



18 February 2022

To the UFS Community,

Over the course of the past week, the three school leaders and I have been conducting Formal Lesson Observations. This exercise is one element of our newly developed, comprehensive and robust performance management system and process. Having such a system is essential to ensure we deliver on our promise to facilitate high quality teaching and learning. It provides our school leaders with insights into the practices of our teachers. These insights are important in order for us to support, train and mentor teachers where needed. Where common areas of development emerge, we can respond by facilitating small or large group professional development initiatives. Conversely, it provides evidence of excellence which we can share across the teaching faculty as best practice. Importantly, we also need to acknowledge, thank and celebrate those teachers who function as Master Teachers.

The Formal Lesson Observations we are currently conducting will be followed up with informal and unannounced full lesson class visits, short classroom visits, book looks, lesson planning reviews, and more over the course of the year.

Why am I sharing this information some of our parents might be wondering? I think it is really important that our parents and students know about and appreciate our commitment to providing a high calibre education, and to have a degree of understanding as to how we work to achieve this.

On another note, we have focused this week on the matter of anti-bullying.

At UFS International, we have a ZERO TOLERANCE approach to bullying. We empower our students to take a stance against bullies by using the practice of **WITS**. We want our students to keep their **WITS** about themselves.

WITS stands for;

W - **WALK** away.

I - **IGNORE**.

If the behaviour persists after the 1st two steps, then...

T - **TALK** to the person involved and ask them to stop.

If the behaviour still persists then...

S - **SEEK** adult intervention.

Speak to a parent, teacher or any adult that you trust.

One element of bullying that is difficult to detect is that of cyberbullying. In this regard, I would like to point out to parents that the minimum age to use WhatsApp, (as per faq.whatsapp.com), is 16 years of age in the European Economic Area, and 13 years old in all other countries. Hence, no children in our primary school, other than those Grade 7s who have turned 13, should be on WhatsApp. There is an abundance of research that shows a young child's frontal cortex is not yet sufficiently developed to manage the stress, distraction and temptation that stem from social media use. Put differently, it is akin to asking a 10-year old to ride a Harley Davidson – damage will be done!

I wish to encourage parents who do allow children, at an age appropriate stage, to have smart phones to speak to them about responsible usage. There is also software that allows parents to set daily limits on screen time, set time limits for usage in specific applications, restrict content, monitor usage and activity, and other valuable controls.

Parents who have used the counselling services of Mrs Robynne Chambers are kindly informed that she is currently on medical leave, and are thus requested not to contact her until further notice. We do wish her all the best during her time of convalescence.

As a proudly Cambridge School, our learner attributes encourage students to become innovative and equipped for new and future challenges.

I wish you all a very blessed weekend.

Yours in Education,



Gareth Allman
Executive Principal

