

Dear Junior School Parents

Driving to work on Thursday morning this week, the 702 news reporter referenced President Cyril Ramaphosa's address the previous evening as 'the nation's family meeting'. This description resonated with me, because as a child when important matters had to be discussed we gathered as a family and together we committed to working towards a solution or favourable outcome. The same is true when we are gathered together by our President to here the latest update on the pandemic and to reaffirm our commitment to do our part to curb the spread of the virus.

Almost all sectors of the economy are now open, and this has and will give everyone a greater sense of freedom and movement. Some might interpret this as 'the pandemic is over' while others continue to understand that the threats are far from over, but the livelihoods of the people of this nation need to resume. The Government has continued to grapple with the trade-off between public safety and reviving economies – lives vs livelihoods.

My plea to parents, girls and staff is to please be cautious and considerate of others in the daily decisions taken. We are all interlinked and if one of us acts negligently with regards to the advised protocols, then the domino effect of many being impacted is very likely.

Please consider and remember the following points:

- If you present with any one of the following symptoms do not come to school – fever, tiredness, cough, shortness of breath, body aches and pains, redness of the eyes, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting
- No mask = no entry
Standing at the gates this week to welcome the girls back, I have watched many parents get out of their cars unmasked to engage with other parents. The girls need staff and parents to role model good mask etiquette at all times.
- Always maintain the social distancing regulations of 1.5m.
- If you or a member of your family has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please do inform the school so that we remain informed and can do all that is possible to ensure the health and safety of the greater community.

Now more than ever this hashtag applies #StrongerTogether. Thank you to every member of our greater school community for doing what is necessary to ensure the health and safety of those around us.

I look forward to welcoming the girls to school in their pyjamas on Monday and Tuesday next week in celebration of the Winter Solstice.

REMINDERS

Half term:

Half term will start at 12:00 on Friday, 26 June and girls will be expected at school and online on Monday, 6 July.

August holidays:

School will close on Friday, 31 July and re-open on Tuesday, 1 September.

Personal devices:

Girls are reminded to make sure their devices are charged before they come to school.



If she believes in herself...she will fly.

Celebrating the change of season

In celebration of the Winter Solstice on Saturday, 20 June, our girls may have a Pyjama Day at school.

Girls attending onsite learning on Monday, 22 June, and Tuesday, 23 June, may come to school dressed in their pyjamas, gowns and slippers, to celebrate the shortest day and longest night in the Southern Hemisphere.



Return to school plan - Final grades to be phased in

Grade 2, 3, 6 and 7 girls all have had contact days at school and we look forward to welcoming our Grade 4 and 5 girls next week and our Grade 0s and 1s when we return to school after half term.

Grade 0 and 1:

- ◇ **Grade 0 and 1 returning to school orientation day on Thursday, 25 June:** Grade 0s and 1s are invited to an orientation day on Thursday, 25 June. This is to help the girls to get familiar with the procedures at school. Grade 0s and 1s may bring a parent to school on the day to accompany them through the screening process on arrival and to their classrooms. The orientation time for Grade 1s will be from 08:30—09:30 and for Grade 0s from 10:30—11:30. Please adhere to the times allocated for the orientation and to the one parent per child request to assist us in following social distance regulations.
- ◇ Please note the change in the phasing in of our Grade 0s. Grade 0F will have their contact days on Mondays and Tuesdays and Grade 0G will have their contact days on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

<p>Mon 22 June</p> <p>Gr 6, Gr 3 and Gr 4 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Tues 23 June</p> <p>Gr 7, Gr 2 and Gr 5 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Wed 24 June</p> <p>Gr 6, Gr 3 and Gr 4 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Thurs 25 June</p> <p>Gr 7, Gr 2 and Gr 5 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Fri 26 June</p> <p>All grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home</p>
<p>Mon 06 July</p> <p>Gr 0F, Gr 3, Gr 4 and Gr 6 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Tues 07 July</p> <p>Gr 0F, Gr 1, Gr 2, Gr 5 and Gr 7 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Wed 08 July</p> <p>Gr 0G, Gr 3, Gr 4 and Gr 6 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Thurs 09 July</p> <p>Gr 0G, Gr 1, Gr 2, Gr 5 and Gr 7 to return to school. All other grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>	<p>Fri 10 July</p> <p>All grades to continue with the Distance Learning programme at home.</p>

IMPORTANT: Parents are reminded to complete the **weekly attendance surveys** on Thursdays/Fridays to indicate their daughters' attendance the following week. This is of utmost importance to assist us with teacher/learner ratios planning and logistics while meeting the social distancing regulations.

Please refer to the following documents to assist with the rules and regulation when girls to return to school:

- ◇ 'Arrangements for returning to school' document shared on the class WhatsApp groups
- ◇ St Mary's DSG Visitor's Protocol - shared on D6 Communicator ([Visitor's Protocol](#))

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Physical Education ~ Coach N Mothiba

Physical education will continue when girls return to school. We are aware that it is uncomfortable for the girls to participate in physical activity while wearing a mask. We have put measures in place to ensure that girls are comfortable and keep proper social distancing when doing PE without wearing masks. When girls come for PE they will be required to stand at least five meters apart. All PE lessons will be on the athletics track, to allow safe distance between girls. All lessons have been prepared in a way that girls do not break the social distancing rules. Please remember the following for lessons:

- ◇ Girls must come to school in their PE clothes to avoid having to change.
- ◇ All girls must come to PE class with their sports bags so they can store their clothes should they feel the need to take off some layers.
- ◇ There will be no equipment used for all lessons.
- ◇ There are hand sanitisers available for the girls when they return to class.

Outreach News ~ Mrs A van Wyk

We are excited to say that we'll be continuing with our Lent Knitting project. Blankets bought, knitted or sewn are all welcome. Every shape size and colour. They must just be a whole blanket because due to the times we are in we cannot have squares and strips to put together. There is a massive need for anything warm. We will be collecting blankets right up until the 28th of July 2020.

Blankets need to be packed in a plastic bag and girls can drop them off at the Junior School reception in the box provided. If your daughter is not returning to school but you would like to donate a blanket you are welcome to leave it with the security guards at the front gate and Mrs van Wyk will fetch them there.

Together with warm blankets goes a full tummy and so we are partnering with an NPO called Sunnyside Up (A-Deed-A-Day). This NPO provides food parcels and soup to residents in need in the Hatfield, Arcadia and Sunnyside area. They support everyone from the homeless and elderly to orphanages and students who have found themselves in dire need. They partner with various organisations and businesses and we would like to support them with the following items:



Mealie Meal	Fruit	Tin food
Rice	Peanut butter	Pasta
Sugar	Potatoes	Cooking oil
Soya	Cabbage	Baked beans
Salt	Onions	Hand soap

The items can be dropped off at the Junior School office in the box provided.

Thank you for the continued support.



Distance Learning Portal

Please make sure you have accessed the **NEW** timetables and weekly schedules on the Distance Learning Portal on the school website or directly via this URL:

<http://www.stmarys.pta.school.za/distancelearning>

The schedules are loaded weekly on a Friday afternoon and should be referenced in conjunction with the grade's timetable.



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PARENT FEEDBACK ON WELLNESS WINDOW ACTIVITIES ~ The Counselling Centre

Dear Parents,

This week we focused the Wellness Window activities on the topic of resilience. Resilience is the ability of an individual to recover from a challenge. The activities were called "Overcoming Obstacles" and "I Can Do Hard Things". Grit and resilience are two characteristics that can be developed and are helpful to children as they navigate the challenges that we all face in life.

We found some activities that help build grit and resilience in children that we would like to share with you, as supportive ideas that could be useful to you as a family:

◇ **Discuss dreams and goals**

Encourage your daughter to focus on her goals and dreams for the future as motivation. It can also be useful to discuss the steps needed to achieve her goals.

◇ **Encouraging children to do "grit interviews"**

Encourage your daughter to talk with other adults she admires, who have worked hard towards long term goals. She can investigate what helped these individuals reach their goals.

◇ **Sharing stories of famous people who demonstrated 'grit'**

Discuss how famous people didn't always 'make it' immediately. Sharing stories of the failures others experienced by famous individuals can demonstrate how perseverance through failure and challenges can lead to success.

◇ **Using nature and literature as starting points for discussions**

Looking at an image of a plant growing through concrete or in a difficult environment or reading a book together (e.g. The little engine that could) can lead to discussions about what your daughter finds hard in her own life. By helping her draw comparisons and make connections to her own life you can assist her in thinking about what helps her succeed and/or learn as she takes steps forward.

◇ **Ask "what is the hard part?"**

When a child feels frustrated, she may want to avoid the whole task or experience. Assisting her in putting it into perspective by identifying the part that is hard can help her feel more in control. You can then brainstorm together how to overcome the hard part of a task.

◇ **Share your own passions and lessons learned**

Sharing your interests and passions and the lessons you have learned along the way – possibly through failures – also demonstrates to your daughter that mistakes are opportunities for learning and that challenges can be overcome. These stories can be valuable tools to model resilience to your daughter as she learns and grows.

Kind regards



ALISON JENNINGS (MRS)

PRINCIPAL: JUNIOR SCHOOL

Stay connected via the School's Social Media platforms:

Facebook - <http://www.stmarys.pta.school.za/>

Instagram - @stmarysdsgpta