



04 June 2021

Reflections

Dear Vuleka Family and Friends

I always start my day with a prayer and inspirational music to lift me up, feed my soul and be ready for the day. Early this morning, I was listening to one of my favourite artists, Oleta Adams and the title of the song, **Love Begins at Home**. Let me share part of the song:

*'In every man and woman
There is a little boy and a girl
Who've learned them from all the things
They've heard while growing up in this world
Some are raised on love and praise
The others guild and fear
The seeds of love breed confidence
The other only fears
Hear me calling you
Hear me calling you
Hear me calling out to you, yeah
Mother, father, sister, brother
Careful how you treat each other
Children just repeat what they've been shown
Remember we will reap what we have sown
Love begins at home'*

As I was listening to the song, I realised how much of a role family can play in raising children with love, respect, and dignity, including my own family. We have a responsibility to be good role models to our children before they adopt 'wrong role models' from the community or any other parts of society, including friends and school.

As parents (including myself), we must ask ourselves, what kind of environment have we created in our families. How much time do we spend with our children? Do we really know our children, or have we left it to some characters on social media to raise them? Don't you think our children have found comfort in Tik Tok than ordinary parent- child chats? As a working father/parent, I am guilty of not spending quality time with my children due to work demands but prepared to do more in this area, and I invite all parents to do the same.

We must protect our children from all that is happening within our families, parent conflict, WhatsApp videos that we share with our friends and all other inappropriate material. We cannot speak against bullying in school, but we share videos of other human beings being beaten up and made funny of, remember children see such and would think it is okay to treat other people like that.

I would really like us to be problem solvers, negotiators and be honest when facing challenges. I am concerned about the new 'culture' that has emerged in our society, and that is the culture of shaming one another on social media instead of dealing with issues and contact people involved. As a parent, I have realised how much of a responsibility I carry with me.

Another part of reflections I had this morning was, schools have a responsibility to protect children, making sure there's proper supervision but above all, be good role models to children. As teachers or any member of staff, we must treat children with respect and dignity, teach them good values: **Respect, Honesty, Integrity, Responsibility**





and Compassion (Vuleka Values). It is our responsibility to communicate with our parents, support them in educating children to be better people, ultimately, produce better citizens who would make meaningful contributions in society.

As a country and school, we are going through so much, COVID-19, unemployment, deaths due to Coronavirus, load shedding, corruption, racism, violence against women and children, bullying in schools, teachers worried about curriculum, high levels of anxiety of not knowing for how long you can keep your job or business and the list is endless. With all the above, it becomes much easier to be negative about life and forget the gift of life.

In the last few days, I have realised that we are anxious, angry, edgy, and depressed about some of the things we have no control of due to COVID-19 but have the power to work around those challenges and provide solutions.

Finally, I am concerned that some of our children are anxious, stressed, and angry due to pressures from home and school. As a school, we have run a series of workshops dealing with bullying and promoting friendships and are planning to do more. Recently, we organised a powerful Parent Talk with Darren August who is a phenomenal speaker and the purpose of that workshop was to educate, inspire and enrich our parents. I appeal to our parents to support us in dealing with challenges faced by our children.

In the event where your child comes home not happy, please ask questions to gain more insights before contacting school. The first person to contact is the teacher, and if you are not happy then escalate matter to the Head of school and if you are still not happy then contact the Executive Head.

However, it is important to approach such matters with an open mind, look at all factors contributing to the issue at hand. As a school, we want our children to be safe and enjoy coming to school.

Lastly, I appeal to the entire school community to work together, raising children with love, respect, and dignity.

‘Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it’. – Marian Wright Edelman

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