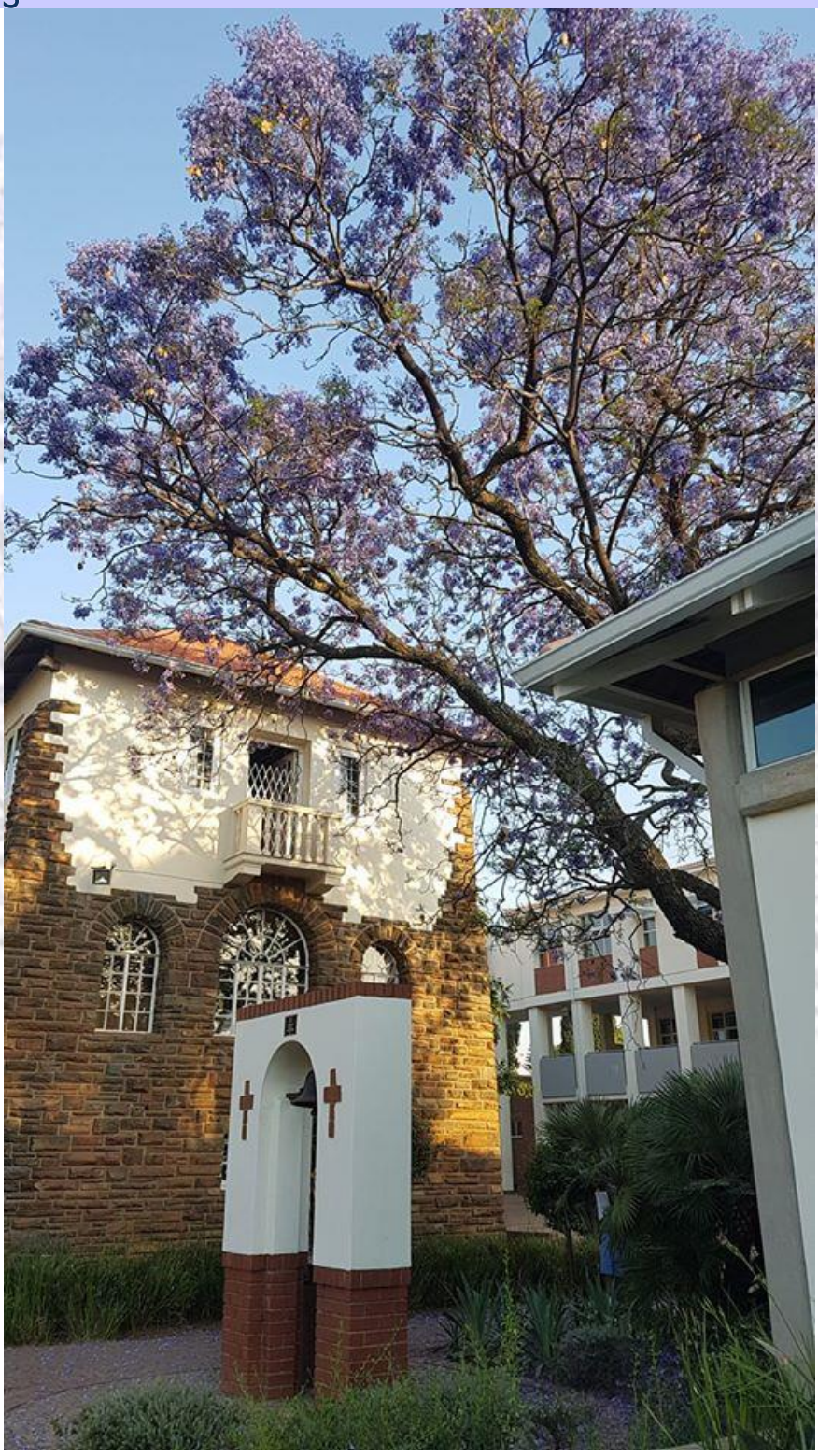
St Mary's

DIOCESAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

# St Mary's Matters

VOL 19 ISSUE 7



# St Mary's

DIOCESAN SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS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## *Dear St Mary's DSG Community*

EXAM TIME!

Our matrics are well into their final exams already, and the rest of the Senior School will soon follow suit. A little while later the Grade 5s to 7s also start their end-of-year exams.

The most important and simplest thing to remember about exams is that they are part of the learning process. They are a snapshot in time of the knowledge and understanding a scholar has at that point. Exams always lead to the next learning process, and should throughout life.

We do ourselves an enormous disservice by elevating them to such importance that our actions become counter-productive. A few examples:

- We work until all hours, especially just before an exam and write the exam sleep deprived. While we know as a fact that sleep is essential in the learning process, anxiety causes us to ignore what we know and arrive at an exam exhausted. During exams sleep takes on even greater importance. We know this but ignore it.
- We think that cramming the day before an exam is critical to our performance, as if a few hours before an exam can influence a whole year's work. It can't.
- We stop exercising, forgetting that refreshing oxygen flow through our brains is critical to performance. We say "We have not got time for this…I must work." And we actually know we are wrong while we do it.
- We stop eating properly, often increasing our junk food uptake because it saves time. We know that at times of stress diet becomes ever more important yet we ignore what we know.

Make no mistake. We want our girls to work hard, to do their best, and to show off during an exam session, but we need them at their most effective.

Healthy breaks from routine, a walk, a visit to the gym, a nap during the day, a refreshing salad, a good night's sleep, a quiet time, meditation and prayer. These are the things to prioritise.

We know these things for a fact. Let us all do it!

Best wishes to all

*The Revd Canon A W Paterson*
*Head of School*

## *Junior School Play*

# *If She Believes*

Written by Jessica Schorr

Three girls – Emily, Tolamo and Kopano – dream of going into the arts – fashion, art and drama. They imagine together what it would be like to walk through an art gallery that showcases everything they would like to do. They meet famous artists, designers, actors and playwrights along the way. They are taught to believe in themselves and to ensure their dreams enrich their country, South Africa.

## *Grandparents Day*

On Grandparents Day the Grade 0 girls joined in an initiative of 1000 Hearts started by Sarah DE Jong. It is based around small pocket hearts which are handmade from wool felt and stitched with love and good intentions. The idea is to spread a little love around the world.

# *Afrikaans Grade 5 Diererympies*

ń Kameelperd

Ek is die dier met die langste nek
Ek kan al die hoë blare kry met my bek
Jy kan my in die bosveld kry
Ek het kolle wat my kamoefleer
Jy kan sien dat ek is ń herbivoor
omdat ek hou nie van vleis
Brooke Stanley

Die leeu

Ek is ń leeu
ek bly in die karoo.
Hy is slim,
hy moet die rotse klim.
Hy jag bokke,
hy is baie honger.
Hy is ń baie groot kat,
hy hou nie van water so nat

Jessica

Die Olifant
Die olifant is baie groot dier.
Die Olifant eet blare en drink water.
Die Olifant het ń neus soos ń lang slurp.
Die Olifant spuit water oor sy rug.
Deur : Ontiretse Koikanyang

My hiëna in die bos

My hiëna kan jy jag
met jou flou lag
In die bos is waar jy bly
Jy is nie bang vir ń by
Jy veg met die leeu
Jy is nooit bang vir ń leeu
~ Amogelang

ń slang
Ek is ń lang,lang slang
As jy my sien,hardloop so vinnig as jy kan
My lyf is soos ń slap liniaal
Wat kan buig tot ek nie meer kan
Karli Ligthelm

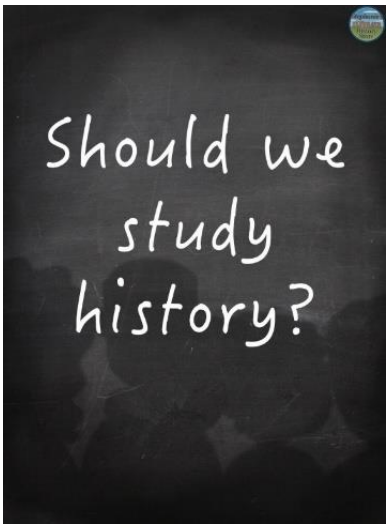
## *One thing I wish I was told about Grade 6*

I tasked some Grade 6 girls to think about a piece of advice they wish they had been given before stepping into Grade 6. Please enjoy these beautiful pearls of wisdom!

***I wish I was told that…***

- Prital - *we get a lot more homework than in Grade 5!*
- Lethu- *you can make a lot of new friends.*
- Yamika *–there are higher expectations!*
- Renee *–assessments and exams get longer… and harder!*
- Bobakhe- *you will definitely make new friends, but you can still keep the old ones.*
- Francesca – *when you have exams, always study. Never take a day off to watch TV or think it is okay to swim or do something fun, because you will regret it.*
- Maia- *we get a lot of homework in Grade 6!*
- Nomvula- *you sometimes have a lot of deadlines in a week.*
- Phatutshedzo- *if you lie back and decide not to do your work… it piles up on you.*
- Naledi- *tests and exams are longer so you shouldn't spend too much time on a question.*
- Gisela – *you should make sure to complete your homework!*
- Isabella – *you have to show more leadership qualities and always do the right thing.*
- Gemma- *Grade 6 is challenging.*
- Uviwe- *time management is very important!*
- Kele- *I shouldn't under estimate the workload.*
- Letago- *Grade 6 is not as easy as it seems.*

*Miss Idah Makhafola*
*Grade 6 English Teacher*




## *A question often asked by pupils*

All of us have studied history at one point in our lives, but have you ever sat down and thought about what history actually is?

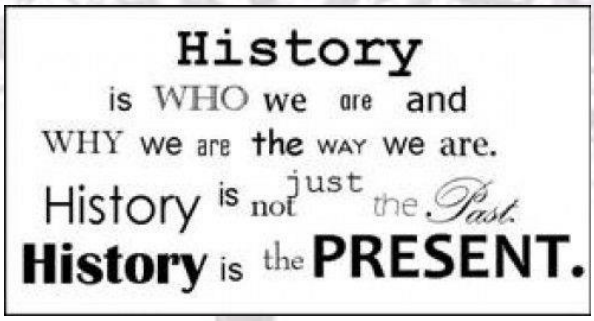
## *What is History?*

Your first birthday. Your first day of school. The time you learned to ride a bike. These are all moments in the history of your life. The second that something is in the **past**, it becomes part of history. The past is made up of all the time and events that have already gone by.

Think of all of the things that have happened in the past as pages in a book. These pages are grouped into chapters based on when and where they took place. All of these chapters are put together into a book of history. Sometimes, we study history's earlier chapters, like when we study cavemen or dinosaurs. Sometimes, we study more recent chapters of history, like the attacks of September 11th or the election of President Barack Obama, the first Black President of the United States. Today, we are continuing to write the pages that will go into the newest chapters in the book of history.

There are different types of history that you can study in school. World History is where you can learn more about the cultures of other countries, as well as what has happened in their pasts, like the building of Egyptian pyramids or the Olympics in Ancient Greece. Another type of history is Art History where you will study different paintings, sculpture, pottery and other forms of art from other time periods in order to learn more about the state of the world at that time.

https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-history



## *So, "Why do We Have to Study History?"*

1. History helps us see why things are the way they are.
2. We should know where we have come from to forge a path to where we want to be.
3. We as a people love stories and history is nothing but stories.
4. History is the best reality show ever.
5. History can be kind of repetitive. History teaches us about a lot of mistakes that have been made that we should try not to repeat.
6. History isn't just dates, battles, and documents. It is people who woke up, ate breakfast, worked, had families, and helped us get to where we are today. We will be those people one day and we should be studied and understood too.
7. The skills you learn and develop while studying history will be useful in many other parts of your life.
8. History answers the question, "*why?*"
9. History can teach us about who we are, and maybe even help guide us to who we want to be.

https://stephanieshistorystore.com/2016/07/03/students-are-asking-should-we-study-history

*Mrs S van der Walt*
*Social Sciences: History*

## *Grade 7 Art outing to Inscape Education*

The Grade 7 girls visited Inscape Education Group in Pretoria on 9 October. They attended 4 workshops in which they actively participated.

- Built Environment: they learned about interior design and decorating. The girls created storyboards
- Creativity & Design: The girls learned about fashion design and made beautiful design for dresses and accessories
- Digital Design and Technology: They were exposed to graphic design, Interaction design, and audio visual design
- Business Communications: They learned about Ideation design, as well as marketing and communication design.

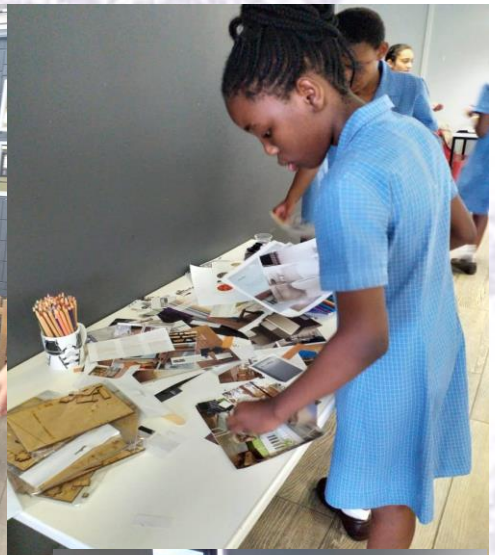
*Mrs Brandt and Mrs Sikhosana*

## *Grade 7 Visit to Inscape Education*

2019 has been a unique year for my learners and me. The manner in which I facilitated interactions with the girls brought about a unique and creative lens to the table. I awarded them the opportunity to experiment with new ideas which allowed me to specifically align my teaching style to the new era in which we live.

The Grade 7s' visit to Inscape Education group in Pretoria became the highlight and the foundation on which we can foster collaborative learning, through developing the learners' creative, imaginative and innovative minds. Throughout the year, the girls' critical and reflective thinking skills were developed, and they are able to express themselves in a symbolic and visual way.

Mrs Boipelo L. Sikhosana
Junior Arts Teacher



## *The President's Award: Bronze Adventurous Journey*

The Grade 9 President's Award club completed their required adventurous journey for their Bronze award over the weekend of 11 – 13 October.

Twenty eight eager and excited awardees were accompanied by their school leaders Mrs Lizelle le Roux and Mrs Melinda Vorster together with Coach Vos du Toit, one of our designated drivers and keen supporter.

This was the club's first encounter with the beautiful Num-Num trail near Machadodorp, now called the High Five trail. The one group started the hike at the Aloe Kaya whilst the other spent the first night at the Pongola Express, which is an old train wagon with a dining saloon. The girls found this very exciting, as most of them had never been on a train, let alone slept in a compartment!

True to the requirements of this award, the girls had to plan their own meals and purchase all the ingredients prior to the weekend. They were issued paraffin storm cookers, which the adventure guides from Chameleon Adventures, demonstrated how to use. This was a totally new experience to them and they dealt with it in a very creative and able manner.

Another requirement is basic accommodation and self-carrying of their sleeping bags, food and clothes. Chameleon Adventures equipped them all with proper hiking bags and advised them how to pack. Many huge shampoo and body lotion bottles had to be left behind as well as luxury items which were too heavy and impractical. The girls soon learnt that to pack the minimum enhances their hiking experience. It also took some getting used to carrying weight on their backs, but everyone managed very well and showed grit and resilience.

Everyone enjoyed the beautiful scenery en route. They had a lot of fun swimming under the waterfalls.

In the evening the girls were left to cook and bond with each other – this they particularly loved. There is a standard rule that no one is allowed a cellphone on an adventurous journey and many remarked how much they enjoyed this enforced freedom!

The hikes were done in very hot conditions and all were tired but happy on Sunday, knowing that they had accomplished a great goal of enduring a back pack for roughly 18 km over two days in a beautiful part of South Africa.

We are looking forward to these girls completing their Bronze Awards soon.

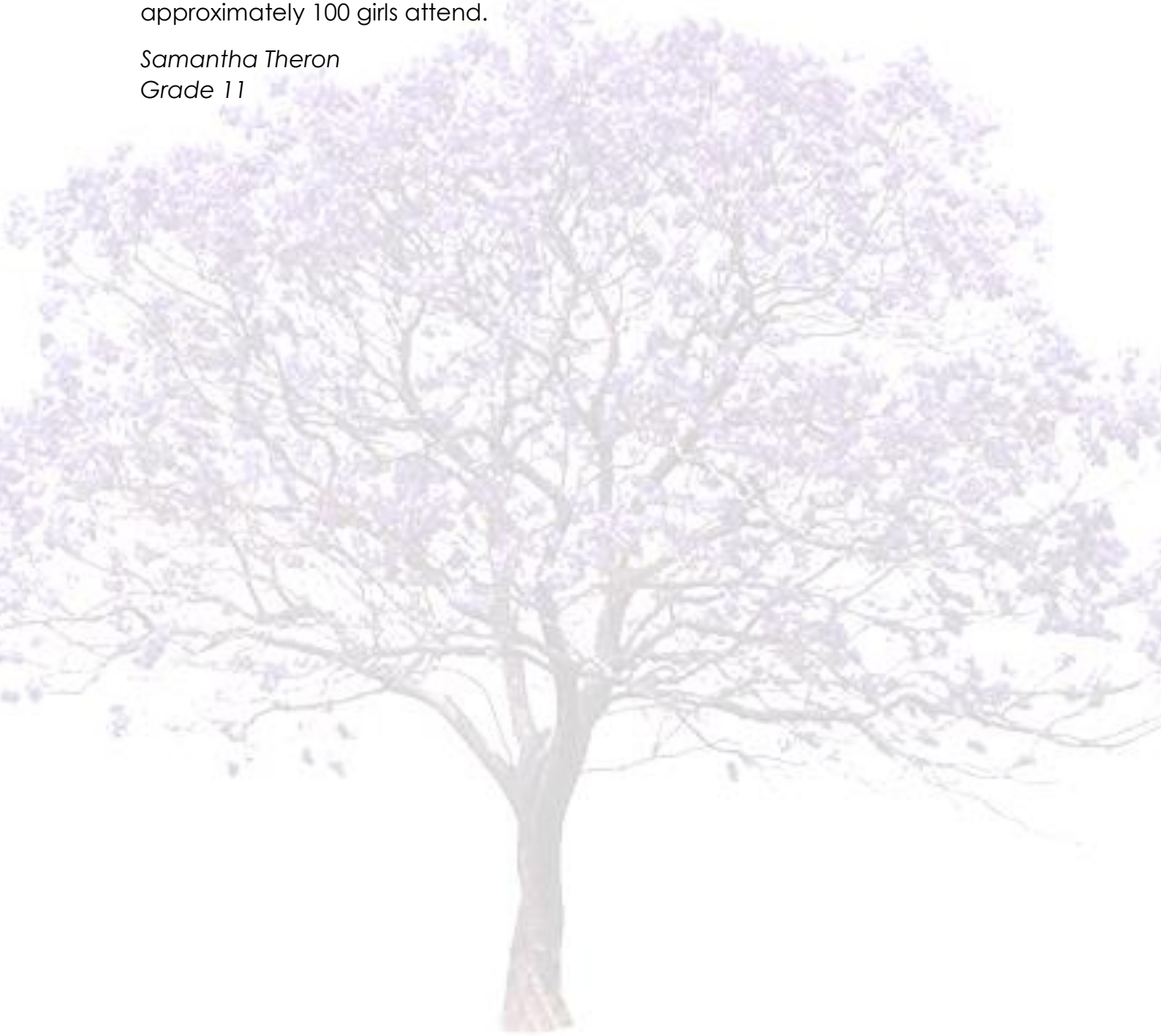
We would like to thank Jo-Anne and Otto from Chameleon Adventures for their loyal and special service since 2014.

*Mrs Lizelle le Roux*

## *Accolades Tea*

Accolades Tea is a place where the girls get to celebrate their academic achievements with some tea or coffee, a sausage roll and a delicious cupcake. The juniors are required to get 10 merits (10 distinctions on assessments) and the seniors are required to get 7 merits. This is a way for the girls' hard work to be recognised and rewarded and it gives girls the incentive to work hard. At the last accolades tea of 2019 we had approximately 100 girls attend.

*Samantha Theron*
*Grade 11*



## *Squash*

### Junior Squash League

Well done to our A team for winning the B-league. We are proud of the girls' outstanding achievement!

The league results are as follows:

| B-league: | C-league: |
|---|---|
| 1st DSG 1 | 5th DSG 4 |
| 3rd DSG 2 | 6th DSG 5 |
| 4th DSG 3 | |

### Senior Club Championships 14-17 October

Well done to Ashton Weir for being the squash champion for St Mary's DSG this year!

### Senior Inter-house 22 October

Congratulations to St Andrew House for winning this year's Inter-House!

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1st place | St Andrew | 21 points |
| 2nd place | St David | 14 points |
| 3rd place | St Patrick | 12 points |
| 4th place | St George | 8 points |

## *Junior Athletics*

Our annual Sports Day was held on 3 October 2019. St Patrick House was the overall winner and the Spirit Trophy was awarded to St David House. Natalie Vermandele smashed two records on the day, in the U13 Hurdles and in the U13 Long Jump – congratulations, Natalie!

Rounding out the big prize winners were Junior Victrix Ludorum Kate Roebuck, and Phatu Netshandamu being awarded runner-up to our Senior Victrix Ludorum, Natalie Vermandele.

What an enjoyable day for parents and athletes alike!

## *Senior Swimming*

Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to be better.
A rather brief but amazing season it has been for the swimming team of St Mary's DSG. The girls attended morning training session, which ignited a bond between them.

The swimming season in Term 3 is short and sweet, but it is good preparation for a jam-packed Term 1 coming up in 2020.

We unfortunately only had one relay gala we could attend, which was at Pretoria Boys' High. Our girls swam their hearts out and despite being a few swimmers short, the girls managed to bank 2nd place. We are so proud of them for this.

We congratulate Kelsea Munro on her 2020 captaincy; there isn't a more deserving swimmer, when we take into account her excellent achievements in representing South Africa at the 13th CANA African Swimming Championships in Namibia in September.

Kelsea won 4 gold medals as well as set 4 new records in the following events:

- 100m Backstroke 1:07.87
- 50m Backstroke 31.94
- 50m Freestyle 26.95
- 100m Freestyle 59.82

## *Note from Coach Fabienne:*

Thank you to every willing and passionate heart that has made the start of my St Mary's DSG career a pleasure. I am so blown away by the talent these girls have, and the potential they have to go extremely far in their swimming. The love for this sport only grows stronger stroke after stroke. I am so excited for what 2020 has to offer, As the well-known verse in James 5:11 says "Indeed we count them blessed who endure," and so I encourage the St Mary's DSG swimmers to endure and work hard, because If she believes in herself, she will fly.

## *Senior Basketball*

After a very successful 2018 / 19 Johannesburg League, our girls were ready to take on the best that Johannesburg has to offer. Last season our teams won 60 % of their matches, which was very impressive considering the strength of the school in that league. This year our girls had great preparation and were ready despite only having two weeks before the league started.

The results were as follows:

| SCHOOL | TEAMS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | U14 | U15 B | U15 A | Open |
| Pretoria Girls High School | 31 – 10 (W) | 18 – 24 (L) | 31 – 08 (W) | 21 – 10 (W) |
| Micheal Mount Waldorf | 26 – 19 (W) | 06 – 40 (L) | 33 – 32 (W) | 22 – 17 (W) |
| Redhill College | 16 – 15 (W) | 18 - 16 | 22 – 0 (W) | 33 – 12 (W) |
| Crawford Sandton | 24 – 06 (W) | | | 27 – 05 (W) |
| St Mary's Waverley | 22 – 10 (W) | 20 – 21 (L) | 32 – 18 (W) | 32 – 20 (W) |

The second half of the season will start at the beginning of the new year.

### International School of South Africa Basketball Festival

Our U14, U15 and U16 took part in the annual ISSA Mafikeng Festival, which was held from 27 to the 29 September. Our teams have been attending this tournament for the past three years. This tournament is one of the strongest in the country as it consists of schools from Western Cape, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and North West Province. Our teams played very well and showed character.

The results were as follows:
U14 Silver medals
U15 9th position
U16 Silver medals

Overall our school was awarded a trophy for the most disciplined school throughout the tournament. Congratulations to the following girls for being recognised as part of the top 5 players in their age group.

Hannah Palane (U16)
Rethabile Ratlhogo (U14)

## O. R. Tambo Social Cohesion Games

Congratulations to Chavonne Sujee and Neo Seleke for being selected as part of the U15 Tshwane team. The team participated in the O.R. Tambo games on the 26 and 27 October 2019. The girls played really well, and their team achieved fourth position.

# *Raising Resilient Children*

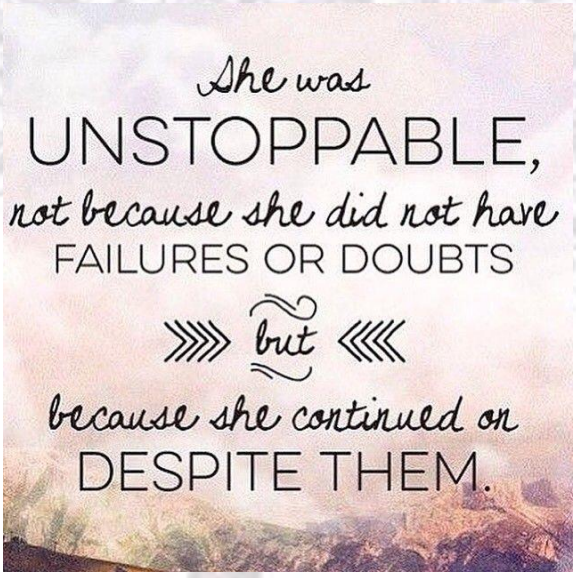
I recently re-discovered a variety of articles and books focused on strengthening parent-child relationships and supporting the development of resilience in children. Reference is often made to research discussing the 'resilience problem' we face as a society as stress levels and anxiety, depression and feelings of being overwhelmed increase. Resilience refers the ability to *bounce back* from adversity or adapt successfully to difficulties/challenges. I wanted to share some insights on how we can assist children in developing resilience.

**We give children their best shot at developing resilience when we provide:**

1. Strong connections to adults who are both competent and caring. Relationships act as the centrepiece for resilience, for better or worse.
2. Support for the development of social and emotional skills.
3. Motivation to master their environment and the things that interest them.
4. Opportunities to develop autonomy and to be responsible for their own decisions.

**Are young children naturally resilient?**

The truth is that both nature and nurture most likely play an important part. Each child has the capacity to be resilient, but it is undeniable that the attributes and characteristics taught to them make a significant contribution. Positive attachment, parental presence and active, engaging parental involvement lay the foundations of resilience.



**Building resilience**
As a parent there are a few things you can focus on in order to raise resilient children.

***1. Help your child develop a strong sense of identity***
Talking to your children about your family history and family stories (your family identity) will help them to create a narrative about their own experiences and life. This also fosters a sense of belonging to a larger unit (The family who cares…is kind…is creative…loves adventure etc.). Linking principles and values that have been taught through lived personal experiences assists children in linking and integrating these into their own sense of self.

***2. Modelling psychological flexibility***
Being psychologically flexible refers to the ability to adapt to a situation with awareness, openness and focus and to take effective action while guided by your values. We can assist children to develop this by helping them in various situations to be calm, think broadly, develop curiosity, take perspective and realise they have choices. This process does not happen overnight, but grows from interactions, discussions and facing challenges together in a flexible and mindful manner.

***3. Boost self-control***
Discussing choices and actions calmly and communicating frequently and often. Focusing on values, patience, hard work, goals setting, time management etc. when approaching situations and remembering that they will ultimately learn from watching how you approach life.

Making decisions when emotions are calm and not heightened. This means that we, as a family, help children make decisions about different aspects (how we treat each other, social media, disagreements) when we are all calm and sticking to those decisions when things become more challenging.

Developing patience by encouraging your child to wait 10 minutes (for a treat or before checking social media) and considering if she still feels the same level of intensity that compelled a quick reaction or decision.

Ultimately children absorb what they see modelled around them. They will learn from your reaction and decisions made so it is important to model what you want them to do.

***4. Developing positive/optimistic thinking***

In short research shows us that being optimistic – realistically and accurately optimistic – can change resilience. It is thus important to surround your children and our family with optimistic people and thought patterns.

Teach your children to challenge their thinking by considering a situation from all different perspectives. If they seem stuck in a negative mindset it can be useful to steer or encourage (not tell) them towards an alternative perspective, perhaps more optimistic or realistic than negative.

***5. It is all about relationships***

Harold B Lee once said: "The most important work we will ever do is within the walls of our own home" and this is as true today as it has even been before and it is therefore important to do the following:

- Be involved in your child's life
- Being responsive to your child's bids for attention and connection
- Connect and find time to communicate
- Nurture the connections and unique attributes that comprise not only family, but individual (on-on-one) relationships.

Ultimately the world will provide many opportunities to develop and use resilience and it can feel like a daunting task filled with many "shoulds" and "should nots" as parents. Trying to anticipate and prepare children for all the problems and adversities life will throw their way is a daunting task. There is, however, also beauty in acknowledging and trusting in the inbuilt capacity for growth, mastery and resilience within children. As parents you do not need to solve or prepare them for every problem, but rather provide an environment in which you can help children to authentically and innately develop the self-confidence to face adversity with a secure self-belief that they can and will work it out and move forward.

*Mrs Riandie Marais*
*Educational Psychologist*

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