



IN THE LOOP

2nd December 2022

UPDATES FOR BMIS SECONDARY PARENTS

There have been many highlights over the past few weeks including the Night Swim Gala and Sports Festival, Service activities, student initiatives, MAP testing and Yr 11 Taster Week. However, one of the most anticipated events of the school year has been the BMIS Broadway production of 'The Greatest Showman!' This has been long anticipated, as we have had many tasters over the last 12 weeks as the songs floated across the campus. We started off with lots of starts and stops, words that were hard to distinguish from the music, and various renditions of the same song. But then the show started to come together, with the help of our choreographer Mitzi Curuthers, who rehearsed the cast for 10 hours over a period of weekends until the dancing and singing combined perfectly with the live music.

This is the first major production we have had in over 2 years and has involved a cast of 30 actors, 11 set and lighting crew, and 6 makeup artists from years 7-12. Our students have been highly dedicated, turning up to all rehearsals and putting all their energy into creating a great 'Greatest Showman' show! A massive thanks to Director Grace Woods, Assistant Romana Hajat, Music David Monreuil and everyone who helped with the production.

Lesley Peacock, Secondary Principal
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Service Through Action

Health awareness has had a very successful first semester. From multiple fun fundraising activities, including the dress up days, bring anything but backpack day, and bake sales. We have also held a very successful blood drive and car wash this past month. This last Wednesday the health awareness service leaders took a school bus to the NGO 'Family Health Service'. During our visit we donated the mosquito nets that we bought through the fundraisers (50 double sized mosquito nets) and sat down with the head marketing director and had a very interesting conversation about everything they do as an organization, from malaria, HIV/AIDS, contraception and much more. Lastly we had the opportunity to be interviewed on their radio station "Youth Alert" that is aired on the 'Timveni' radio station! We are very excited for our future projects working alongside Family Health Services.



You are invited to have
**COFFEE WITH THE
COUNSELORS**

19 January
BMIS Secondary Library
7:30 AM until 8:30 AM

Join us to discuss:

- Common mental health challenges and how they show up in children at every stage of development
- Recognizing the difference between a "down day" and a significant mental health issue
- How to talk with your child about their mental health
- Ways to attend to your own mental health needs

**A CALL FOR SINGERS:
SINGER'S NIGHT Vol. 3**

Thursday, March 30th

**Choose the song YOU want
to sing with a live band.**

**Auditions on now...
until the start of the
December break!**

See Mr. Montreuil



What's the time in French!
Year 7 students are learning how to tell the time in French through various activities including picture dominoes, interactive online games and conversations. Thanks to this skill, they are able to talk about their daily routine (je me lève à 5 heures, les cours commencent à 7h10, etc...). Bonne journée à tous (have a good day everyone!)



U13 Netball shooting Baskets

Our U13 Netball Team finished the netball season in style and good form with an amazing win against the Good Shepherd U13 Netball team (36-0).

This semester the U13 Netball team put their skills to the test in 2 competitive tournaments; Lilongwe Schools Tournament and Kamuzu Academy Tri Schools Tournament. A couple of younger players joined this squad and enjoyed exposure to senior netball; the team was a combination of Year 7, 8 & 9 students, our biggest challenge being we had a new team training together for the first time, with only a few weeks to prepare for these competitions, the girls were up to the challenge and got down to business.

The team worked hard and applied much of what was practiced in their training sessions into the games, and accomplished a great deal in the time given. They Showed a fantastic commitment to training and performing well in the matches played. Well done to Nolawit, Christine, Stephanie, Mwai, Bohlokoa, Lydia, Ariella, Christabel, Yihan, and Zoe.



First Aid Training

The Year 9's are currently completing a life-saving unit in PHE whereby students are taught different techniques to help people both in water and on land. This week we focused on rescuing someone who is struggling to swim and how to tow them back to shallower water. In the classroom we learned how to put someone into the recovery position. Whilst the students understand that this unit doesn't give them a qualification they have enjoyed learning about how to potentially offer support to other people.

Netball Update

Our Netball teams finished the season with two strong wins over a Good Shepherd side that battled well. Some lovely passing and movement was on show in both games which resulted in two dominant wins; the juniors winning 36-0 and the seniors picking up a 25-3 win.



Region 5 Youth Games

This week, Bishop Mackenzie has been honoured to have 12 different international teams visit to prepare for the up and coming Region 5 Youth Games. Bishop Mackenzie has been chosen as the lead practice facility for both Swimming and Football and have made strong connections to international coaches and organisers. This has resulted in an incredibly kind gesture of providing BMIS 12 new Olympic swimming blocks and brand new anti-wave lane ropes which now means that BMIS can host international level competitions. It has been an incredible week !

Girl's Rugby is Popular

There is a huge interest in Girl's Rugby, with it's focus on 'fun' and 'engagement'. The girls recently had the opportunity to play the best U19 team in Lilongwe.

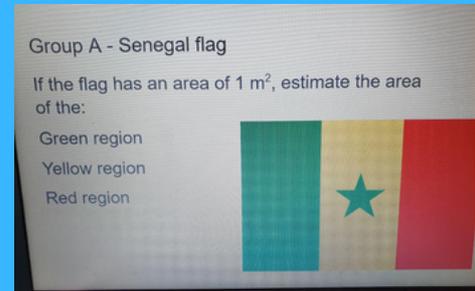


World Cup Mathematics

The Year 7's have been exploring some of the Mathematics involved in the Men's Soccer World Cup 2022.

Do you know how many different combinations of points can occur in the group stage? We wonder how many will occur in this world cup. We will know in the next few days!

For our spatial reasoning unit, we have been connecting the concept of area to the flags of the countries in the World Cup. This has also given us an opportunity to practise our estimating skills and using decimal numbers.



A Personal Project that Continues into Yr 12

I wanted to give you a quick update on the ongoing project (Chess for blind and visually impaired). I was able to meet the students on Friday at Kamuzu institute. I initially thought I would start with 1 student, however, there were 3 students who came along. We started the lesson with a short introduction, and we each said something about ourselves. They were all passionate and curious, and this made the process of teaching them so much easier.

Before the lesson I created a lesson plan, that guided me through the lesson and activities that I wanted to complete. Each of my lesson plans had an objective, which ultimately worked towards the long term goal.

Last Friday I worked on getting the students more familiar with the concept of the chess board, along with terminology and notation. It was heart warming to see them reach small milestones; like being able to show me squares after I call out their name. After the lesson I also created a mini quiz to test and summarise all the lessons we learnt, and it went well, I could see that they were grasping what I taught them very quickly.

They mentioned that they loved learning, and can't wait for the rest of the lessons. I really enjoyed the lessons too! I have attached some images below from Kamuzu institute on Friday (PS. The two ladies next to me were the organisers).

Priyasha Shariyan Yr 12



The Success of Independent Reading

This year we have begun our Independent Reading Program in earnest. In brief, students are allowed a one period space to read with their classmates where they can choose their books, as long as they read and discuss with at least one other student. Some of the goals of Independent Reading are for students to:

- Have a space where they have agency in their choice of group, novel and discussion
- Discuss their books with peers
- Set achievable goals in consultation with their peers
- Enjoy reading at an appropriate level

It is specifically not assessed, and with scaffolded question stems as well as teacher supervision and modeling, students are aiming to build the capacity for sustained focus and find joy in reading.

As part of this program, we recently conducted a survey to measure students' experience of the class. I thought I'd share some of the data and comments from students so you can see how they have responded to the initiative.

Last year, in the whole of the academic year, our students read (including non-fiction and fiction books in class) an average of 7.1 books. This year, in the first semester alone, students have read (not including subjects for their classes) an average of 5.2 books. If we continue at the same rate, our students are on track to read more than 10 books in a year. That's impressive. While it's hard to collect data on how many books average teens are reading worldwide, Scholastic's 2015 annual reading report indicated that Infrequent readers (which make up about 80% of students) in the UK between the age of 12-17 reported reading an average of 4.4 books a year.

In reporting what students liked about Independent Reading, with free reign on writing responses, 36% of students mentioned the quiet, calm, peace, silence or fact that it was "relaxed" or "chill". I read this as a reminder of the value of slowing down in our fast-paced learning environment.

In their comments about what they'd change about the time, our most frequent response was about giving them more choice. Some of the answers showed a misconception they may have had though, so it's good to remind students that they have free choice for what they read, as long as they read it with at least one other person. They can bring their own books in if they like, but their partner should have access to it too.

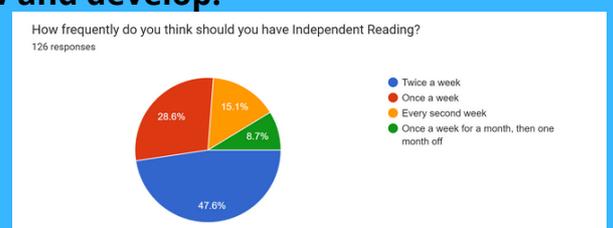
Finally, I find it heartening to read that almost half our students in the MYP would like even more time to read.

I'd really like to thank the Independent Reading Supervisors:

Sam Richards, Sam Giblett, Angelica Jones, Raquel Constenla, Sabira Nathanie, Wayne Kovacs, Matthew Hendriks and Charlie Bowles.

Their continued support has helped the IR program grow and develop.

James Brown
Secondary English and TOK Teacher



SUPPORTING YOUR READER AT HOME

Mackenzie Peters, *BMIS Student Service Consultant*

Cultivate Passion  Utilize Research Based Strategies  Create Consistency

Research Based Strategies Continued

This 'In The Loop' is a continuation of our previous article, focused on supporting reader's at home. Below, you will find a table which describes activities and strategies you can utilize with your child (primary and secondary) at home to support their growth and knowledge in the Reading Rope strands.

Strand	Strategies/Description				
Language Comprehension	<p>Background Knowledge: Imagine you are asked to read a one hundred page peer-reviewed article on the theory of quantum physics. Unless you are a quantum physicist, you'd probably be lost, right? Background knowledge is a core component that readers rely on in order to make sense of what they are reading. Prior to reading a text, invite your child to discuss what they think the text will be about based on the front and back cover and illustrations.</p>	<p>Vocabulary Knowledge The more vocabulary a child knows, the better they can make sense of their reading. Invite your child to ask questions about unknown words they come across in texts, TV, conversations, word games (i.e. Taboo, Scattegories...) etc. Share definitions with your child in student-friendly words and ask them to restate the definition in their own words.</p>	<p>Language Structure: Language structure has to do with syntax - the arrangement of words in a sentence as well as the ability to use words and phrases to create meaning. The more exposure a child has to language, the better. Consider the following strategies to support your child's understanding of language structure: Listening to podcasts in English, reading aloud to your child, and going on guided tours.</p>	<p>Verbal Reasoning: Verbal reasoning refers to children learning to differentiate between literal and non literal uses of words and phrases. Although children will pick up on some of these nuances naturally in conversation, many need to be taught explicitly. Learn more about verbal reasoning and the types of figurative language skills to practice with your child here: https://www.weareteachers.com/figurative-language-anchor-charts/.</p>	<p>Literacy Knowledge: Children gain literacy knowledge when exposed to a variety of genres and text types. Exposing children to stories and topics with various themes and cultural backgrounds enhances their ability to cultivate connections. To support your child in enhancing their literacy knowledge, consider: Reading to your child from various sources (newspapers, story books, poems, scripts, instructions etc.) and Listening to podcasts from various cultural themes and backgrounds.</p>
Word Recognition	<p>Phonological Awareness: Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and manipulate the spoken part of words and sentences. It is a global awareness of sounds that sets beginning readers up to learn to decode. To support your child's phonological awareness, practice: Rhyming, Counting Syllables, Recognizing Alliteration (words with the same beginning sound) and segmenting sentences.</p>	<p>Decoding (and Spelling): Decoding occurs when children sound out each grapheme. With the awareness of sounds that comes with phonological and phonemic awareness, students can begin decoding and encoding words. Strategies for improving decoding skills can be found here: https://www.weareteachers.com/cracking-the-code-9-hands-on-strategies-for-improving-decoding-skills/</p>	<p>Sight Recognition: Some words are utilized so frequently that we do learn them by sight. Two of the most common sight word lists include Dolch (https://sightwords.com/sight-words/dolch/) and Ery (https://sightwords.com/sight-words/fry/). Activities to support learning sight words can be found here: https://www.weareteachers.com/sight-word-activities/.</p>		

Create Consistency

The final key to supporting your reader at home is to create consistency. With life being busy, this can present as a challenge, but here are 4 questions to consider as you implement this key:

1. **Who?** Does your child have somebody to read with each day?
2. **What?** Invite your child to experience a variety of texts including picture books, chapter books, audiobooks, recipes, directions, newspapers, magazines, etc.
3. **When?** Everyday! Children thrive on consistency and research shows that practicing our skills from the Reading Rope each day is the most effective way to become a proficient reader.
4. **Where?** Create a comfortable and safe space in your home where your child can read and practice their strategies each day.



References and Resources

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Epic! Books: <https://www.getepic.com/>

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Victoria State Government. Literacy Teaching Toolkit. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/Pages/default.aspx>



YEAR 9 "PERSPECTIVES" MUSEUM EXHIBIT

**BMIS Lower Hall
Tuesday, December 6th**

7:10 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.

" Different perspectives influence how people view the events that change our world "

Dear Parents,

Hi! I am Ms Mariella, the Secondary School Counsellor. As part of my continued commitment to making BMIS the best possible learning environment, I am seeking to further develop our parent-school partnership. I believe that all adults play an important role in developing social and emotional (SEL) awareness and competency in young people and only by working together, are we able to provide the best guidance to our students.

For this, I am introducing the In the Loop's SEL Corner where, every other week. I will be sharing with you strategies and resources my colleagues and I use in school to promote social and emotional learning.

This week's SEL strategy focuses on anchoring attention on the positive aspects of our daily lives. The last few weeks of term can feel exhausting both physically and mentally for students and teachers. Stress can often be heightened by continually worrying and thinking about the many demands and expectations. The secret to putting the brakes on our stress response lies in focusing our attention on positive anchors, one of which is showing kindness i.e. being patient, accepting and caring of ourselves and others.

When we promote a culture of care towards others, we help our students understand the importance of self care in busy times. The video below reminds us of how kindness can anchor our attention towards the positive aspects of our work and be a powerful motivator. We can easily incorporate this quick '60 seconds of kindness' exercise into school and home life!

<https://characterstrong.com/csweekly/60-seconds-of-kindness/>

Mariella Vittetoe Castillo BSc, MSc, PGDip
Secondary School Counsellor



Up and Coming Events

Saturday December 3rd The Gran Masquerade Ball in the Upper Hall from 6pm-9.30 pm
Monday 5th December -DP Theatre Night 16+ audience only, in the Upper Hall from 6.30 pm-8.15 pm
Thursday 8th December Secondary Swimming Carnival -All Day
Friday 9th December Secondary House Festival Quiz
Monday 9th January Term 2 begins