St Mary's
DIOCESAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

ST MARY'S MATTERS

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Dear St Mary's DSG Community

The end of the year is hurtling towards us, and I am sure that all our girls are eager for the break that awaits.

The end of the year is always a time when we must say farewell to some of our community.

As I write this the matrics have finally completed their exams and it seems to have been relatively smooth. Let us hope so! We wish them God-speed in their futures.

The following staff are leaving the School:

Ms Carna Kriel. Miss Kriel joined us in 2004. Miss Kriel has made a very significant contribution to the School in Sport, Leadership and Mathematics in the Junior School. We wish her very well and thank her for her legacy at St Mary's DSG.

Mrs Sabashnee Govender. Mrs Govender joined the School in 2005, and has played an integral part in guiding the School, both educators and generations of Senior School pupils, towards efficient and effective IT usage. We thank her for her offering over these years and wish her and her family well as they emigrate.

Mrs Lizel Pollard. Mrs Pollard joined the School in 2008. She is a magnificent Accounting teacher and a consummate professional educator. She has had significant pastoral input into the lives of many girls of the School, never being just about the academic, but about life lessons as well.

Mr Dale Calitz joined the Junior School staff in 2015 and we wish him well as he takes his expertise to the Far East in the immediate future.

Mrs Robyn Keys also joined the Boarding House staff in 2015 and is also moving to the Far East to teach. We wish her health and happiness.

Miss Tariro Pamacheche has been an intern and teacher in the Junior School since 2015. She is an extremely talented educator and we are sorry that she cannot remain at St Mary's DSG.

Ms Lelo Jiyane joined the administration staff towards the end of 2016. She has proved a vital cog in the administration of Boarding House, EduAdmin and other issues. She has become well loved and respected and will be missed. She takes up the post of Head of Boarding at St Andrew's School, Senderwood. We wish her every success.

Mr Mdu Msomi has been the introductory full time teacher of Zulu in the Senior School. We thank him for his efforts and wish him well as he returns to Johannesburg.

Miss Tshwarelo Mkhabela has finished her two year internship with us and we wish her well and thank her for the role she has played in the Junior school.

We also greet the girls who for various reasons will be moving on from St Mary's DSG. We hope that they understand that they will always be "daughters of the King." This is not a title that can ever be lost!

Of course, for every ending there is the anticipation of new beginnings. Our minds are firmly with the planning for 2019, and we are excited to celebrate the 140th Year of the School's existence. There will be new students. Indeed the school will be fuller than ever. There will be new teachers who we will introduce at the beginning of the year.

It is an uncomfortable truth that the sooner we close the year, the sooner we start the new. However, the brain cannot cope with that thought just yet, so let us first enjoy the holiday and celebrate the birth of the Christ-child, and bring in the New Year.

With very best wishes to you all

The Revd Canon A W Paterson
Head of School

St Patrick House Prancing with Pride

St Patrick House is proud of the outstanding results achieved this year. Our highlight was winning both the Inter-House Swimming Trophy, as well as the Spirit Cup! The Grade 7 girls brought passion, great dedication and commitment, which ensured another successful year for the St Patrick House. Phil Jackson quoted "The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." Thank you, girls, for your amazing spirit and participation in all the School Inter-House events this year.

Our Charity this year is to support ABBA House, a faith-based, non-profit organisation, which provides a caring facility for babies and children. They provide support to orphans and other vulnerable children ensuring that they have shelter, clothing, and food to eat and that their basic needs are met. Babies and children in the care of the ABBA House staff range from birth to four years old.

Mrs Wocke and I would like to thank everyone in our St Mary's DSG Family who has opened their hearts and so generously contributed and donated to this worthy cause. The Grade 7 girls will be visiting ABBA House, where they will present all the wonderful gifts and spend time interacting and playing with the toddlers.

Who was Saint Patrick?

Saint Patrick was born a long time ago, about 385 AD in the United Kingdom.
When he was 16 years old, he was kidnapped by a group of bad Irish raiders and forced to become a slave in Ireland.
After six years being a shepherd, he finally escaped to France and became a priest, then later a bishop.
When he was about 60 years old, Saint Patrick returned to Ireland to spread the Christian word.
He used the shamrock, which resembles a three-leafed clover, as a symbol to explain the concept of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).
Saint Patrick was important, because it's said he brought Christianity to the Irish people.

FUN FACTS & SYMBOLS

- Green is part of Saint Patrick's Day because it's the colour of Spring and many people wear green on St Patrick's Day
- One of the Irish traditions is to pinch anyone who is not wearing green on St Patrick's Day.
- The most common St Patrick's Day symbol is the shamrock. The shamrock is a leaf from the clover plant.
- It's a myth that the shamrock can only grow in Ireland – the three-leaf clover grows all over the world – from Tasmania to England.
- Symbols like the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow and leprechauns are also associated with St Patrick's Day.
- The leprechaun is a small Irish fairy who dresses like a shoemaker. Leprechauns are unfriendly little men who lives alone in the forest, spending time making shoes and guarding their gold treasures. If you catch a leprechaun, he'll be forced to tell you where he hides his pots of gold. However, the leprechaun must be watched at all times. If his captor looks away, the leprechaun will vanish along with his treasure.

Miss Kirsty Frigyik
(Foundation Phase Teacher)

ST DAVID HOUSE 2018

We have come to the end of yet another successful year filled with achievements and buzzing enthusiasm from our girls. The highlights of the year have been our victory in the Inter-House Athletics, the Spirit trophy at the Gala and the Mathematics Quiz challenge. Thanks to the parents and family of St Mary's DSG, our Valentine Fundraising event was successful and with the generous donations of items for cats and dogs, we will yet again, put a "meow" and a "woof woof" smile on the faces of the animals at the SPCA. We bid farewell to our Grade 7 girls, who have really gone the extra mile in flying the St David flag high. We are very proud of our girls and would like to wish them all the best for their future endeavours. We wish all our girls a blessed festive season and a prosperous 2019!!!

Ms N Masengi (Head of House)

With our mighty roar we sing:

"We are dynamite, the David dynamite!! AND if you mess with dynamite it goes tick, tick, tick, tick, BOOOM dynamite, THE DAVID DYNAMITE!!

The year 2018 has truly been an outstanding year for St David House, filled with many great achievements! As the saying goes, teamwork makes dream work and this is what enabled St David to trail blast a path of many victories this year! As a tightly knit team we worked together and finished the year having taken home many phenomenal awards, including the Inter-House swimming spirit trophy, the victors of the Mathematics Quiz and proudly wining the Inter-House athletics!! The Grade 7 house leaders were inspired and determined by the challenges of all their tasks such as creating new cheers for the house, making posters, making chapel presentations and collecting dog and cat food for our charity event at the SPCA.

It can proudly be reported that we accomplished every dream we aspired to achieve! St David House has come a long way since the house began, from coming last in every event, to taking first place in almost everything. St David girls can truly be proud of what we've accomplished this year - "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

By Paris Stanley (Grade 7M)

My experience has been amazing. I haven't been at St Mary's DSG since Grade 0 but I have been here since Grade 2 and when I came everyone was so nice to me they all wanted to be my friend, I joined one of the groups and we've been the same group from Grade 2 till Grade 7; some people have left , some people have joined and along the way I have made some of the nicest most amazing friends in the entire world, we have all had our ups and downs but in the end we all still love each other whether it's small or big it's there and that's what matters. When at this school you're part of a team. There are 4 Houses - St David, St Andrew, St George and St Patrick. I am part of an amazing team St David, I'm not saying other teams aren't as good but I've only experienced St David and from my time in St David I've never been left out and we as a team work together 24/7. At DSG I found that when I was in need of something teachers would be more than happy to help. In P.E our coaches made sport fun whether it was cross country or dodge ball. My time at St Mary's DSG has been nothing short of amazing and an experience I'll treasure forever.

By Courtney Kapnias (Grade 7M)

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

ST ANDREW HOUSE 2018

The Spirit of Winning - It's Not a Score

The St Andrew girls experienced an incredible joy, sense of fulfilment and success upon winning the treasured Spirit Trophy at the Inter-House Athletics.

Winning can be very closely tied to finding your sense of fulfilment and success and it is all about performing to your own highest ability and not necessarily being better than others.

"Winning isn't about finishing in first place. It isn't about beating the others. It is about overcoming yourself. Overcoming your body, your limitations, and your fears. Winning means surpassing yourself and turning your dreams into reality." Kilian Jornet

Junior School Leadership Programme

The girls working towards their gold leadership badges have been busy raising awareness and doing collection for various charities.

Abby-Lee, Joy-Mari, Maxine, Paris and Vanja collected over 2 000 toilet rolls for Choc. This is enough to last Choc for an entire year.

Hannah, Imogen, Kate, Rethabile and Tayla organised a fun afternoon with games for the Grade 0 girls. They collected toys and clothes for Peas in a Pod.

Juliet and Lily collected wool for the Magic Yarn project who uses the wool to make homespun wigs for little cancer fighters.

Gianna, Sancia, Sophia and Victoria collected sanitary pads which they will donate to less fortunate school girls.

Abakwe and Zoë had a fun puppet show for the Grade 1 girls. They collected a variety of items for Hospice.

We thank all these girls for their hard work and generosity!

Strengthen Holiday Language Skills at Home

The holiday break gives parents the opportunity to spend more time with their children. Parents can use this valuable time to strengthen their children's language skills and have some fun, too!

Use Family Pictures to Develop Strong Language Skills

Pictures are a great way to develop family sharing and closeness while promoting a variety of language skills. Children and parents love looking at new or old pictures. Placing pictures into a personalized picture book, such as an inexpensive "flip-book" type album, can help your children understand **themes** such as holidays, birthdays, or vacations. Help them write or tell stories by using white label stickers and writing **who, what**, **when**, **where**, and **why** sentences about each photo. Encourage your children to use **past tense** when describing the pictures. Give them examples such as, "When you were a baby, you loved the stuffed bear Father Christmas brought you for Christmas". Talk to your children about people, objects, and colours and **take turns** describing each. Allow them to describe their memories of these events and expand upon these with your own.

Reading and Telling Stories: A Great Way to Develop Imagination AND Language Skills

Another way to spend quality time with your children, and strengthen language skills at the same time, is by reading and telling stories together. Let your children **predict** the characters' actions and **describe** the pictures using **nouns**, **verbs**, and **adjectives**. Encourage your children to tell you their feelings about the book (i.e., Was it scary, fun, or funny?). Also, ask your children to retell the story while adding your own ideas and giving clues to the **sequence** of events

Tell stories to your children to allow them to build their **imagination** skills. Children love to hear stories about their parents and other close family members. Tell them funny stories about what they did when they were little, such as their first birthday, their first word, or when they first learned to talk. Allow your children **to add to these stories** with real memories or make-believe. To bond with your children and strengthen their language skills, make this a part of the bedtime routine.

Adapted from: Kelly Faulkenberry Cheek, Superduper Publications

DSG's Got Talent

Afrikaans Evening

On 31 October, the Grade 8 to 11 Afrikaans students enjoyed an evening dedicated to Afrikaans cuisine and traditional dancing. We started the evening by being treated to a boerewors roll and koeksisters. This was followed by a tutorial on different types of line dancing, among them the electric slide and the line dance in the popular film, *Footloose*.

We also learned well-known 'sokkie' dance moves including The Octopus, The Basket Walk-around and The Basket Lean. We thoroughly enjoyed dancing around the hall and spending time with other Afrikaans students. The opportunity to experience part of the Afrikaans culture was greatly appreciated by all the girls.

By Kerryn Moore and Mary Anne Gutter (Grade 11)

Why unstructured time is important for a child's healthy development

As holidays approach many parents may start to think about how they will keep their children engaged and entertained each day; however it may be good to stop for a moment and ask: "Does my child need to be engaged and entertained all the time?"

One of our biggest tasks as adults, which we start preparing for during childhood and adolescence, is learning to manage our time well. It is thus essential for children to have the experience of making decisions about how to use periods of unstructured time. There are various benefits to unstructured time for our children. Unstructured time encourages and improves creativity - when children have nothing to do, they exercise their imaginations and that might be one of the most important skills they can develop. Unstructured times assists with the development of internal motivation – when children have unstructured time they are given the opportunity to practise making their own decisions and finding ways to be interested in what's going on around them. Unstructured time assists children in developing their inner worlds as it gives them the opportunity to entertain themselves and discover what their passions are.

Often parents share their frustrations about their children constantly saying "I'm bored" or asking what they could do. When children struggle to find something to do, it's usually because:

- Screen time has become a norm for them and they have not yet developed and practised the skills of identifying activities they like to do themselves.
- They are used to their time being very structured and as such are not used to finding fun things to do with their "free time."
- They do not have someone to engage with and have not yet discovered things they like to do on their own.
- They have a need for some parental connection or one-on-one time.

How parents can encourage their children to enjoy unstructured time

Take a few minutes to focus solely on your child and connect with her in a meaningful way. Once you are sure that your child is not asking the question because she seeks your attention, you can revisit the "what to do" question. If she still does not have any ideas, you can share with her that figuring out how to enjoy her own free time is her job, but you'd be happy to help her brainstorm about possible activities.

Most children, when given unstructured time, rise to the occasion (after some minor complaining) and find something interesting to do, but there are times when they really do need our help, especially if they are normally very reliant on electronics, TV or structured time. (Once children adjust to limitations on electronic devices and are exposed to more unstructured time, they become good at entertaining themselves, and more creative at play.)

If your child requires assistance with ideas it will be a good idea to shift the responsibility to her, by working with her to create a "Boredom Buster Jar" or "Creativity Activation Centre".

Together, you write down ideas that she thinks would be fun to do and put them in the jar or container. Whenever your child says she's bored, she picks three pieces of paper from the jar and chooses one of the activities.

Some screen free activity ideas for different ages are listed below:

- Make a book of jokes
- Build a fort with blankets and pillows
- Write your Grandparents a letter
- Cut out paper dolls and costumes for them
- Get a ruler and measure things in your house, recording their length
- Write the story of your life
- Do a something kind for someone, in secret
- Make an obstacle course
- Play Simon Says (you will need a friend for this)
- Make a placemat
- Read a book
- Make snow globes or calming jars
- Have a water balloon fight (outside!)
- See if you can draw a picture with your foot.
- Draw on the sidewalk with chalk
- Play hopscotch
- Play jump rope
- Play with bubbles in the sink
- Paint your toenails
- Make a curving line of dominoes
- Practise kicking a ball
- Create your own board game

- Put on some music and dance
- Wash the mirror with a sponge
- Write down ten things you love about each person in your family to surprise them
- Give the dog a bath
- Find shapes in the clouds
- Make paper airplanes and fly them
- See how many times you can dribble the basketball
- Organize your room
- Write a story
- Create a play with costumes
- Make paper bag puppets or sock puppets
- Surprise your mom by making lunch
- Make a zoo for your stuffed animals
- Learn a new card game
- Make a potion lab or pouring station outside with food colouring and containers (wear an apron!)
- Set up a shop and be the shop keeper
- Plant some seeds
- Make a windsock
- Use the hose and a tarp to make a slip and slide on your lawn

- Brush the dog
- Draw a tree
- Make a dollhouse out of cardboard
- Learn a tongue twister
- Cut a guitar out of cardboard and add rubber band strings
- Paint a picture
- Plan a treasure hunt, with clues
- Ride your bike
- Start a journal
- Make homemade wrapping paper
- Cut out pictures from magazines and make a collage
- Use plain white paper and envelopes and decorate your own personalized stationery
- Play Tag or Freeze Tag
- Start a collection (leaves, rocks, buttons) and make a museum display
- Hang a clothesline in your room and clip photos to it to make an art display
- Create a circus performance
- Make a fairy house for your garden
- Cut out a crown, tape into a circle to fit your head and decorate
- Review your goals for next year

- Glue popsicle sticks together to make picture frames, decorate.
- Make and fill a bird feeder
- Make play-dough
- Paint sea shells or rocks
- Make bean bags
- Blow bubbles
- Give your dolls or stuffed animals a bubble bath
- Make & decorate a calendar of the summer, with important dates marked.
- Put juice & cut-up fruit into ice cube trays to make ice cubes.
- Make a boat using a plastic soda bottle base & popsicle sticks (use duct tape) for the top
- Draw a picture of a desert island with all the things you would want on it
- Blindfold your sibling & take them on a tour of your house & yard, then trade places
- Play a board game
- Weed the garden
- Make puppets with old socks, buttons & markers
- Use pipe cleaners to make animals
- Read to someone at an old age home

Enjoy providing your child with the gift of some unstructured time during the festive season ahead; however it is also important to enjoy some quality time spent together as a family.

Ms Riandie Marais (Educational Psychologist)

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