



ST ANNE'S
DIOCESAN
COLLEGE

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Parenting has never been an easy task, particularly if you are trying to be the best mom or dad that you can possibly be. Few people would deny that the difficulty index linked to parenting has risen a number of notches over the last ten years. One of the main challenges encountered by parents has been the impact of technology on children, especially that of social media. Given the many temptations faced by children, it is unlikely that any parent can guarantee that his or her child will never succumb to temptation and do something contrary to what the parents have “taught” at home. In such instances, it would normally be inappropriate to blame the child’s family for the child’s indiscretion. The parents would hopefully agree that their child has erred, probably sanction the child for inappropriate behaviour and possibly consider new interventions to reduce the possibility of a repeat of the transgression.

Transfer the above to a high school context. Research confirms that these children are arriving at high school with most of the values they will subscribe to in future, already in place. This means that they are already behaving in ways that provide evidence of values that influence their approach to matters of race, gender, social class, etc. These values/beliefs, although influential, may not yet be properly articulated or succinctly defined, and are normally learned from significant others with whom the child has previously interacted.

In an article published in last week’s edition of *The Mail and Guardian* headed “*The curriculum must be about change: We need to rethink education to tackle our blighted history and a challenging new world.*” **Sylvan Blignaut**, an associate professor in the education department at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, wrote the following:

“Universities and schools have a moral responsibility to address racism, inequality, power, privilege, gender and patriarchy. Discussions about race and racism need to happen at school so that by the time students reach university, they have well-developed ideas about race.” (and, I would add, about “inequality, power, privilege, gender and patriarchy”)

School education is not only about academic subjects, sport, music, drama, debating, etc. These are obviously valued components of our curriculum but their importance is linked to what is learned during the process of engaging in these activities more than to the actual results achieved in them. Chapel services, assemblies, informal interaction between members of our College community, programmes such as Social Awareness Week and Sacred Listening Spaces (as referred to in my last newsletter), etc., all take on increasing importance if our pupils are to contribute positively to creating the South Africa we so desire. However, there are no guarantees that members of our school community will not “mess up”. As a school we can only do our best today to try to prevent unpleasant incidents from occurring. Just as it is perhaps unfair to point fingers at a girl’s family when she errs, it may be inappropriate to point fingers at a school when one of its pupils behaves in a way that is clearly in contravention of the school’s values and Code of Conduct. Unfortunately, this is not the way that the press and the general public normally react, as is has been evident of late in the reaction to a number of incidents at various schools around the country.

YOUTH DAY

Youth Day last Friday offered us a chance to focus on the significance of what happened on that fateful day in 1976. At an early-morning Assembly, **Mrs Urasha Ramnarain** presented a brief historical context to the events that took place on the 16th of June, and shared part of her personal journey, focussing particularly on the impact that the then-Government's education policies had on pupils such as herself.

The cancellation of formal lessons and the STEPP Fête contributed to the girls enjoying a relaxing and most enjoyable day. Thank you to the many parents who supported the Fête, making the most of the wonderful weather and of an opportunity to relax with family and friends.

STAFF

We bid farewell to **Ms Ntombi Mtolo** who has been an intern at St Anne's for the past four years, and a boardermistress in Macrorie until the end of last year. She has made a significant impact on the College during this period, for which I am immensely grateful. I am also grateful to **Mrs Moira Lovell**, **Mr Anthony Lovell** and **Mrs Nicky Roy** who have looked after **Ms Denbigh Maurer's** classes while she has been recuperating from back surgery. The Lovells will still be with us for the first two weeks of next term before Denbigh returns.

FOUNDATION GOLF DAY

The St Anne's Foundation will be hosting a Golf Day at the Victoria Country Club on Thursday, 12 October. The Chairman of the Foundation, **Mr Nick Jonsson**, will be writing to all Matric parents next term to invite them to this event. In the meantime, I request that parents of Form 6 girls make note of this date.

INTERHOUSE MUSIC

I am currently in Cape Town attending a meeting and an AGM of the Anglican Board of Educators. **Venita** and I therefore attended last night's performance of the Interhouse Music Competition which was as impressive and entertaining as ever. Parents attending tonight's performance are in for a treat.

SPECIAL AWARDS

My trip to the Cape necessitates me missing a number of school functions, including our end-of-term Assembly. As usual, the Assembly will include the announcement of various awards, including that of an Honours Award for Drama to **Emma Pitout**. At an Assembly last week, prestigious Gold Certificates were presented to **Emily Lazenby** and **Morgan Logan** in recognition of their successful participation in the President's Award Programme.

Kind regards



Dave Arguile
COLLEGE HEAD

A feminist is anyone who recognises the equality and full humanity of women and men.
Gloria Steinem, journalist and activist

Upcoming Events

INTERHOUSE MUSIC COMPETITION, 22 JUNE

Please contact Toni on 033 343 6100 or twoodgate@stannes.co.za to book your seats.

GRANDPARENTS MORNING, 29 JULY

Please pass on the invite to all grandparents and RSVP to Toni on 033 343 6100 or twoodgate@stannes.co.za.

OLD GIRL KICKS OFF SOCIAL AWARENESS WEEK

By Courtney Crooks, Form 4

Zandile Mgutshini, who was head girl of St Anne's in 2015, returned to the school to open the second annual Social Awareness Week, which had the theme "For the Youth, By the Youth".

Zandile spoke to the college about her personal experiences of racism and economic classism. Her advice for those who hold privilege was to "use your privilege as a pedestal to help others".

She also spoke about her experience of entering a university environment as a St Anne's Old Girl, saying, "Destroy that first judgement that people pass on you based on your clothes, food, gender or race and just show them that you care".

Zandile was incredibly passionate about all that she said and started conversations between the girls.

THE POWER OF ACTIVISM

By Kayleigh Naidoo, Form 3

Two Grade 11 girls took to the stage during Social Awareness Week earlier this term to address the issue of activism. Rumbi Vambe spoke about the different types of activism, the power of activism and how necessary it is to speak up even if it is through social media because, she said, "speaking up is where change happens". She warned, however, about becoming a slactivist, for example when you are only active on social media but you don't physically do anything.

Katekile Dakile spoke about educating others but mostly educating ourselves. She said people often have the mind-set that activists are loud, outspoken and angry people but this is not true. If you are shy and quiet but still have strong feelings, you can still be an activist. She says that we should be open-minded and seek change for all.

WHERE THE PLASTIC IS REALLY COMING FROM

By Esmé Thornhill-Davis, Form 2

"Plastic enters the ocean in unimaginable ways", said Marine Biologist Dr Deborah Robertson-Anderson at a College Lecture held last term.

"Roughly 10 million metric tons of plastic enter the oceans per year," she explained to the St Anne's girls. And some of this comes from when synthetic fabrics are washed in a washing machine - thousands of fibres break away from the item being washed. These tiny plastic microfibrils enter the ocean and are eaten by fish. Poisonous toxins are then released into their bodies, and into human bodies when these fish are consumed, even if the fish is cooked.

But there is a solution to this, says Dr Robertson-Anderson. "These plastics in the oceans cannot be recycled as they are classified as dirty plastics," she said. "The only way we can dispose of dirty plastics completely, is to melt them down into reusable oil."

There is a way to do this using a R6.2 million machine, but Dr Robertson-Anderson is certain that, "the machine will make back the money in six months of its use."



Marine Biologist Dr Deborah Robertson-Anderson (second from the left) was invited to speak to the girls at the College Lecture on ocean pollution.