



ST ANNE'S
DIOCESAN
COLLEGE

Dear Parents,

Special greetings to those parents who are receiving a St Anne's Newsletter for the first time. While the new girls and matrics commenced their school year earlier, the majority of our pupils have been back at St Anne's for less than a week. I am immensely proud of the effective manner in which our school programme clicks into gear and to state that the girls are already very active would be an understatement. The new girls' Induction Programme; Form 6 Leadership Training; choir auditions; trials in at least four sporting codes; a Form 6 Geography field trip; drama production rehearsals; many staff and pupil meetings; and two staff social functions are but a few of the activities that have kept us busy. This afternoon I will be interviewing our first prospective 2018 pupil, and tonight Venita and I host the first of our Form 6 coffee evenings. 2017 is a reality! I trust that it will prove to be a positively significant year for all of you.

NEW GIRLS' DAY

Nervous excitement was the order of the day as our new Form 2 girls arrived on campus for the first day of what will hopefully be a happy and most rewarding five years at St Anne's. I look forward to getting to know the girls and their parents in the years ahead. The following is an excerpt from my welcome address to them on the Sunday morning:

*On a day like this I am mindful of the broader educational picture in our country. I don't have to remind you that the sad reality experienced by the majority of pupils in this country is far removed from the positive atmosphere so evident here today. I consider myself extremely privileged to be the Head of St Anne's, a College that I consider to be a very successful institution. But what do I mean by **successful**? Am I basing this claim on our recent matric results? If so, am I referring to our 100% pass rate, to every one of the 77 girls qualifying to study for a degree, to the 12 girls who obtained straight A's? Am I referring to those on the other end of the spectrum who obtained far higher marks than they dreamed of when they commenced Form 2? These statements are all true of our 2017 results and while I am immensely proud of them, and said as much to our staff at our start of year meeting on Friday, the success of St Anne's is related to far more than our matric results.*

*Parents, you have decided that St Anne's should be your daughter's high school. By implication, you should therefore consider this school to be a successful one. What does **successful** mean to you?*



Form 2s settling in and receiving their laptops

James Henan of the Harvard Graduate School of Education is reported to have challenged a group of principals at a conference with the question, "How do you know when your school is successful?" What would your answer be?

Henan listened to a number of answers that referred to various specific achievements before he responded with the following:

"These achievements are important but you should be asking yourselves whether your students are going to be happy and productive citizens at age 25, 45 and 65. What kinds of adults will they be? Will they be respectful and honest, and will they work to make the world a better place? These are the qualities we should be valuing and pursuing in our schools. And those are the measures of your school's effectiveness."

Thomas R Hoerr, the writer of a book I have recently acquired, states that reading, writing and computing should form **the floor, not the ceiling**, of students' education. Sticking to this image, I believe that matric results at schools such as St Anne's have more to do with floors than with ceilings. However, the reaction of many good schools and of the press, in general, to the recently released matric results, appears to suggest otherwise.

The skills required for success **in** school are not necessarily those required for success **out** of it. Matric results are not an accurate predictor of success at university beyond 1st year level, and certainly not a guarantee of success during adulthood. Consider the concept of financial success. Research by the Carnegie Institute of Technology showed that 85% of financial success is due to skills in "human engineering", your personality and ability to communicate, negotiate and lead. Only 15% is due to technical knowledge.

This serves to reinforce St Anne's emphasis on holistic education, on the College attaching great importance to qualities not assessed in tests or exams and on qualities specified in our Annie Document which you can access on our webpage. Thomas Hoerr refers to these qualities as success skills – skills that will promote success in every arena of life. He goes on to identify what he considers to be the five most important of these and refers to them as **the five formative skills**. They certainly resonate with me and are the following:

Empathy, Self-control, Integrity, Embracing diversity and Grit.

Encouragingly, he asserts that all these skills are teachable, unlike traditional IQ which is stubbornly resistant to improvement after the age of 8.

Our College's extensive co-curricular programme that includes sport, music, drama, social responsibility projects, etc., etc. play a crucial role in developing these skills. We have innumerable alumni who are making our world a better place, adding weight to the assertion that St Anne's is a successful school. Young ladies, if you want to join their ranks, if you are intent on gaining maximum value from your five year association with this College, you need to diligently tackle your academic commitments but, perhaps more importantly, you must also immerse yourself in our co-curricular programme.

As an illustration of change, someone once said, "When I was growing up, plastic surgery was a bit of a taboo subject but these days if you mention botox, nobody raises an eyebrow." We live in a world where change is one of few certainties. Parents, the education that your daughters will receive at St Anne's is very different to the one that you received. Your daughters are about to commence what I hope will be a five-year journey at St Anne's. It will be a journey characterised by change and will be full of uncertainty.

The journey is bound to be littered with challenges. While St Anne's is certainly not a perfect school, you can take comfort in the fact that it is well equipped to assist your daughter in dealing with these challenges. Educating adolescent females is our area of expertise. I assure you that we are committed to ensuring that your daughter graduates from the College with not only a good matric but also the formative skills to which I earlier referred. We are committed to providing her with a value-added education that will hopefully contribute to her joining the ranks of St Anne's alumni who are making our world a better place.

2016 MATRIC RESULTS

The above excerpt refers to the matric results of the Class of 2016. I am proud of the members of this class, particularly those who achieved their personal academic goals while still ensuring that they honed their formative skills by enthusiastically participating in our co-curricular programme. As a supporter of Stephen Covey's "abundance mentality" philosophy, I do not believe that academic success is only achieved at the expense of other school activities. Details of our 2016 Matric results can be viewed on our College website (stannes.co.za)

ACADEMIC AWARDS

While on the topic of academic success, the highlight of our first Assembly of the year, which took place this morning, was the presentation of Academic Honours Awards to **Erin Crossman, Robyn Ducasse, Sabrina Henderson, Katerina Itopoulos and Emma Pitout**. A full list of the awards, which were based on the girls' final reports of last year, can be accessed on our D6 Communicator.

STAFF

At a staff meeting a couple of days before New Girls' Day, we were delighted to welcome the following new members of staff:

Mrs Debbie Martin	Deputy Head: Pastoral	previously Maritzburg College
Mrs Cecile Jansen	Afrikaans	previously Treverton College
Mrs Corné Oelofsen	Afrikaans	previously St Patrick's College
Sister Gayle Gotte	Sanatorium	

Ms Ayanda Shata, Ms Londeka Msomi, Ms Sarah-Jane Lait and Ms Tracy McNamara, all of whom are joining our new Internship Programme that will be overseen by **Mrs Bernese Hyde**.

Kind regards



Dave Arguile
COLLEGE HEAD

"Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow."
Ronald Osborn, teacher and writer

