



Newsletter #76

20th January 2020

Dear parents/students/friends,

2020 is well under way; the future has arrived! Since the start of the holiday, the school grounds have burst into life as a result of the generous rains which have been falling. Mr Colliver tells me that there are probably over 200 species of butterfly and moth living on the school site; SAIntS really is a haven for bio-diversity as Blantyre expands around us. We have even recently seen a family of civets on the school site.

The forthcoming weeks shall see the School's Governors seek my successor who is due to start in September of this year. I can report that over 40 applications have been received and the standard of those interested in leading our school through the next phase of its development is exceptionally high.

The School is also looking for a new position of Business Manager and the retirement of Mr Maclean after decades of service to the school leaves his position vacant. The recruitment process for these two important positions is also well under way.

All stakeholders have been involved in the process of reviewing the organisation of the school day. This

is a process which has involved the parents, teachers and students and has been ongoing for some 18 months. It is likely that there shall be some changes from September 2020 and once these are finalised you shall be informed. The COBIS inspectors agreed with the direction the School is planning to go in with slightly more time in class for students (especially Year 12).

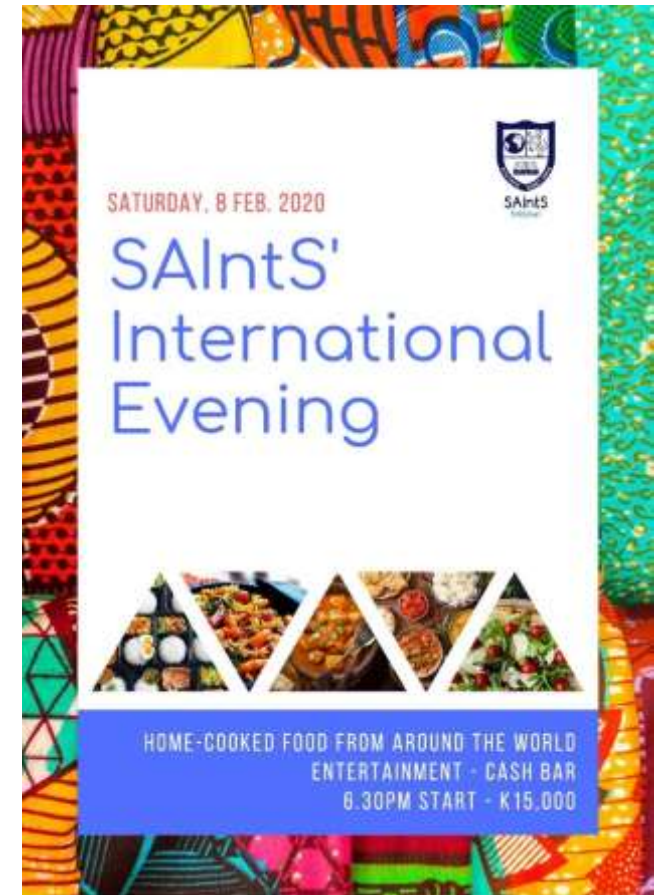
If you have not already realized, two important evenings are fast approaching; firstly our Open Evening from 6pm to 8pm on 30th January and secondly our biennial International Evening. Thank you in advance to all students, parents and staff who are involved in these evenings which showcase all that is good about SAIntS.

K P Smith, Head Teacher

SAIntS International Evening

We are still looking for some countries to be represented at the International Evening, can you provide some food or possibly entertainment? If yes please get in touch with cdoherty@saints.mw

Tickets for the evening are now on sale from Reception k15,000



Gold DofE

On a windy Saturday morning of early December, 13 students began their Gold practice journey on the school premises. As heavy bags were being loaded on the bus, smiling faces started filling its seats one by one, and soon we were set to go.

We left for Mulanje shortly after 6 o'clock, shouting and laughing throughout the 2 hour drive. We had no idea what was awaiting us...

The seven hour hike to Chambe hut, was the first of many small adventures that we would encounter. Let me repeat this, just for emphasis: the seven hour hike! Loaded with bags containing all our necessities for the next four days, we made a slow and (slightly) steady progress up the mountain. At some point, when we were convinced that we were about to die, Ujjal and I almost jumped for joy at the sight of a stream up ahead. The swim in the cold waters, left us feeling refreshed and ready to tackle the rest of the hike! However, exhaustion was quick to come back and ambush us once again, so when we were eventually greeted with the sight of the hut, we could not believe our eyes...the run-down, wooden structure in the middle of no where, to us appeared as a palace, a place fit for kings!

That night, we sat around the fireplace, enjoying a fire-cooked meal of curry and rice, while exchanging stories with a group of British travellers whom we met at the hut. Later, huddled up in our warm sleeping bags we fell into deep and much-needed sleep, with the stars watching down on us. Nida's exclamation that the moon had been shining directly in her face was received with little surprise; it was truly a bright and breathtaking moon.

Thankfully for us, the next day's hike was not as long, or as exhausting. The destination was Chisepo hut: we made it there by the early evening, and after un-packing and settling down, we spent the rest of our time playing 'kads' (or 'cards').

On the following day, the hike up to the mountain peak, Sapitwa, was optional. Amy, Annika and Nathan were the three brave warriors that chose to undertake the challenge, along with our two amazing teachers. Mrs Dean (the mother of our group) returned shortly after, with one of the guides who followed behind telling us that "the mama couldn't make it", a statement which made us all laugh. Later, we began the walk towards the third hut where we would stay for our final night. Across streams, past rocks and over bridges (which Noti

almost fell off of), we finally arrived at the hut, which was surrounded by heavy fog. We settled in for the night quite early, after a dinner of pasta and a (peculiar-looking) cheese sauce.

"WAKE UP EVERYONE", came the voice of none other than Mr Wagner, at 4:00am the next day. Although the plan was to leave as early as possible in order to avoid the rain, we ended up getting drenched on the way down. By the time we saw our beautiful bus which would bring us back home, we looked like cavemen in raincoats.

Overall, the trip was physically exhausting, but definitely one of the most memorable ones, ever!

Year 11 Imaginative Writing

During the recent Year 11 English mock examinations, students were invited to write imaginatively on the title, 'The Painting'. Promise and Nazra rose to the challenge and wrote beautifully on the topic. Please enjoy their narratives.

The Painting

By: N. Hawash

It's not rare for the eyes of a person in a portrait to seem as if they're following you. Perhaps walking down a hallway, a painting of a woman whose eyes simply don't break off from looking into yours. Or maybe dawdling towards a painting of a little boy, whose gaze intimidates you, yet intrigues you. Some eyes are like darts, bullets, shooting you in your very soul sending shivers as soon as you make eye contact. Yet some eyes are like oceans, like waves, diverse in colour and texture, impossible to look away from.

What if I told you that I am a painting? That I go by day by day in a gallery watching people walk past. Different faces, shapes, reactions, souls. Would you laugh in disbelief? Be speechless because of shock? Frown because you think I'm an absolute liar? I am a painting. I was painted in 1802, in the countryside of Italy. I'm not sure whether I'm old or young, beautiful or ugly. But from the way people look at me and look away instantly; I must be fairly scary.

I've moved around fifty times, and each time has been pretty bland, except one.

I got moved in, I think, 1963. To a gallery that seemed somewhat out of my league. It was a room of portraits. All of them glistened. Although most of them were older than me, they looked new, as if they'd been painted the day before.

My first day there, I saw probably the most amazing portrait I've ever seen. It was of a young woman, she had really dark long hair, deep and exotic eyes and a subtle blush and judgemental, yet innocent smile that made me want to know her.

When I was placed on the wall, I was placed just opposite her in a hallway narrow enough for me to examine her eyes but wide enough so that she didn't notice. "Hello?" I whispered, that same night, hoping she would be engulfed back into her painting and answer. She did. "Hi," she said, simply, yet it was all I needed to know that it was likely I was going to talk to her every day, every chance. "What's your name?" I asked. "The Mona Lisa," she answered, "and yourself?"

She had a deep foreign accent that was hard to trace. European definitely, maybe Spanish, or French, even Italian. "My name is Farmer in Italian countryside" I answered, still at a whispering tone and a quiet, calm volume. She didn't say anything

back. "Where are you from?" I asked her, "I'm not very sure, but I hope to find out one day. The people that pass say certain things under their breath that indicate I'm an Italian woman," Ah! She's Italian, I thought to myself at the time "and that I was painted by someone called Leonardo."

For the next several months, we talked like this every night. About our hopes, dreams and fears. About our past and perhaps future. About everything. And while it lasted I was very content with the idea that for the rest, or for at least most of my existence, I would spend talking to her.

Until one night, one dreaded night. There were sudden alarms and red flashing lights just as we'd been saying our goodnights. Two young men they couldn't have been more than twenty, crawled in through a window. Balancing, they took me off my nail. I think both me and the Mona Lisa were in shock, we were speechless in fact. I never said any last words to her, her who would've been the love of my life. And that's all I really remember from that night, it happened all too fast. These two young men took me away. After years of moving around, I am finally at my end; in someone's attic. That's practically death for paintings.

Usually, if not always, I sit and wonder where The Mona Lisa is now, and I miss every single feature of her face, every aspect of our conversation. I just hope she's not in an attic like me. Perhaps if I wasn't taken away, I'd be talking to her right now.

Teacher Feedback:

An extremely creative and original interpretation of the prompt.

- **Writing is perceptive and subtle**
- **Ambitious vocabulary**
- **Concise story**
- **Range of devices used to sustain the reader's interest**
- **Manipulated complex ideas**
- **Cohesive writing**

The Painting

By: P. Nkhono

'It's ruined!' the man screamed.

'Hours and hours down the drain.' Sadness etched the man's features, his joy and his excitement all washed away with the grey paint.

The stubborn sun illuminated the day as Watipatso prepared the equipment to begin to bless the piece

of plain paper that stood before him. Excitement and passion coursed through his veins as he picked up the paint brush. The twinkle in his eyes could be seen from Mars. Watipatso was about to enter the African Arts competition when the sun let the moon take the spotlight for a week. He believed this painting would be a show stopper. It would drill its beauty into the judges' minds forever.

This was his time.

His time to show everybody whatever he was capable of. To prove them all wrong. To down their barbaric nasty laughs with golden applause. A sound of cheer and approval that would hum through his body until the end of time.

The rainbow liquid danced across the paper. A festival gracing every inch. Continuing to mould together the one big family, a master piece, which would gobsmack every eye gifted with the honour to behold it. It would be fitting for Peter Mutharika!

An air of excitement and colour drifts across the whole room and the paintbrush explores the paper. A line, a map and the image of clouds screaming beautiful and magnificent cause the corners of his frown to perk upwards.

But the rain roared in.

By unexpected appearance, the rain taps violently against the windows making the man cold and all anxious.

The man had to walk.

The man had to abuse his feet to deliver him to the competition. Now, how was he meant to keep his painting safe?

His shoulders tensed up. Anxiety, fear and concern were swirling in the pools of his brown eyes.

Was this the end of his dream?

No.

With determination, Watipatso got his coat and wrapped the painting up with a spare large piece of cloth comfortably resting in the corner of the room as peaceful as a baby.

'Am going to have to run', the man solemnly told himself.

Leaves and trees being thrown around and streetlights that kept people company zoomed by him. He would make Usain Bolt proud. The rain slapped against his needs as he was determined to stand a chance of winning the competition and being the symbol of success to all his friends as well as enemies. His lungs yearned for oxygen, mentally screaming at his legs to stop running and breathe

deeply. No. He was almost there. Watipatso burst through the door. The oak wood slapping against the brick behind it. Vibrant lights illuminated the room. Bright neon lights accentuated every painting before him and highlighted the sharp, fascinated faces of the guests. An air of appreciation, money and joy coated every table and tile in the room. 'How beautiful!' he gasped.

He was here.

Watipatso then graced the golden steps of those he admired and reached Mr Bande - the Arts chairman – to submit his work.

'Good evening sir,' he gushed.

The tailored suit hung on his body; his big brown eyes held a story. A story of inspiration. This man would sign my success away to me; he thought.

His time had come.

The chairman greeted him, a warm, and sweet, like honey, voice greeted him back. Slowly Watipatso uncovered his masterpiece, excitement growing in every fibre of his being...

But, but alas ... everything was ruined.

It was over. Every brush stroke, rainbow liquid party was drawn into the depth of his nightmare. A mess.

His dreams snatched away in milliseconds.

But then the chairman. His face contorted into ...

Joy? He looked as if he was in awe of the work that should be before him.

Watipatso – whose tears were threatening to gush out like a waterfall - stared at the chairman's face in severe confusion.

Time seemingly stood still

'Sir?' Watipatso asked.

'Yes?'

'What is it?'

'What do you mean?'

'Do you not see the embarrassing mess of a painting I have created?'

'Well I think my boy this painting is – is quiet marvellous. Abstract'. The chairman said.
