majority in favour of a prescribed LHS uniform and a general appearance policy which has been approved by the Governing Body and is applied by the Principal and staff.

**Any** deviation from the school uniform rules will **always** lead to conflict, which is really unnecessary. The golden rule is that **no learner may be allowed to get away with breaking school rules, otherwise a thousand other learners also have such a right.** No individual parent necessarily needs to agree with the school rules – yet **legally** you are obliged to ensure that your **child** abides by them. To name a few examples:

4.6.1 There are clear rules laid down with regard to boys' and girls' hairstyles which were finalised after negotiation with the learners as well. These rules will be applied by the school without any further negotiation.

4.6.2 If a learner does not comply with the rules regarding general appearance after being warned, the parent will be telephoned to fetch the learner from the school. This also applies to a boy who comes to school unshaven.

4.7 You are reminded of media reports regarding **physical violence and bullying.** The **collapse of discipline** poses a threat to all schools particularly to multi-racial schools. At an assembly, all the learners were warned by means of a yellow and a red card that absolutely **no** form of violence will be tolerated on the school grounds, or whilst wearing **school uniform outside of the school** property. The learner who throws the first punch commits "LHS suicide". Principals have been instructed from the highest level to root out this evil and guilty parties could be expelled. **No learners may take the law into their own hands.** Action will also be taken against learners who provoke others to the extent that violence results. The safety of every learner on this property is the Principal's **first** priority and in this regard he requires the support of every parent.

4.8 Lastly, we also require your support to prevent certain prohibited articles from being brought to the school. The Code of Conduct states: A learner of Ladysmith High School "under no circumstances brings onto or uses any **cigarettes** or any other **smoking material, alcoholic drink, drugs, pornographic material** or **dangerous weapons** on the school premises or uses the same whilst dressed in school uniform outside of the school property ...". The Code of Conduct furthermore determines: **"A learner may not bring a cell phone to school during normal school hours"**.

A learner for example, who brings smoking material to school, will be fined R100. Bringing alcohol or drugs to school will be met without mercy. In some instances where this occurred in the past the result was immediate expulsion.

The capabilities of the modern cell phone are limitless. Learners can convey pornographic material of the worst degree to each other at school, via their cell phones and facebook, for example, which also offer other means of communication. Learners can even be in communication with each other at a very low cost, whilst in the classroom. Staff could be totally unaware of this. Learners can photograph events inside the classroom, and post this on facebook and thereby seriously undermine the teacher's professional domain.

The golden rule is therefore that **no** learner may bring a cell phone to school. If a parent requires that a child needs a cell phone for whatever reason, either before or after school, the parent needs to write a letter addressed to the Grade Head to explain the reason why it is necessary to have a cell phone at school. The phone must be handed in during register period in the morning and collected again at the end of the school day.

**5. Grade 8 parents' evening**

All parents of Grade 8 learners and their Grade 8 child/children are cordially invited to a compulsory parents' evening on Monday, 9 February 2015 at 18:00. At this meeting school issues relating to you and your child will be discussed.

**6. Staffing matters**

One new member of staff, namely Mrs T Brown has joined us. We welcome her to Ladysmith High School. The tuck-shop is also under new management. Mike and Shelley Gerber will be running the tuck-shop.

**7. Sport:**

**Swimming gala:**

Our inter-house swimming gala takes place on Tuesday, 27 January 2015 at 16:00 and will end at approximately 19:00. All spectators and swimmers must be within the swimming pool area by 16:00 to take up their places. No late comers will be allowed and the official school uniform will be applicable for spectators. If a learner cannot attend because of transport problems, or any other justifiable reason, he/she will be excused from the gala.

**Athletics:**

Our inter-house athletics meeting takes place on Friday, 30 January 2015 at 08:00. Most track and field items will take place during the meeting. The official school uniform is applicable for spectators and athletes must be dressed in the proper athletic uniform to be able to participate. The last few items will take place during the next week.

The trophy winners for swimming as well as athletics will be given recognition for their achievements at a special assembly and not directly after the two activities.

**8. 2015 School Governing Body Election:**

The term of office of the current School Governing Body will expire in 2015. The election of the new members will take place between 6 and 28 March 2015. You will be informed well in advance when this meeting will take place at Ladysmith High School. For an election to take place a quorum of 15% of the total parent body must be present. It is therefore of paramount

importance that parents arrive in numbers at the meeting to elect members for the governing body.

9. We would like to remind parents to visit our school's website <http://www.lhs.co.za> for all the latest information regarding the school.

It is clear that our efforts to keep LHS a winning school are very closely intertwined with **parent involvement and support**. May this support once again be clearly visible in your child's actions, behaviour and progress this year. Ladysmith High School is also determined to remain a values driven school. Every parent, learner and staff member must be aware of the contents of our Code of Conduct. Values contribute to a healthy learning environment which leads to academic success and this in turn develops skills which will be retained for life.

Sincere LHS greetings.

MR JC PIETERSE  
PRINCIPAL

**Please complete this questionnaire and return it via your child to the register teacher: IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT BOTH PARENTS SIGN THIS FORM.**

I/We (Title, initials and surname) .....parent(s)\*<sup>1</sup> of  
 ..... in Grade.....and.....in  
 Grade.....and.....in Grade ..... is/are familiar with the contents of this  
 letter dated 26 January 2015. \*<sup>1</sup> (Please explain if you are not the parent).

My/Our contact numbers are:

Father:

Mother:

Home: .....

Home: .....

Work: .....

Work: .....

Cell phone.....

Cell phone: .....

e-mail address: .....

e-mail address: .....

My/Our physical address is:

My/Our postal address is:

Postal Code:	Postal Code:

I/We will pay the school fees as follows: \*<sup>2</sup> (R8 500 per learner per year)

1. Before 28 February 2015 to qualify for a R500 discount.

2. Before the end of each month until the end of October.

3. Want to make use of a stop order.  
 Banking details available on the website)

4. Want to prove in writing the inability to pay by completing  
 an application for subsidy form.

\*<sup>2</sup> ✓ where applicable.

Signed: 1. ....

Date: .....

2. ....

Date: .....