St Mary's

DIOCESAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

ST MARY'S MATTERS

VOL 19 ISSUE 2

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DIOCESAN SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS

Head's Message	Page 1
Message from the Head Girl and Deputy Head Girl	Page 3
Senior School	Page 5
Sports and Recreation	Page 13
Junior School	Page 23
Parents' Association	Page 37

Dear St Mary's DSG Community

Globally, tertiary education is under huge pressure. We are familiar with the grotesque imbalance between the number of people who apply and those who get accepted in South African Universities. WITS had 34 000 applicants for 5500 places, for example.

This is not a South African issue, however. I read that in Kenya the number of students over a three year period increased by 56% while the number of "professors" went up by 11%. (This reduction in academic staff usually because of financial austerity is all too familiar in South Africa.)

In the United Kingdom, we read of a deficit of 150 000 places nationally. When they recruit internationally, it is for quality not for numbers. It is also for the full paying client as opposed to the subsided local.

What this means is that the universities are becoming ever more "picky" about the quality of their intake. In the South African context this means that the APS scores are becoming higher and higher, excluding more and more scholars who qualify through their BD pass in matric for university acceptance.

Part of the reason for this is the changing age demographics of populations. In the 2018 CIA analysis, 18 of the nations with the majority of their population under 15 (between 48% and 56%) were African countries. South Africa itself has a similar pattern with vast numbers of young people, who will be challenging for university spaces. 30% is under 14 and only 5% 65 or older.

The middle class, under enormous pressure, is at present called the sandwich generation, as we are having to pay for our elderly who are living longer, often without financial provision, and our young, for whom we have such high aspirations.

The consequence for the market place and jobs is that hyper-qualification becomes necessary. A Bachelor degree of the past needs a Master's degree in the present. Chartered Accountants are found around "every corner." Work experience has become crucial. Jobs are scarce.

4IR (the 4th industrial revolution) will result in even greater job losses. Robotics and automation will lead to jobless economic growth. The soft skills of how to deal with technology will become the critical skills of the future, not the technological skills per se.

The parents of the future will need to change their thinking about tertiary education. Traditional university courses and qualifications which have served us well are changing before our eyes. Burgeoning private colleges and universities offering training in vast areas of other niche skills are all around us and will continue to arrive as the future becomes clearer.

Parents must start thinking differently.

The successful person of the future will not necessarily be the one with the PhD, or the LIB, or the MSc, the MBBCh, or the BEng. They will not necessarily be the ones who get to go to Harvard or Oxford. They will not be the ones who gain fame on the stage or silver screen.

She will be the one who has greater purpose, who has grit and determination, who can face failure and not give up, who can work with people and collaborate, who can analyse and innovate, who can see the greatness in people and bring this out.

She will be the one who lives simply and for others.

A new way is necessary and we need to think differently about the future.

The Revd Canon A W Paterson
Head of School

Message from the Head Girl and Deputy Head Girl

Kerryn Moore and Abigail Stoffels

Term 1 started busily as all the Grade 8 girls, task leaders and sports portfolio girls arrived at school two days before the official starting date to run and take part in the Grade 8 orientation. The Grade 8s were very excited to be a part of their new environment and soon felt right at home.

Despite the many meetings and busy schedules, we (Kerryn and Abigail) have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to serve the school as leaders and we have also already been exposed to many fun opportunities and events.

On 15 January, the evening before the start of term, all 18 task leaders attended our task leaders' dinner at Blu Safron at the Pretoria Country Club with Mrs Neser and Ms Mbandlwa. It was a wonderful occasion in which we could all bond and set the tone for the start of our matric year.

On 7 February, we attended a leadership convention at Hatfield Christian School. It was a wonderful networking opportunity where we had the time to talk to the top leaders of other schools in Pretoria. We exchanged stories of leadership, discussed how we maintain our academics during busy times and what we have learnt about leadership thus far. It was a lovely morning and we hope to host something similar in Term 2.

On 14 February, the St Alban's College "Barbershop" choral group visited us to sing to the girls for Valentine's Day, serenading us with Stevie Wonder's well known "Isn't she lovely?" They sang beautifully and this definitely created an atmosphere true to the "day of love". We would like to thank our brother school for spending part of their morning with us.

It has been an eventful term so far and a brilliant start to our matric year. We cannot wait to see what the remainder of 2019 has in store for us as well as for St Mary's DSG.

The Grade 8 Social

The Grade 8 social is a very entertaining tradition at St Mary's DSG. The Grade 8 learners of both St Mary's DSG and St Alban's College spent a fun yet awkward evening together which gave them the opportunity to get to know one another and make new friends.

This year, the theme of the social was "Carnival". It could be described as colourful and enticing. The evening consisted of a collection of ice-breaker games that allowed everyone to bond in a comfortable and fun environment. There were games such as Balloon Dares, Fruit Salad and, as per tradition, Speed Dating, where everyone's conversational skills were truly put to the test. We were quite honoured to see such a vast number of outgoing personalities in their element.

The games were a lot of fun for both the Grade 8s and the matrics who ended up participating alongside them; this allowed us all to come together and to establish good friendships.

The most anticipated event of the evening – saving best for last – was "The Ultimate Cheer-Off". After dinner and a few more activities, everyone came together on the main lawn to show off their talents, or noisiness… In honour of the upcoming Inter-High Gala, we thought it would be a fun and innocently competitive way to end off the evening, with everyone showing the extent of their school spirit. This was a lot of fun, as you could see the determination of both schools to show their pride, although, as it would be a biased opinion, the results of the cheer-off were inconclusive.

In the end, it was amazing to see the Grade 8s make this evening their own, to see them greet familiar faces and welcome new ones. The evening was a great success and we sadly said farewell as the night ended off with memories, laughter, many new friendships, and don't forget, doughnuts.

Cape Town History & Geography Tour

"Don't be late"
Miss Brown's single and most important rule. The rule was simple enough and thus I was determined to abide by it; unfortunately, the day of departure seemed to hold other plans. In other words: despite the six expertly timed alarms that had been set, I ended up becoming the newest addition to Miss Brown's future late-related stories. The frenzy had begun long before we'd even reached Charly's Bakery.

Travelling to a different place always brings a myriad of feelings to the fore – excitement, anticipation, slight apprehension. On this occasion, I think it's safe to say that the feelings of eager determination and blessed satisfaction never left our sides. These feelings didn't surface in response to our being in a different place, but rather from the knowledge that this different place harboured rich commodities of both nature and history – South African and global alike.

From the bright confectionary of Charly's Bakery to the vibrant and unchanged streets of Kayamandi, it is evident that Cape Town possesses significant pockets of antiquity. Visiting the home of the risky breakthrough that changed the global face of medicine side by side with the recollections of the grievances of the apartheid regime and the holocaust, opened my eyes and my heart. The confines of Robben Island next to the vast halls of parliament depict the long and unique journey of this country, still ongoing, for which I have deep affection.

Amidst our visits to the past, we danced through the present to the colourful music of markets and up the lofty Table Mountain heights. We were sun-kissed by the beach and the wine farm and sprinkled with the inspiring dust of a humble constellation of stars, yet to shine upon the world. As with all good trips, it ended with our suitcases heavier and our clothes and camera storage tighter than on arrival.

Experiencing the world with friends – as well as the opportunity to immerse oneself in tangible aspects of the past - is a rare and valuable gift that not many get to experience. This journey served as a reminder that there is so much more than what is given credit for. Had it not been for this trip, my life would have continued, obliviously bypassing the hordes of 'more' surrounding it. I look forward to the frequent onslaughts of memories and remain confident in their ability to continue to change me, long after the sun burn has faded.

Kombo Bingudza
Grade 12 History Student

Drama Department

Grade 8 and 9 are the years in which we establish and lay the ground work for vocal and physical expression in Drama. The performer's toolbox in Grade 8 enables the student to integrate voice and body which develops stress management skills and understanding personal attitudes. Improvisation in Grade 9 teaches the girls to think creatively and communicate well in a group setting. This increases confidence and nurtures empathy with each other and the characters they are portraying.

Mr Christo Potgieter
Head of Drama

Ecobricks: Joining the International Trend

St Mary's DSG is adding another aspect to our Eco-Schools project: Ecobricks. An ecobrick is a bottle filled with single-use plastics and was started in the Philippines not only to save the environment, but also to provide the communities in the area with cheaper building materials. The initiative is now spreading across the world and has been implemented quite successfully in the Western Cape Province in Jeffrey's Bay and Port Elizabeth. Port Elizabeth has set the trend in South Africa by building the first building, Penguins Pre-School, out of ecobricks.

On Thursday, 28 February, a tutorial by the Endangered Wildlife Trust was attended by the Eco-Angels. During this session the girls were shown how to make a robust ecobrick. The Eco-Angels, in turn, will show their respective tutor groups how to make an ecobrick. A competition will be launched between the groups, where the winning group will receive a treat for their hard work. This will include making the most ecobricks according to the specifications and also making the heaviest ecobrick.

If you want to get involved in the project, please bring empty, clean and dry 2 litre bottles to Mrs Labuschagne. Contribute clean and dry plastics to your tutor group and start stuffing bottles.

How to make an ecobrick:

1. Segregate, collect and dry all your plastic. These include styrofoam, bags, candy wrappers and packaging, straws and cellophane.
2. Choose your bottle – we are using clean and dry 2 litre bottles.
3. Cut your plastics into smaller pieces.
4. Use a wooden or bamboo stick to tightly compress the plastics into the bottle.
5. Start with a soft, coloured plastic at the bottom of the bottle and push this down tightly into the contours of the bottle.
6. Alternate between soft and harder plastics as you fill the bottle. Remember to push the plastic down along the sides of the bottle, as well as the middle.
7. Weigh the bottle at either Ms Brown's or Mrs Labuschagne's classroom to ensure you have packed it properly. It should have a mass of 660 g for a 2 litre bottle.

Transformation

This year, The Transformation Heads were given a portfolio filled with open-minded, diverse girls and a teacher who held her arms wide open to all our insane ideas and goals.

At the beginning of the term, the portfolio met to discuss all the ideas that they had for Transformation. We asked ourselves, "How can we Transform and Transcend St Mary's DSG?". The eager response from the Portfolio was overwhelming and filled with passion. We came into this year with a vision and mission to change and improve St Mary's DSG in all areas. However, this task almost seemed impossible until we hosted the first Circles of Healing meeting.

The meeting was held in Mrs Singh's class where 30 amazing students from all different grades, backgrounds and beliefs harmonised and openly discussed their views on controversial topics. Tshimologo and Kayla ran the meeting and although they were unable to open every single girl's mind, they were able to start a conversation - and that was enough.

Another Circles of Healing was hosted 2 weeks later and the outcome was even greater. We got a few new faces and voices who joined us and this time, some of the quieter girls began to talk. Our goal to improve all aspects of St Mary's DSG and to create harmony amongst the girls now seemed like a task that was achievable.

The Transformation Portfolio is looking to increase the size of our platform by hosting an Open Circles of Healing picnic in which anyone in the high school will be given the opportunity to speak and to listen.

Furthermore, we have loads of Transformation days and events planned and we are excited and ready now more than ever to Transform and Transcend St Mary's DSG.

By Kayla Alfonso and Tshimologo Matlala

During a school tour to Cape Town, The Transformation Heads went to Drankenstejn Prison. This is where former president Nelson Mandela was held for his last years of his arrest and took his first steps into freedom through these gates in 1990. The gate reads, " As I walked out the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison."

Reach-in and Junior School Liaison Portfolio

The Reach-in and Junior School Liaison portfolio started 2019 off with a bang.

Truly indulging in what our portfolios represent we welcomed the new Grade 8s to the school, showing them around and helping them to feel more relaxed in their new and exciting environment.

Ensuring our school is united from the beginning to the end, we spent a morning with the Grade 0s and 1s at a delightful Community Prayers and celebrated the opening of our new Kopano centre. To retain that unity, we host The Big Sister Club every second Monday where we go and play with the Intersen Phase girls.

Our portfolio not only focuses on our St Mary's DSG sisterhood bond but also a very special bond with our mothers. We were part of hosting the Grade 8 and Matric Mother-Daughter breakfast, where we delighted our mothers with a special video to show them how appreciated they are.

Our portfolio stays true to what we believe in achieving and are very excited for rest of the year to come.

Swimming: Senior School & Junior School

Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to be better.

What an amazing season it has been for the swimming team of St Mary's DSG. We started the year with a bang, by hosting our annual Inter-House competition in the first week of school.

SENIOR INTER-HOUSE RESULTS:

Swimming Trophy:	St George House
Spirit Trophy:	St Patrick House
Junior Victrix Ludorm:	Maxine Boyce
Senior Victrix Ludorm:	Kelsea Munro

The swimming season is like a 50m sprint – very short, packed with intensity and minimal breathing until you reach the finish line. Therefore, it is vital for our swimmers to have proper pre-season preparation and/or year round swimming.

Competing at the weekly friendly galas enable us to determine where our focus should be during practice. It is clear to see that our swimmers have the right mind-set but need more regular training to be able to compete at a top level. Our participation at Summer Splash was successful and gave the swimmers the opportunity to represent the school as well as better their times in preparation for the Inter-High Gala. On Monday 18 February the A team swimmers arrived at Hillcrest to participate at the Inter-High A league. With big hearts and excited butterflies each girl showed what they have been training for.

INTER-HIGH RESULTS:

A Team: Overall 6th place **B Team: Overall 9th place**

Spirit: 1st place

Congratulations to the following girls who achieved outstanding results:

U/14 200m Medley Relay *Bronze Medal*
Joy-Mari Boyce
Maxine Boyce
Sancia Richter
Zoë Terblanche

Zoë Terblanche	9th Overall	
	50m Breaststroke	*Gold Medal and Record*
Hannah Andraos	14th Overall	
	100m Backstroke	*Gold Medal*
	100m Freestyle	*Bronze Medal*
Savanna Sommerville	20th Overall	
	100m Backstroke	*Bronze Medal*
Maxine Boyce	20th Overall	
	100m Freestyle	*Bronze Medal*
Clara Lubbe	31st Overall	
	100m Freestyle	*Bronze Medal*

Our brave B team was next up to go to the Inter-High C league. Thank you to all the girls who wholeheartedly participated at this meet and kept this tradition high by representing the school. Every one of you deserves a medal but a BIG congratulations go to Kiandra Grobler for winning a silver medal for her 50m Freestyle event.

Note from Coach Carli:

Thank you to every willing and passionate heart that made the last 5 years such a success and an honour to be part of. I have seen girls developing into young ladies, leaders and world-changers. I am so proud to have been part of each girl's journey and a team that not only shines with bright talent but also with a passion for God. The love for this sport only grows stronger stroke after stroke. Our inspiration and strength - Savanna Sommerville, THANK YOU! You have been a Captain like no other and a support in ways that cannot be expressed in words. St Mary's DSG will always be the foundation of my heart and the team are the building bricks. She believed in herself… and she DID (Butter)fly!

INTER-PRIMARY RESULTS:

A Team – Overall 3rd place
B Team – Overall 9th place
C Team – Overall 8th place
D Team – Overall 2nd place

Congratulations to the following girls who received medals for their outstanding performance:

A Team

U/13 200m Medley Relay *Silver Medal*
Eleni Zigiradis
Gabriella Pretorius
Madison Irvine
Natalie Vermandele

U/12 200m Freestyle Relay *Bronze Medal*

Courtney Smulders
Kirsty Andraos
Lwandle Rikhotso
Maia Roux

U/12 200m Medley Relay *Bronze Medal*

Gaelen du Toit
Kirsty Andraos
Lwandle Rikhotso
Maia Roux

Gaelen du Toit	50m Breaststroke	*Gold Medal*
Eleni Zigiradis	50m Breaststroke	*Silver Medal*
Madison Irvine	50m Freestyle	*Silver Medal*
Jessie Smulders	50m Freestyle	*Bronze Medal*
Kate Roebuck	50m Breaststroke	*Bronze Medal*
Mia du Toit	50m Breaststroke	*Bronze Medal*

D Team

Ana Elena Solano	25m Breaststroke	*Silver Medal*
Nolwazi Siziba	25m Freestyle	*Bronze Medal*
Georgia Pretorius	25m Backstroke	*Bronze Medal*
Dimpho Malesa	25m Butterfly	*Bronze Medal*

Mixed U/10 Freestyle Relay	*Gold Medal*
Mixed U/13 Freestyle Relay	*Bronze Medal*
Mixed U/10 Medley Relay	*Bronze Medal*
Mixed U/13 Medley Relay	*Bronze Medal*
Mixed U/9 – U/13 Ladder Relay	*Bronze Medal*

Tennis: Senior School & Junior School

Senior School

Our first team tennis recently competed in the ISTT Tennis Tournament in Grahamstown where they came 5th of 8. We are also participating in the strongest league (A1). We have matches coming up against AHMP and Garsfontein.

We also hosted our annual Valentine's Tennis Festival on 15, 16 and 17 February.

Junior School

Our junior U13A team have not lost a single match in the league thus far! We wish them luck as they are most likely going to win their league!

St Mary's DSG beat Constantiapark Park 6-0

St Mary's DSG beat Hennopspark 5-1

St Mary's DSG beat Midstream College 6-0

We also have an U13B and U11A team entered and they are going strong!

All said and done we competed and improved so much this year, we are finally competing against the top schools in the country and giving them a go!

Congratulations to the following girls who have been selected to represented Gauteng North:

- Tsobotsi Lehloenya (u19)
- Katlego Manyane (u15)

Junior School Netball

Junior School netball kicked the 2019 season off with preparations for the upcoming Tshwane and Gauteng Netball trials. The girls practised hard to get back into gear for netball and an U12 and an U13 squad were chosen to take part in the first round of D4 trials.

We are proud to announce that Vhuhwavho Nebotalo, Faith Nyamaka and Masiza Masiza were chosen to go through to the next set of trials, the Tshwane trials. We are excited to see how our girls did!

Our netball season officially kicks off in March with the following clinics and matches

4 March	Netball season starts		
6 March	Mini Netball clinic	1:45 – 3:30pm	DSG Courts
7 March	U 10 – 13 Netball clinic	2 – 4:30pm	DSG Courts
8 March	U 10 – 13 Netball trials	1:30 – 4pm	DSG Courts
14 March	U 10 – 13 vs Pretoria Oos Laerskool	2 – 4:30pm	TBC
28 March	U 10 – 13 vs Mount Cambridge	2 – 4:30pm	TBC
30 March	Mini Netball Festival	8 – 11am	TBC

Volleyball: Senior School

On Wednesday, 27 February 2019, the U14 and U16 Volleyball Teams played against Fourways High School. Both the U14A and U16 Teams won their matches. The U14B team lost narrowly.

On Thursday, 28 February, we played our last league matches for the season against the American International School of Johannesburg. Our U19A, U19 B and U14 teams lost their matches.

On Saturday, 2 March, DSG will be hosting an U14, 3-on-3 Volleyball Tournament from 9 a.m. to 13:00 p.m.

On Wednesday, 6 March, the Volleyball League (Goliath Cup) playoffs will be taking place at the American International School of Johannesburg from 14:00 p.m. to 20:00 p.m. Final confirmation of the teams playing in the playoffs will be announced after Saturday 2 March, once all schools have completed their league matches.

On Saturday, 16 March, all our teams will be participating in the Annual Fourways High Volleyball Tournament (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

"Winners are not people who never fail, but people who never quit."

Basketball: Senior School & Junior School

Junior School

Our girls took part in the Johannesburg Basketball Festivals this term. This was the first time we participated and it as proved very popular with the girls.

Our teams took part in the following festivals:

St Mary's DSG U10-U13 Festival
Sacred Heart College Sports festival for girls
SAHETI school Basketball Festival

All these festivals are preparations for the Junior School League which takes place in Term 3.

Senior School

The Senior School basketball programme kicked off earlier than usual this year. Our teams took part in the Johannesburg Rainbow league, which consisted of schools with strong girls' basketball tradition. Our teams performed very well and won most of their matches.

The results were as follows

DATE	SCHOOL	U 14 A	U15 A	U15 B	U16 A	OPEN
26 Jan	Redhill College	07-10 (lost)	36-14 (won)		20-11 (won)	11-18 (lost)
09 Feb	Saheti School	09-19 (lost)	41-09 (won)		42-20 (won	21-19 (won)
16 Feb	Bishop Bavin		11-08 (won)	04-29 (lost)	20-13 (won)	12-21 (lost)

This is great preparation for our teams entering the Pretoria Basketball League which is our focal point of the season.

Senior School Hockey

Senior Hockey trials have been completed and preliminary teams have been announced for each age group. These teams will be finalised after Derby Day vs Midstream College on 12 March 2019.

Congratulations to the 15 girls who have been selected as part of a so-called 'best of the best' team to participate at the St Mary's Waverley Festival from 3 to 7 April 2019!

Mignon De Wet
Khabi Honwana
Neo Huma
Bea Jacobs
Hannah Kidwell
Clara Lubbe
Jenna Marinus
Bryony McDonogh
Reitumetse Nyakale
Tshepi Phaswana
Savanna Sommerville
Jaimee Terblanche
Ciara Truman
Keira Van Zyl
Mitchel Walls

March and April will be filled with Hockey festivals in preparation for our first league matches in April.

- U14A will be attending Roedean School Festival from 29-31 March
- U15A will be attending Hoërskool Garsfontein Garsiefees from 27-29 March
- U16A and U18A will be attending St Mary's DSG Festival on 15&16 March

Squash: Senior School

Squash Ranking Tournament (28-31 January 2019)

The ranking tournament went well. This event was used as a basis to get the ladder in place for the NJSA High School Squash League. We have entered 9 teams into the league.

NJSA Open (1-3 February 2019)

U16	Deneil Beukes	3rd
U16	Ashton Weir	2nd

NJSA Open (1-3 February 2019)

St Mary's DSG 1 vs Midstream 6-8

St Mary's DSG 3 vs Midstream 6 4-12

St Mary's DSG 7 vs The Glen High 4-14

St Mary's DSG 2 vs DSG 3 14-4

St Mary's DSG 4 vs DSG 5 14-3

St Mary's DSG 6 ve DSG 7 12-4

St Mary's DSG 9 vs UHS 6 16-1

Squash & Tennis Festival (15-17 February 2019)

We hosted a very successful squash festival! The girls had a great experience and very tough matches were played!

The results were as follows:

Played 4
Won 4

Friendlies agains PHSG

Girls played good matches against PHSG. The purpose of the friendlies is to expose the girls to gain match experience and have fun.

Junior School

EdTech Grade 4

Once a cycle we take the Grade 4 girls to the Creative Space to get their creative juices flowing. It has been marvellous to see how the girls can think out of the 'LEGO' box. The girls are divided into different groups for each lesson and given a challenge. Each group receives a BIG container filled with LEGO. Girls have 30 minutes to figure out a way to complete the challenge. They have had to complete various challenges this term: building their names with LEGO, building pyramids, making tic tac toe boards and playing games, and using the LEGO bricks to build symmetrical shapes. Soon, we will be investigating structures, systems and controls, processing and robotics. Our time together has been stimulating and the girls' creativity has been stretched.

Ms Kjonstad and Mrs Collins

Natural Science

The Natural Science department has had a great start to the term doing hands-on and exciting activities in the lessons. For instance, the Grade 5s used dinosaur eggs to learn about the characteristics of living organisms-Mrs Nerg. They watched the eggs crack as the dinosaur grew.

The Grade 5s also used dyed water and white daisies to demonstrate that plants need to absorb water for their survival.

The Grade 6s had the opportunity to become soil scientists as they learnt about different types of soils, their characteristics and the structure of a soil profile. They tested soil samples from home to determine which soil type they had.

Miss Pearl Makhene
Intersen Phase

CEC Grade 6

CEC stands for Character, Ethics and Citizenship. So far, we have focused on goal setting for Cycle 1, organisation involving time management regarding the girls' afternoon schedules, and study skills including their study schedules.

At St Mary's DSG it is imperative for us to take into consideration the whole child when focusing on personal development. We want your daughter to develop personally using a wellness approach. Your daughter has written down in her diary what she personally would like to achieve this first mark cycle. In class we have been working through the "*Study Tools for Junior Learners*" booklet which offers a comprehensive approach to studying in order for your daughter to become an effective learner.

The girls have set smart goals for themselves and looked at how to manage their time effectively, to get the most out of their day.

A simple understanding of how their brain works and how they can help to improve their brain functioning has been discussed. The amount of sleep your child is getting each night was quite an eye-opener. At least 9-10 hours of sleep is necessary for a growing child, and yet most of our girls admitted that they went to bed much later than they should, thus not receiving their optimum quota of sleep.

The girls were able to determine their preferred learning style and how to approach a comprehension test. Six easy steps to understanding new work, being an active learner and how to best summarise their work using a variety of approaches has been covered. We shall continue to work through this valuable booklet in our CEC lessons so that our girls are well equipped to develop their memory through various tips and techniques, be able to approach assignments and projects with confidence and how best to prepare for tests and exams without stressing.

On pages 32 and 33 of the booklet, there are some very useful tips for parents. I encourage you to read through the advice given, in order for you to answer that very important question that most parents ask, "Am I doing too much or too little in helping my child?"

Mrs Jenny van Staden
Intersen Phase Teacher

ST DAVID HOUSE 2019

"St David, what is your profession?" "Ahoo,Ahoo and Ahoo!" Welcome back to all our St David girls and a special welcome to our new member of staff Mrs McVittie and to all our new girls. You have come to the best house with the best winning team spirit. The year 2019 promises to be one with lots of fun-filled experiences and opportunities to shine. A "Special Yello greeting" to our committee members who will make us proud and perform their duties diligently.

Our first Fund Raising activity was a great success, with all four houses spreading the spirit of love on Valentines' Day. This event was truly memorable.

We are currently ranked second in the collection of the bottle tops, so keep collecting ladies; we can do this!!!

Ms Nelisiwe Masengi
Head of St David House

St Patrick House

This year is a very special year at St Mary's DSG as we celebrate the school's **140th Birthday!**

Let's take a step back in time to reveal some history about the origin of the Houses in the early years at St Marys DSG:

Did You Know?

- From 1925 to the early 30s, the Houses in the High School were called Ascham, Colet and Wykeham. The names were changed to St Andrew, St Patrick and St George in 1932.

- Prior to 1976, the Junior School Houses were called Elizabeth and Mary, but in that year the Junior School joined the High School pupils and were placed in St Andrew, St Patrick or St George.

- As the size of the school increased, a fourth House, St David was established for both Junior and Senior School pupils in 2001.

On 17 March, the world honours the Irish on **St Patrick's Day**. This is a day to celebrate the patron saint of Ireland, **St Patrick**. The colour green, pots of gold, shamrocks, and leprechauns are often associated with the celebration. Legend says that each leaf of the clover has a meaning:

Hope, Faith, Love and Luck.

St Patrick House will once again be supporting 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, 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 4 years old. Any form of donations would be highly appreciated.

We look forward to this exciting year filled with celebration! Let's open our hearts and embrace this special year at St Marys DSG.

Miss Kirsty Frigyik
Head of St Patrick House

With thanks to past Head Mistress Jeanette van der Breggen for the historic information provided.

Abacus in the Junior School

As an ISASA school in the Gauteng region, we meet as a Maths cluster group each term. It is through these clusters and networking that we have evolved and developed our Mathematics curriculum and methodologies. This is how we were introduced to Abacus. We visited schools in Johannesburg and Pretoria, who use the programme, and attended a workshop at Lebone in Rustenburg, before we made our final decision to subscribe to the programme.

Abacus is a unique Maths toolkit that is carefully crafted to help inspire a genuine love of Maths and help every child master the national curriculum. It has been built by a team of expert authors and teaching practitioners who understand the realities of teaching and learning.

Abacus is made up of...

For the teacher

- Thousands of inspiring plans, planning ideas, activities and tools.
- Can be used in a way that suits each individual teacher
- Search for resources quickly and easily.
- Hundreds of built-in assessment opportunities and a growing bank of assessment resources.
- Tools and videos to support building a whole-school approach to calculation
- Supports teaching and building curriculum
- Consistency in teaching

For the pupils

- Lively and exciting Maths games and rewards.
- Hundreds of activities for keeping Maths facts "on the boil" and building mathematical fluency.
- Children can create avatars and buy rewards using coins from completed games.
- Increases engagement and a love for Maths
- Develops fluency in the fundamentals of Maths

It is vitally important for our children to develop a love of Mathematics. In doing so, they will work with greater confidence and perform better. The activities and resources that Abacus offers are differentiated and therefore cater for the different ability groups in our classes. They are interactive and generate discussion which promotes collaborative learning.

The first few weeks of teaching Maths this year have been most rewarding, in witnessing the growth and enthusiasm in which our girls are working. May this be the beginning of many happy hours of problem solving and calculating.

Mrs Louise Whitelaw
Head of Junior School Academics

An Introduction to Self-Regulation

Self-regulation refers to a child's ability to manage her feelings and behaviour in the face of a difficult situation, while maintaining her focus, in order to reach a certain goal. Not to be confused with self-control, which can be described as a social skill, self-regulation is necessary in resisting frustration, staying calm, and being flexible, ultimately leading to the development of resilience. It draws significantly on the child's ability to process and provide a response to information and emotions.

Behaviours such as tantrums, impulsive reactions and overexcitement can be age-appropriate and are not necessarily cause for concern. In addition, it is important to note that challenges relating to executive functioning, ADHD and Sensory Processing Disorder, stressful environments and sensitive temperament can make self-regulation more difficult for the child. However, research shows that a child's early formative years, as well as her adolescent years, provide an ideal opportunity for a parent to provide self-regulation support, due to rapid changes in the brain during these developmental stages. This support is referred to as co-regulation, and involves the caregiver providing the necessary nurturing, instruction and coaching to the child, thus guiding and completing the child's own developing regulation.

In order to know how to support a child in the area of self-regulation, it is necessary to have an understanding of age-appropriate regulation across the developmental stages. The following behaviours and tendencies can be expected:

- Infancy (birth to age 1): The child orients her attention away from stressors and uses self-soothing behaviours like sucking her fingers.
- Toddlerhood (1-2 years): The child begins to select and shift her attention and adjust her behaviour to achieve simple goals; she can delay gratification and inhibit responses for short periods when there is structure and support and her emotions are stronger than her cognitive regulation abilities.
- Preschool-aged (3-5 years): The child's focused attention increases but is still brief; she begins to use rules, strategies and planning to guide behaviour appropriate to the situation; she can delay gratification and inhibit her responses for longer periods; her perspective-taking and empathy emerge; language begins to control her emotional responses and actions and she can tolerate distress apart from her caregiver.
- Middle Childhood (6-10 years): She can use cognitive strategies and internal speech to control her behaviour; she has increased cognitive flexibility, attentional control, and more accurate appraisal of situations and she has an emerging ability to manage emotion in the moment.
- Early Adolescence (11-14 years): The child displays increased focus and task completion; displays more goal-oriented behaviour and self-monitoring; she can organise more complex behaviours and manage her time more independently; she can use strategies to manage her distress; her emotional arousal is stronger than her cognitive controls; she displays reward-seeking behaviour with relatively low fear and can make poor decisions in the moment.

- Late Adolescence (15-17 years): She focuses and persists on complex and challenging tasks; displays more complex and independent planning, time management, and prioritisation; her future orientation may influence her behaviour; she considers others' perspectives in goal-setting; she can make less emotional decisions and manage distress more effectively with support.
- Emerging Adulthood (18-25 years and beyond): She can persist on long-term projects and manage time independently; self-monitor, self-reinforce, and overcome challenges to goals; delay gratification to achieve goals; her future orientation begins to guide her behaviour; she can make decisions with broader perspective and compassion for self and others; organise complex behaviours in context and independently and manage frustration and distress independently.

More information will be provided on this topic, particularly as it pertains to your child's emotional regulation, as well as what parents can do to support regulation, in a talk offered by Miss Lesley King on Tuesday 12 March 2019, at 6pm.

Miss Lesley King
Educational Psychologist

My Child Can Read – But Won't!
Motivating Children to Read for Pleasure

Why doesn't my child like to read? There are probably many answers to this question, but the first order of business is to ask your child directly. After hearing her reason(s), you can begin working to help your child discover that reading can be, and is, a pleasure. Nagging, bribing, demanding, setting unrealistic time segments for reading, or criticizing their choice of reading material will not encourage reading for pleasure! Forcing children to read is like forcing them to eat a food they don't like; they'll hate it forever!

Reasons Children give for not Reading!

We have all used or heard these reasons before :

"It's boring. It isn't any fun, and it's hard."

For some children, reading creates anxiety. Children may not know what anxiety means, but they know it makes them feel frustrated and uncomfortable. Research tells us that the more children read, the better readers they become, and the reverse is also true. Children struggling with reading usually have poor reading skills. Talk to your child's teacher. If your child is not reading at the appropriate grade level, find hi-lo readers (books, magazines, or comics written below grade level, with high-interest, age-appropriate topics) in the library or bookstore: sports, hobbies, mysteries, riddles, jokes, etc. Ask the teacher for suggestions.

"I don't have to read at home; I read all day at school."

After having to read what the teacher wants them to read "all day," reading materials must appeal to their interests. I don't have time to sit and stare at a book. Who said it HAD to be a book? For older children, reading articles online is just as much reading as turning the pages of a book. Prompt your child during a normal conversation with a question or idea. "See if you can find out about the different products companies can make from recycling plastic bottles." Children are very computer savvy these days. Ask her to search the internet (under your watchful eye!) and find the answer. This kind of research kills a lot of birds with one stone. Reading online requires a multitude of skills: searching, researching, scanning, selecting, and following other links in order to find answers. Searching for one answer usually prompts other questions and curiosities, leading the child to read even more about a subject or topic.

"I have better things to do."

Lead your child to use reading materials to do fun activities: building models, making paper airplanes, coin collecting, cooking and baking, etc. Following directions helps develop comprehension.

Here are some other ways to encourage reading at home.

- Scout around for books, magazines, or comics you think your child might like to read. Present it as a gift. "I know how much you like airplanes. I found this book about WWII bombers, and I thought you might like to look at it." Don't mention the word "read"; "look at it" will produce the same result!
- Ask older children to read with their younger siblings. "Would you read a story to Jon and let him read it back to you? He needs a good reader to listen to him."
- Play games that are reading related: spelling games, trivia games, board games that require reading cards or board spaces, and card games with directions.
- Find models or other crafts that require reading directions for assembly. This is great for teaching sequencing, prediction, and following directions.
- Let your child see you reading, and then share your thoughts about your book or magazine. Set aside quiet times for reading. This could be a few minutes after dinner, after a bath and before bed, etc.
- Take advantage of reading and discussing road signs, menus, labels, or even lyrics to music.
- Limit TV to make time for reading, but never use TV or video games as a reward for reading or as a punishment for not reading.
- If your child is reading a book or magazine, allow an extra few minutes to finish a chapter or an article before bed
- .• Have a family book club night! Everyone gathers and brings a book, magazine, comic, or newspaper and shares a passage, a bit of trivia, a human interest story, an interesting fact, or even a joke that they like. Inspire your child to read more by saying, "That's very interesting! I'd like to hear more about that when you finish reading...I didn't know that; tell me more...Those are very funny jokes! Read some more."
- Don't force your child to finish a book she doesn't like. There are millions of other choices.
- Read to and with your child. As you read, your child will pick up important literacy skills in the process: vocabulary, fluency, inflection (changes in pitch or tone of the voice), comprehension, and more. Ask questions as you read; "What do you think will happen next? How do you think the story will end? What was your favourite part of the story? Which character is your favourite; why?

Adapted from by Becky L. Spivey, M.Ed.

Encouraging children to read

Learning to read is no easy task! We do not have the innate ability to read and have to be taught this important skill. During the foundation phase years it is imperative that girls 'learn to read' so they can move to 'reading to learn' in the intersen phase years and beyond.

Here are a few ways to encourage your daughter to read:

1. Read me a story- reading together is a powerful tool in motivating your daughter to read.

2. Beyond books- reading material comes in many different shapes and sizes.

3. Keep it fun, for everyone- if kids are going to enjoy reading, the experience has to be enjoyable.

4. "Look at what I did!"- use some sort of visible record of achievement.

5. "I want that one!"- Reading should be a choice, not a chore. Make sure there are a variety of books, magazines, and other materials available for your daughter to choose from.

6. Something to talk about- Reading doesn't have to stop when you put the book down. Talk to your daughter about books you've read and books you think she might enjoy.

7. Hey, Kids! What time is it? - Carve time out of the busy day and dedicate it to reading, both together and on your own.

Snyder, J. (2019). *Tips for Encouraging Kids to Read*. [online] Reading Rockets. Available at: http://www.readingrockets.org/article/tips-encouraging-kids-read [Accessed 2 Mar. 2019].

The *Story Builder* Table, can be used as a guide to initiate discussion before, during and after reading a text.

THINK AHEAD	THINK BACK	THINK FOR YOURSELF
We try to figure out what is going to happen in the story so that we can make predictions and really understand the story.	We review what the story was about so that we can see if we understand it.	When we read, we get to think deeply about the story and how it makes us feel. Our own thoughts are the real treasures we dig for when we read.
We: • Read the title. • Take a picture walk. • Make predictions about the story. "What is going to happen in the story?" • Create some questions about the story.	**Setting:** "When and where is the story happening?" **Characters:** "Who is the story about?" **Problem:** "What do the characters want or need?" **Solution:** "How did the characters get or not get what they wanted or needed?" **Story Structure:** "Does the story have a beginning, a middle, and an end?"	**We ask ourselves questions like:** • What did I find out that I never knew before? • Do I have new thoughts and feelings? • Could this really happen? • Can I retell this story in my own words?

Come and visit the **iHub** and the **WOW** (World of Words) **Lounge** and get your nose stuck in a good book!

Mrs Tarryn Molver

Head of Foundation Phase

The Parents' Association Committee

1. Parent Engagement:

The Parents' Association is the structure through which parents in the school work together for the best possible education and school experience for their children.

We have heard your desires for a stronger connection to each other, the chance to contribute and collaborate in a meaningful way, and the means to be heard and participate in the school's future.

We have kept these in mind in our 2019 planning:

- **Speaker Series:**

We endeavour to engage speakers who can address a range of issues that we and our children might encounter. One of these would address:

Mental Wellness Awareness

- **Annual General Meeting (AGM): 4 March 2019**

In keeping with the constitution of the St Mary's DSG Parents' Association (PA), which recommends that the body's Annual General Meeting (AGM) be held during the first term of each year, the 2019 AGM was held on Monday 4 March 2019 at 18:00, in the Auditorium.

The AGM provided the Chairperson of the PA with an opportunity to brief parents about the activities and achievements of the body during the past year, highlight key goals for 2019, and entertain a few questions from parents on issues pertaining to the objectives of the PA. The Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors and the Head of School were also in attendance and both presented reports pertaining to the school and leaner performance in the past year.

The parents were given the opportunity to table various queries, which were answered and discusses during the meeting.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

ROCHELLE DAMONS
CHAIRPERSON

WENDY THERON
(SECRETARY)

ANNELIZE FERREIRA
(NEWLY ELECTED)

NELLADEE PALANE
(NEWLY ELECTED)

NICOLLE WEIR
(NEWLY ELECTED)

NOX CHITEPO
(NEWLY ELECTED)

MELANIE STEYN

PATRICIA AJAYI

ANDY PAPADOPULO

LOUISE DEL GALLO

JANOME BOYCE

GEORGE LOATE

ADELAIDE RANAPE
(NEWLY ELECTED)

MPHO NETSHILEMA
(NEWLY ELECTED)

Thank you to the newly elected members of the PA committee for volunteering their time and expertise; we are really excited to have them join the team.

Our next PA General Meeting: 3 June 2019

- **Welcome Function: 5 February 2019**

Re-enforcing our role to be visible and engage with parents. Our function this year saw International Keynote Speaker and author, Mr Alex Granger, address us as a parent and staffing community.

The event allowed the parents to visit and engage with the staff on the various portfolios on offer within the school. It allowed for open, informal dialogue and for parents to understand achievements to date and what is lies ahead on the horizon across the portfolios.

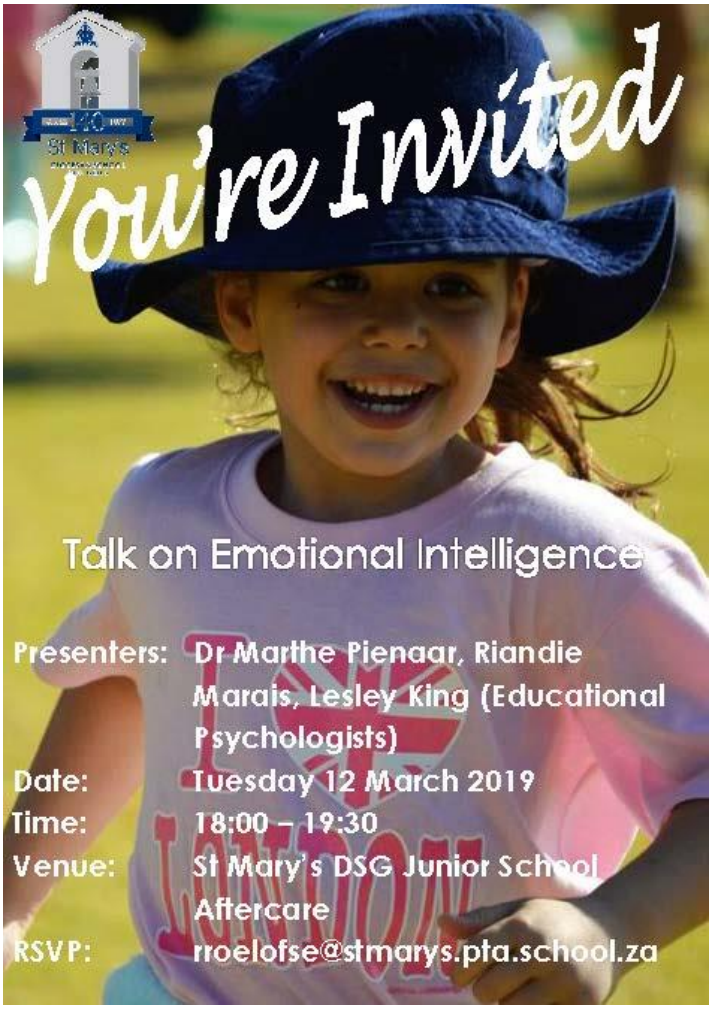
It's important for parents and teachers to interact because of their shared responsibility for the welfare of the children in their care. The PA is very aware of the need to encourage interaction between all parents of the School; this event was aimed at doing just that.

The PA has devoted significant work this year to how we could better meet the needs of parents and families in a time of growth and transition. There is still more potential for deeper learning and collaboration amongst our girls, staff and parents.

We invite you to join us in setting the future direction of our community.

"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents" – Jane D. Hull

pa@stmarys.pta.school.za



St Mary's DSG

SOUNDS OF Spring

CLASSICAL MUSIC COMPETITION

16 – 20 September 2019

Open to Junior and Senior School Scholars

Piano | Woodwind | Brass | Strings | Voice

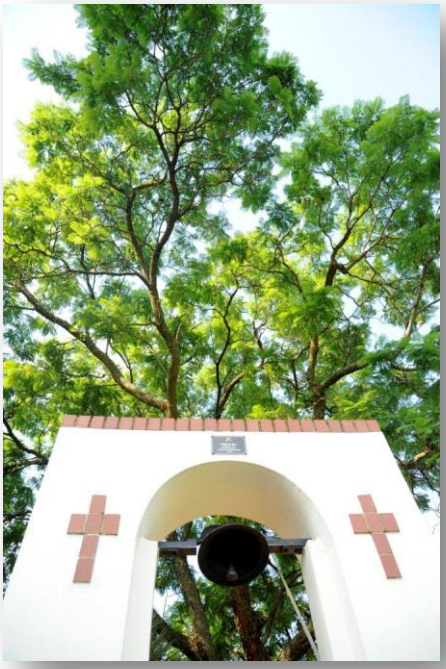
Venue:	St Mary's DSG Pretoria: Performing Arts Centre
Entries Open:	11 March 2019
Entries Close:	30 June 2019

Prizes sponsored by MITECH DIRECT

Online entry and competition rules available at www.stmarys.pta.school.za

St Mary's

DIOCESAN SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS



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