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**ST PETER'S
GIRLS PREP SCHOOL**

Merry Christmas



FROM THE HEADMASTER

Last night was our Annual Prize Giving Ceremony. This was an opportunity to celebrate the many successes of our Girls in Gr 5, 6 and 7. (We recognised and celebrated our Middle School girls at our *Celebration of Achievement* Service last week). Prize Givings are usually an opportunity for Heads of schools to give their report on the year. You will have been relieved that wasn't the case last night! Instead, I share my report in this newsletter, for your interest:

2019 GIRLS SCHOOL REPORT

Gratitude turns what we have into enough . . .

This report is an opportunity to express gratitude in as many ways as possible.

An attitude of gratitude has to start with our phenomenal teaching staff; the ladies and gentlemen who dedicate themselves to the academic, emotional, social, cultural and sporting development of every girl in our school, every day!

Starting in the Junior Prep, our amazing JP Teachers have explored so many new and exciting initiatives this year. They have enhanced our "learn through play" philosophy whilst at the same time made every effort to ensure that each girl is learning at their own pace and understanding.

We are grateful for our new teachers, who were employed this year, to head-up five critical areas of our school: Mr Steyn, as Head of Sport, Mrs Ellis, as Head of Science, Miss Morey as Head of English and Mrs Gordon as Head of

Maths. Not forgetting one 'not so new' teacher, in Mrs Attlee, our founding Headmistress, who was appointed to head up our Junior Prep.

I am grateful for our Interns and our Intern programme. I don't believe there is another Prep School in the country that gives so many young individuals an opportunity to complete an apprenticeship in teaching and at the same time gain a qualification and add significant value to the lives of all our girls and staff.

Gratitude needs to be expressed to School Council for enabling us to finish building the Girls School. By the end of this year, we will have the following new additions:

- A new Tree House Art Room. This new Art Room is literally in the branches of the gorgeous Jacaranda Trees, next to the tennis courts.
- The ever increasing and dynamic music department will expand into the old Art Room and give us a whole new space for our orchestra and marimba bands.
- A new Library. While so many schools are closing down their libraries in favour of screen reading, we have made a strategic decision to provide a quiet space for girls to 'chill' and read a book.
- Our old library becomes our new 'flexispace'. This is a space that allows an entire grade to be taught at once with an ability to form small breakaway discussion groups after a plenary session. The flexispace will also be used for Coding and Robotics.
- A new Pastoral Care Unit. This comprises of an office for Mrs Eggett and a lounge area for her Life Orientation lessons.
- A new Academic Support Unit. This is an open plan space for small group teaching. An office for Mr Blackhurst, a parent meeting room and new space for our Educational Psychologist.
- A new Board Room.
- A new Locker Room for Grades 6 & 7.
- An upgraded Keys Pavilion. This has included a revamp of the toilets and changing areas and a new Sickbay. The PA kindly donated new furniture for this space.

Gratitude must be afforded to Mrs Pam van Gass for driving an incredible Academic Programme. The main focus of 2019 has been to develop a Personalised Learning Programme for every girl in our school. If one of our Grade 4 girls are reading and computing at a Grade 6 level, they should be given the opportunity to do so. Our drive to motivate our girls to think critically and creatively has also continued to grow in strength this year, with so many creative Inquiry-Based projects and learning opportunities.

I didn't think it would be possible to improve on the standard of music, art and drama from previous years, but I truly believe we have. Gratitude here must go to our Director of Music, Mrs Schmitt and Mrs da Silva for their efforts in teaching our girls a profound love and passion for music. To our Head of Drama, Mrs Aspelung and her team of teachers for directing the most amazing Grade 7 play and for instilling a love for the stage and the self-confidence to perform. To 'Juffie' (Mrs van der Watt) for her incredible ability to motivate our girls to express themselves through various forms of Art. Although the process is always more important than the end product, the 'end products' have been quite astounding. To Mr Roodt and Mr van der Walt for their unbelievable ability to get our Senior Choirs to sing at the level they have this year. It's often hard to believe these are Prep School Choirs.

In his first year as Head of Sport, Mr Steyn has done the most amazing job and we are so grateful that he decided to join us. Mr Steyn and his team of dedicated teachers and coaches have achieved some excellent results this year. The Junior Prep Sports day, organised by Mrs Fleming and Miss Mashabela was another great success. The Sports Department introduced Soccer as a new sport in the Girls School this year; they revamped the Senior Prep Sports Day and brought in many more coaches to guide and motivate our girls to give of their best in our various codes of sport. Our sports tours were also hugely successful.

I am grateful to Mrs Whitfield, employed as our Educational Psychologist, and her team of therapists for their consistent and dedicated efforts to work with our girls who experience difficulties with the academic curriculum. Mrs Whitfield has also assisted us in developing our Personalised Learning Programme this year.

I am extremely grateful to Mrs Eggett (Mrs 'Eggie') for being our emotional backbone in the Girls School. Cara has developed a number of staff wellness activities this year and every day she has been the 'go to' person for the girls' – for life's emotional and social challenges.

I am grateful to nurse Nosipho for looking after those who fall ill and to Father Richard for taking care of our spiritual needs. The Church is, after all, the centre of everything we do every day!

I am grateful to our support staff. The ladies and gentlemen who clean and maintain our school every day. The ladies in the accounts office, the HR Department, Marketing, Admissions, Reception and Administration. I am particularly grateful to my phenomenal PA, Mrs Paula Gouveia. Paula is an interior designer, a chef, a nurse, a shoulder to cry on and somehow manages to get me to the right place at the right time every day.

Our security guards greet us with a smile and a wave every morning! For this, I am so grateful. Particular mention needs to be made of Mr David Sentse for going beyond the call of duty to look after us all, in the Girls Prep.

I am grateful for our Rector, Mr Royce (*Gramps!*) and the Head of our Boys Prep, Mr Rob Macaulay. Greg has set the tone and ethos at St Peter's for the past 25 years. There is no one more passionate about St Peter's than Gramps. Rob is the most patient, levelheaded and supportive colleague I have ever worked with. I am so grateful to work with these two inspirational men.

I am grateful to our parents, guardians and grandparents. First and foremost, if it wasn't for you, St Peter's wouldn't exist. Thank you to our parents who have given of their time in volunteering to be a part of our numerous committees and events. Thank you to our moms and dads who have made the lunches, helped with homework, driven here there and everywhere and supported your daughters through the good and the difficult times.

Sincere gratitude goes to every girl in our school for being who they are. Our girls have worked hard and played hard this year and I am so proud of each and every one of them. A special mention must be made of our Grade 7 Class of 2019. We wish you every success in the future as you venture into the world of High School. Please know that you are thoroughly prepared for every challenge that life will undoubtedly throw at you.

My final gratitude must go to my family, my wife Jo and our children, Jess and Jont. Without their love and support, I would struggle to do what I do every day.

'We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude.' Cynthia Ozick

Have a wonderful festive season!

Darrel Webb (*Headmaster*)

2020 PARENT INFORMATION EVENINGS

Please save the date for Parent Information Evenings for 2020. Invites will be sent out at the start of the academic year.

Grade 3 and 4	Thursday, 16 January 2020	18:00	Royce Hall and classrooms
Grade 5 to 7	Thursday, 23 January 2020	18:00	Royce Hall and classrooms

A LETTER FROM THE BAIN FAMILY

Dear St Peter's Girls, Parents and Staff,

Thank you so much for the bright paper chains and cheerful pom poms that you made for Georgie's rainbow Christmas tree. The tree is spectacular and it is so special to know that so many little hands went into making it. Georgie loves watching the lights sparkling through the bright colours. Many of you may know us, but for those that don't, Georgie was diagnosed with a brain tumor in her Grade 1 year at St Peter's, in 2017. Since then she has had a number of surgeries, a lot of chemo and weeks and weeks of radiation.

Despite all this she is a happy girl who has always loved going back to spend time at St Peter's, her happy place. The warmth and love that the girls and staff have shown her has been the best medicine when life is completely not what it should be for a 9 year old.

Thanks for all the love and support and wishing you all a wonderful holiday with many special times with your family and friends.

With love,

Grant, Kerrin, Ethan and Georgie Bain



SPANNS OF SPORT HOLIDAY ROUND ROBIN TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Venue: St Stithians Boys Tennis Courts

Date: 9 – 12 December

Time: 08:30 – 13:00

Please contact Nadine on 083 306 2886 for more information.



Robotics Holiday Club scheduled for 9 - 13 December has unfortunately had to be cancelled.



Grade 2, 3 & 4 HOLIDAY OUTDOOR CLUB

Mrs Fleming, Mr Steyn, Ms Mashabela and Mrs Clarke will be holding an Outdoor Holiday Club in the December Holidays. It will run from Monday, 9 December - Friday, 13 December. We will be having the best time swimming, playing outdoor sports/activities, riding bikes and a range of other unusual sports. There will be music, dancing and mostly **GOOD FUN!** Girls may sign up for all days or selected days on the **sign-up sheet** on the Holiday Club board at the JP and SP sports boards. All information can be found on this board. Please include your email, with your child's name and take a sign-up sheet and information letter. Payments to Mrs Fleming before the end of term.

Cost: R220 per child, per day.

CLOSING TIME – THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER

School closes at 11:00 on Thursday, 5 December.

Kerryn Schmidt

(Director of EdTech and Organisation & Administration)