RAND PREPARATORY AND COLLEGE NPC
74 Sixth Avenue, Bezuidenhout Valley

NEWSLETTER
11
of 2026

CELL PHONES AT NIGHT & PUNCTUALITY

2 October 2026

Tel: (011) 618-3331/2 **Fax:** (011) 624-2420 **Web:** www.randschools.co.za **Email:** info@randschools.co.za

Dear Parents,

> *"Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."*
>
> *— Benjamin Franklin*

In this newsletter I would like to raise two matters that are directly affecting how well our learners are doing at school: the use of cell phones late at night, and late arrival in the mornings. I ask all parents to read this carefully and to work with us on both.

1 CELL PHONES AT NIGHT

Over the past few weeks, our teachers have noted a clear increase in the number of learners arriving at school tired. Many struggle to concentrate in the first lessons, some fall asleep in class, and a number have told us openly that they were on their phones until late at night, in some cases well past midnight.

Children and teenagers need considerably more sleep than adults: roughly 9 to 12 hours a night for primary school children and 8 to 10 hours for teenagers. Sleep is when the brain consolidates what was learnt during the day. A learner who is short of sleep remembers less, concentrates less, is more irritable and is more vulnerable to anxiety and low mood. The light from screens and the constant stimulation of social media, games and group chats delay sleep and disturb its quality, even after the phone is put down.

Late-night phone use also carries risks that parents cannot see. Contact with strangers, cyberbullying in group chats and exposure to inappropriate content most often happen late at night, when no adult is watching.

2 WHAT WE ASK OF PARENTS

The school can set rules during the day, but what happens at night is in your hands. We ask parents to be firm on this and to insist on it, even when it is met with resistance:

- **Set a fixed time each evening when phones are handed in.** We recommend no later than 20:30 for Preparatory learners and 21:30 for College learners.
- **Keep phones out of the bedroom at night.** Phones, tablets and laptops should be charged overnight in a shared space, such as the kitchen or your own bedroom.
- **Replace the phone alarm.** If your child says they need the phone to wake up, an inexpensive alarm clock removes the reason.
- **Use the controls you already have.** The parental controls on the phone and on your Wi-Fi router can switch off data or apps after the agreed time.
- **Lead by example.** A household "screens off" time works best when the adults keep to it too.

We understand that this may lead to some arguments at home. Please know that the school stands fully behind you. A firm, consistent rule is far easier for a child to accept than one that is negotiated every night.

3 LATE ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

We are equally concerned about the number of learners arriving late. Learners are expected to be at school by 07:50 each day. Arriving on time matters every day, but it is critical when cycle tests and examinations are written, for these reasons:

- **Lost time cannot be recovered.** Tests and examinations start and end at fixed times. A learner who arrives late loses writing time, and this directly affects their marks.
- **Late entry may be refused.** In line with examination rules, a late learner may not be admitted to the venue once a paper is under way.
- **Important instructions are given at the start.** Corrections to question papers, venue arrangements and exam rules are announced before writing begins. A late learner misses these.
- **A rushed start affects performance.** A learner who arrives flustered and anxious begins the paper at a disadvantage. A calm, settled start leads to better results.
- **Late arrival disturbs others.** Every time the door opens, the invigilator must stop to admit and settle a learner, and the concentration of the whole room is broken.
- **Safety and accountability.** The school must know at all times which learners are on the premises. Late arrival also means missed registration and lost teaching time on ordinary days.
- **Punctuality is a life skill.** Final examinations, universities and employers will not wait, and the habit is formed now.

⚠ A learner arriving late for a cycle test or examination will NOT be given extra time.

On test and examination days, please plan for your child to arrive at least 15 minutes early, allowing for traffic, faulty traffic lights and bad weather. The two concerns in this newsletter are also linked: a learner who goes to sleep late is harder to wake, and late mornings very often follow late nights.

4 CYCLE TEST SCHEDULE

Cycle tests are written every Wednesday at 07:50. Please ensure that your children are at school on time for these tests. The full schedule was published on the school's website; the remaining tests for the term are included below:

DATE	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11
7 October	NS: Natural & Life Sciences	Maths	Afrikaans/isiZulu	Business Studies/Physical Science/History
14 October	Creative Arts	SS: History & Geography	IT (Practical)/CAT/History	Life Orientation
21 October	SS: History & Geography	EMS: Business Studies & Accounting	Life Sciences/Art	IT (Practical)/Life Sciences/Art
28 October	EMS: Accounting & Business Studies	Natural Science	Life Orientation	Accounting/Economics/CAT
4 November	Life Orientation	Creative Arts	English	Maths/Maths Literacy

5 IMPORTANT DATES FOR TERM 3

Please could parents take note of the following important dates for the remainder of this term:

DATE & TIME	EVENT	WHO SHOULD ATTEND
5 to 8 October	IEB Visual Art Practical Drawing Exam 6 hours per day for 4 days Venue: Art Display room	All Visual Arts Grade 12 learners
9 October	Final day for Grade 12 learners Ringing of the bell ceremony Grade 12 Valediction	All Grade 12 learners and their parents
10 October	Open Day, Entrepreneurs Day & Scholarship Day	Prefects on duty
15 October	IEB NSC Exams start	All Grade 12 learners and their parents
23 to 26 October	Mid-term break	All parents, learners and staff
4 November	School holiday — Voting Day	All parents, learners and staff
11 November	End-of-year exams start	All parents, learners and staff
4 December	Last school day of the term Civvies day School closes at 11:00 Reports for Grades 8 to 11 issued	All Staff, Parents and Learners

6 ENROLMENTS FOR 2027

I would like to ask any parents who are considering enrolling a learner into our school in 2027 to contact Mrs Ludolph in the office as soon as possible to finalise the enrolment. We have had a huge number of enquiries and the Grade 8 classes, in particular, are filling up fast. Please do not leave this for later, as you may be disappointed. We are running a scholarship day on the 9th October to provide financial assistance to new enrolments into our school. Please share this information with friends and family that are looking for a school placement in 2027. Parents who refer new parents to our school, will receive a reduction on their school fee account in the last month of the year.

7 EMAIL ADDRESSES

We note that when we send emails to our parents, quite a few of our emails are being sent back to us, stating that the email address is invalid or that your email address inbox is full. Parents are missing out on important information.

Can we please urge parents to check that we have a valid email address for them, and also please check that your email address inbox is not full. The issue with full inboxes is particularly noticeable with parents who have Gmail email addresses. We thank you in advance for paying attention to this issue.

8 GRADE 12 PRELIM STATEMENT OF RESULTS

The Grade 12 Prelim Statement of Results will be issued on Monday, 5 October. This statement combines each learner's second-term mark with a report on how the learner performed in the Prelim exams.

9 EXTERNAL BENCHMARKING ASSESSMENTS

Parents are requested to note that, annually, independent schools are required to undergo external assessments to ensure that we maintain standards and comply with Umalusi requirements. Our learners will write the following:

- **Grades 8 and 9:** IBTs (International Benchmarking Tests) in English and Mathematics.
- **Grade 10:** IBTs in English and Mathematics, written only in the subjects the learner takes.
- **Grade 11:** IeBTs in Mathematics and Physical Science, written only in the subjects the learner takes.

Each assessment costs **R180**, and these costs will be added to the **October school fee statement**. Learners will only be charged for the assessments they write.

Thank you for your continued support in partnering with us. Rested, punctual learners learn better, write better and are happier at school. If you would like to discuss any concern about your child, please contact the class teacher or the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mr B Harris
EXECUTIVE HEADMASTER