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## ST PETER'S GIRLS PREP SCHOOL

### Weekly Newsletter of the Girls JP

#### FROM THE HEADMASTER

On Tuesday morning, we hosted our Middle School, Celebration of Achievement. This was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the success of every girl in Grade 3 and 4. Next Monday, 4 December, we will host our annual Prize Giving event for Grades 5, 6 and 7. All girls in these grades are expected to attend this event dressed in their No 1s and all parents are welcome to attend. Pre-drinks will be served from 17.30 and the event starts at 18.30.

This event is not about lengthy speeches, it's about celebrating the achievements of the girls. I have, therefore, written and included my report in this, my final newsletter of the year, which will also serve as my 2017 magazine article.

#### 2017 SCHOOL REPORT

A reflection of my second year as Head of St Peter's Girls Prep School:

The first thing that comes to mind is how privileged I am to work in the St Peter's environment. I work with the most wonderful girls, amazing teachers, hugely supportive parents and incredible educational leaders in one of the most beautiful and well-resourced schools around.

Once again, our teachers have gone over and above their core duties to ensure that every girl is loved, cared for and supported, every day. Our support staff always go the extra mile to ensure our campus looks incredible. There is no doubt that our girls have embraced the many opportunities that St Peter's has presented to them, throughout this year.

In our Junior Prep, Mrs Heather Kissack and our Junior Prep staff have continued to make this crucial phase of the educational process as fun-filled and as beneficial as possible. This year's strategy has included: the successful introduction of a new reading programme, Time2Read, making Thinking and Learning Visible, designing a new reporting system, implementing relevant IT in the classroom and making use of 'Maker Space' creativity.

JP events have included - Year of the Woman, Mothers and Daughters Craft Morning, numerous coffee mornings to engage with parents on numerous academic, emotional and sporting topics and the termly 'Little Mozart's Concerts.'

Heather and Mrs Leigh Lidgley have also continued to make a significant difference to our Community Partnership school, Sefikeng. Their focus has been upgrading their literacy programme and there is no doubt that their weekly visits have achieved just that.

Our JP *Isematholeni* Intern Programme has continued to provide our amazing interns with the teaching skills and experience that will no doubt provide them with the opportunity to teach, once fully qualified, anywhere in our country.

In terms of JP staffing, we are delighted to congratulate the following staff who have been promoted to Lead Teachers in 2018: Mrs Janet Buck will lead our Literacy programme, Mrs Sheena Steyn will lead our Numeracy programme and Miss Lauren Keeve will lead our Ed Tech initiatives. We are also thrilled to announce that Mrs Robyn von Ginkel (our current Remedial Therapist) has been appointed as our new Grade 1 teacher and Miss Lerato Mafatle has been appointed as our new Grade 0 teacher. Lerato has had a number of years at St Peter's, as an intern, and is more than ready to take up the challenge of a full time teacher. Mrs Leanne Fleming has also been appointed as our dedicated JP Physical Education Teacher in 2018.

Our JP Department has many exciting initiatives in the pipeline for 2018 – all will be revealed at our Information Evenings next year.

In the Senior Prep, under the watchful eye of Pam van Gass, 2017 has been a year of cementing the core academic skills or three 'Rs' of Reading, Writing and 'Rithmetic' whilst at the same time starting an academic journey to ensure we are providing our girls with the critical skills they will need in the future.

As usual, our International Benchmark Results (IBTs), our local Grade 7 Benchmarking process and our wonderful scholarship results confirmed that our core skills are indeed, in place.

In terms of 21<sup>st</sup> Century teaching, we experimented with an Inquiry-Based Lesson, which we called 'Exploration and Learning.' It involved a number of teachers collaborating in an extended weekly period in attempt to provide the girls with meaningful project-based assignments. This integrates the fundamental principles of the FLP Programme, namely, interest-driven, maximum engagement and accelerated learning, into our units of inquiry. We also introduced STEM (Science, Technology and Mathematics). We have reflected on both these processes and will be making some adjustments for added educational benefit next year.

Pam also introduced an *Access to Teacher* time this year, which gave the Senior Prep girls a timeslot to get reinforcement from their respective teachers or simply use it as a time to read or do homework.

Our Student-Led Conferences were introduced to reinforce a mindset that the girls need to take responsibility for their own learning. This process also required a change in our reporting process. Constructive feedback in this regard, will enable us to make further improvements in the New Year.

Mrs Rachel Amm and her Middle School teachers have ensured that our little ones coming up from the Junior Prep, have felt cared for and loved. Rachel has taken numerous Middle School assemblies this year and is always looking at ways to enhance the effectiveness of our Middle School teaching.

In terms of staffing in the Senior Prep, we say a sad farewell to Mrs Lee Pace, who is retiring to spend time with her daughters. Lee has served our school with distinction for the past eight years.

We also say a sad farewell to Miss Jabulisile Mtshweni. Jabu started her teaching career as an intern here at St Peter's and is going to gain further experience at Steyn City School. Mrs Cathy Linnell, sadly, will be leaving us at the end of the first term. Cathy is taking up a new position as Head of Maths in the Boys School.

Our very own Mrs Kerryn Schmidt will replace Lee Pace, as Head of IT and Coding. Miss Biotumelo Ledwaba, who has taught previously at Reddam Waterfall and Jan Celliers Primary, will replace Miss Mtshweni. Mrs Leigh van

Rooyen has been appointed as our new librarian when she completes her locum for Mrs Leigh Tennant in February, next year. Mrs Carmen Whitfield has been appointed as our new Remedial teacher in the Senior Prep. Carmen is actually a qualified Educational Psychologist, but will initially be focused on assisting any of our girls who require remedial assistance.

I am also delighted to announce the following promotions in the Senior Prep: Mrs Rose Nkomo is our new Head of isiZulu, Mrs Leigh Tennant, is our new Head of English, and Mrs Ritchie is our new Head of Thinking Skills for 2018. On the Girls School Management Team (MANCO), Mrs Amm, Mrs Eggett and Mrs Schmitt have all been promoted to Directors of their respective areas.

We have achieved some excellent sporting results this year. Our new Netball Club on Saturday mornings has proved to be a great success and hugely beneficial for our netball girls. It's been wonderful to see so many girls at our early morning tennis practice sessions. This dedication has paid off and is evident in the results our tennis girls have achieved this year – particularly our First Team girls who travelled to the Midlands to play a number of schools. Our hockey girls also did really well on their tour – also to the Midlands. Our swimmers and athletes did themselves very proud this year. I was particularly impressed with the number of girls who took part in our various voluntary Cross Country and Biathle events that took place towards the end of this year.

We say a sad farewell to Mrs Kagiso Musi this year and thank her for her incredible commitment to our school over the many years. We wish her everything of the best as she joins St Catherine's next year, to be closer to home. We are however, delighted to announce that Mrs Keitumetse Makola will be joining us next year. Keitumetse has taught at Brescia House for a number of years. She has a degree in Sports Management and I know she will add tremendous value to our school. We are also delighted to announce the employment of Miss Charné Badenhorst. Charné is a qualified biokineticist and joins us as a Master Coach. There is no doubt that she too will have a significant impact on our sporting programme next year.

A huge thank you to our Sports Department, very ably led by Liz Ashmore.

Under the amazing leadership of Marguerite Schmitt, Music has continued to grow from strength to strength in our school. We have had more girls than ever learning an instrument. A large proportion of these girls undertook theory and practical exams and achieved phenomenal results.

Our iPad Band continues to grow and the girls had a number of opportunities to perform. Our various choirs performed at the highest standard, and our Chamber Choir enjoyed their tour to White River and Nelspruit. Our thanks goes to Hugo who ensures that the Chamber and Chapel Choir always provide thrilling performances.

Next year, our strategic imperative is to take our Orchestra to another level. We have employed a number of new teachers who will take various ensembles during the day, which will culminate in an orchestra practice once a week.

This year, Mrs Cara Eggett focused all her energy on our Pastoral Care Programme in the Senior Prep. Girls needing special attention are mentioned at morning meetings and we have met once a week with Father Richard and Pam van Gass to discuss girls at risk, either emotionally or academically to ensure we are supporting them one way or another.

This year Cara has also developed a document that outlines what aspects of leadership are taught at different levels within the school, culminating in a leadership programme that takes place in Grade 6 and Grade 7. Our first ever Grade 7 Keys Leadership Camp took place early in the year. This camp focused on critical leadership skills that

our Grade 7s were able to implement throughout the year. A huge thank you to Mrs Cathy Linnell who organised this camp.

In terms of transformation, a significant number of courageous conversations have taken place this year, not only in our staffroom between teachers, but in parent forums hosted by our Transformation Committee and at Council level.

The overarching theme being that discrimination of any form will never be tolerated at St Peter's Prep and that every child, employee of St Peter's and parent feels welcome and accepted as an equal member of our family. This year we were delighted to appoint Mrs Thobile Kizito into a position of class teacher, Miss Lerato Mafatle as our new Grade 0 teacher and we were delighted with an increased diversity of parents who have volunteered to be class reps and involve themselves in various committees. I would like to thank Mrs Susan Wolfenden for her incredible effort in chairing our Transformation Committee and Mrs Malope Mabizela who co-chairs our Parents Association and who has been instrumental in persuading so many parents to become involved in school committees. Malope organized the most amazing Football Festival this Year.

In terms of building projects, we have completed our new Media Centre and Coding Room, our new Staffroom and our multipurpose surface. Our Chapel has also been renovated thanks to some incredibly generous donations from a few of our parents.





WHAT I LEARN TODAY  
DOESN'T MAKE YESTERDAY  
**w**rong.  
IT MAKES TOMORROW  
**b**etter.

Financial considerations have delayed the building of our new classrooms until 2019, and the upgrade of Keys Pavilion will take place after that.

I need to thank so many people for their support and commitment to our school this year. On a personal note, I would like to thank my dear wife Jo for putting up with all my nonsense, and my kids, Jess and Jont for their understanding of needing to share their dad with 500 girls!

Thank you too, to Greg and Rob for their support, to the chairman of Council, Mr Steve du Toit and the Council for their commitment to our school and their support. To our EC (Grainne Formby, Nicky Thompson, Ellen Ngcongco and Cathy Page) and our PA (Robyn Doak, Malope Mabizela and the team) for all their work behind the scenes to communicate with parents and raise money for the school. To my Management team, the Girls School Exec and our administrative support for their dedication to our school, in particular Non and my PA, Paula.

Most importantly, though, a huge thank you to our girls, our teachers and all our parents for making our school what it is today and this, I believe, is the reason why I'm so privileged to teach here!

Have a good weekend! Nibe nempelasonto emnandi!

Darrel Webb (*Headmaster*)

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## FROM THE JP HEAD

### GRADE 2s ARE TRANSITIONING

At the Grade 2 Service of Thanksgiving, I steered our girls on their way to 'Middle School' and celebrated and honoured their growth and progress to date and then introducing them to the next stage of their academic journey.

The path of a JP girl is very exciting, and transformational . . . the proverbial butterfly image comes to mind when I look at them and think about how much they have grown and how exciting their world has been for them each day!

With our 'Year of the Woman' and thinking about growing, I researched characteristics that are typical of woman who are strong. They include: *optimistic, hardworking, resilient, passionate, authentic, confident, embracing change and having a strong sense of self, values and voice.*

I am proud to say that our girls embody every one of these characteristics; *optimistic* in spirit and attitude, *hardworking* to the point of fault. These girls are *resilient* as the *manage change* and problem based learning in dealing with the inquiry based learning opportunities we as a staff afford them, and *passionate* about their learning and also having fun! Their ability to embrace their strengths and challenge supports their *authenticity*, and they will show you today how they have grown their *confidence* and show their *strong sense of self* through self-expression, their solid *value* base and finally you will hear and experience their *voice*. I encourage enjoying this special time of joy and thanksgiving. I wish each one of you girls and your families a very special holiday season and the very best in Grade 3.

### **MANY THANKS!!!**

Parents are so involved in our school, from our Class Parents to all those who help with the Puzzle Library, Hot Dog day and other functions through the year - including covering books and helping in classrooms and at special functions. I wish to thank you all and say that without this support, we would not function as smoothly as we do.

To the EC of 2018, Ellen Ngongo and Cathy Page, your efforts and hard work have been amazing. You are loyal and supportive in every way. How could I ever have made this year work as well without your help?

### **GOOD LUCK IN SP KERRYN SCHMIDT**

Kerryn Schmidt is moving up the hill. As a Grade 0 teacher, Kerryn has been an amazing team member, participating in creating curriculum, collaborating on Makerspace and Learning Lands and ultimately, growing into our IT Co-ordinator at the JP. She will take on Head of IT and Coding at the Senior Prep and is very excited about this new opportunity for growth and development. Kerryn will continue to support the JP and will work closely with Lauren Keeve to keep a sense of focus on the same goal. We wish her all the very best.

### **SUNSET CAROLS ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **Rehearsal for Grade 2 Choir Girls: Saturday, 2 December**

Dress Code: Civvies with a hat

Venue: Mvukuzane Field

Please provide a snack pack as this is a long session.

Junior and Cadet Choir (Gr 2-4) **08:45-10:00**

#### **Performance: 18:00-20:30**

Dress Code: White school shirt, blue jeans and white trainers.

Choristers arrive: 17:45 (backstage)

### **FAREWELL KAGI MUSI**

Kagi Musi started at St Peter's last year, and she has been a diligent and hard-working member of staff. She has been active in our Phys. Ed. Department and been a strong role-model to our girls - athletic and very enthusiastic. We will miss you a great deal, Kagi.

**FAREWELL TO THE FOLLOWING CHILDREN**

We would also like to wish the following children a fond farewell as they begin a new journey at other schools, in other cities and even countries! Once a St Peter's Girl, always a St Peter's Girl.

Farewell: Emily Elliott, Kate Vermeulen, Xintian Li, Tamar Harris, Kamo Musi, Skyla Jerome, Taylin Hilliard-Lomas, Kiara Thomson, Chloe van Schalkwyk, Milla de Beer and Zoe Shaw.

**FAREWELL TO MICHELE HALA AND MARIA SHILALUKI**

We wish Michele and Maria all the best for their new careers in teaching in 2018. Both ladies are taking on teaching positions in local private schools and we are very proud of their success. We will miss them tremendously and hope that they come and visit us often.

**SCHOOL UNIFORM UPDATE**

We are starting to include one red sports golf shirt in Grade 0 next year. Grade 1 and Grade 2 girls can buy one as and when all our Grade 0 children have got their uniforms. We will continue to wear white golf shirts until there is no more in stock. The red shirts will only be compulsory in 2019.

It will be compulsory to wear a white shirt on Chapel days.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

I hope you all have the most wonderful Christmas with your families and friends. Looking forward to seeing you all in the New Year!

With much love,

**Heather Kissack** (*JP Head*)

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**MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

Music applications for 2018 are now open for new and existing students.

Please complete the online application to secure your daughters spot for 2018 before the end of term.

Please follow the online link for the 2018 music applications.

<https://goo.gl/forms/W3WUcaVlsvCt9uuB3>

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**CHRISTMAS BOXES**

A huge thank you to the St Peter's family who so generously supported the Christmas box initiative. On Christmas morning, you will have made a joyous difference in the lives of the children at St Mungo's, Diepsloot.

Blessings

Fr Richard (*Chaplain*)

## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

### CECILIA NETO

Cecilia joined St Peter's Prep School in 1999 working in various administration and Accounting roles. She then became PA to the previous Business Manager, Rob Dyer and from there evolved into Operations and is the longest serving member in the Operations department overseeing the various roles, namely: Catering, Maintenance, Internal transport, Grounds and Security.

Cecilia's tenure has seen her witness the College and Girl's school coming into existence.

Cecilia is an avid walker, walking faster than most people can run! A useful skill in her role, which demands her to be on top of things on both sizeable campuses.

Cecilia has two sons Nicholas and Marc, both qualified CA's and they are both living in London passionately pursuing their financial careers. An exciting time lies ahead for Cecilia as her eldest son is coming home to get married in December.



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## SECURITY DISCS 2018

Parents will receive two security discs in their daughter's report envelope. Please DO NOT throw these away.

Please place on your car windscreen for access into the school next year; otherwise the guards will have to stop you. This is for the safety of our St Peter's Family, thank you.

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## LIBRARY BOOKS

Please ensure all library books are returned to school next week.

Many thanks.

Zanele Mbatha

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**ONLY ONE DAY LEFT!**



**1 WEEK LEFT**

**WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE.**

Don't forget to drop your slips, with your name and number on the back, in the entry boxes at all receptions in order to stand a chance to win the Nespresso Coffee Machine. Draw will take place on 2 December at Sunset Carols

NESPRESSO ZENIUS  

## Christmas Holiday Club for Grade 0, 1 and 2 girls

**Dates:** Friday 8 December - Thursday 14 December

**Time:** 8am - 12pm

**Cost:** R220 per day



Let us keep you entertained! We have planned exciting Christmas baking and crafts as well as a bike riding day. Bring your friends and siblings too!

**FUN! FUN! FUN!**



Please book in advance with either Mrs Buck, Mrs Steyn or Mrs Montagu to secure your place. Maximum 25 girls per day

**WEEKS AHEAD**

02/12/2017	09:00:00	10:00:00	Sunset Carols Choir Rehearsal on Stage	Gr 2,3,4	
02/12/2017	14:00:00	17:00:00	Christmas Market		
02/12/2017	18:00:00	20:00:00	Sunset Carols		
04/12/2017	10:00:00	11:00:00	Puppet Show "A Christmas Story"		
05/12/2017	09:00:00	09:30:00	Meet 2018 Teachers		
06/12/2017	08:30:00	13:45:00	Pinocchio Pantomime		JHB Civic Theatre
<b>07/12/2017</b>	<b>11:00:00</b>	<b>11:00:00</b>	<b>ADVENT TERM ENDS</b>		

**SECOND TERM, 2018**

Please note that school will be starting on Thursday, 3 May 2018 for the Trinity Term. This will allow for Staff Development to take place on Wednesday, 2 May, in the knowledge that Tuesday, 1 May is a Public Holiday.

**SUNSET CAROLS – SATURDAY, 2 DECEMBER**

R120 Adults; R60 Children or reserve a table for 8 to 12 people at R220 per person.

Times: Christmas Market - 15:00 and Sunset Carols – 18:00

**NOTE:** Marimba, Orchestra, Drumline and Choir Children get in free as they are performing.

This includes: Grade 2 Choir, Cadet Choir, Chapel Choir and Chamber Choir.

Pre- Order DVDs at R150 each.

Tickets will be sold on the day.

