



ST ANNE'S  
DIOCESAN  
COLLEGE

Dear Parents

It is my pleasure to commit some observations and thoughts after my first few months at St Anne's as Deputy Head of Pastoral. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues and the girls for their warm welcome which has made the transition from Maritzburg College to St Anne's surprisingly smooth and I have felt part of this beautiful school from the moment I arrived. Thank you.

As a teenager, I was so happy at St Anne's and the friends I made, and the values and lessons I learned here, have remained as treasured constants. I was surprised at just how much it meant returning to my alma mater as the waves of gooseflesh flowed continuously as I walked into my new office and looked out over glorious Front Lawn and the familiar fountain. It felt so right.

Reassuringly, the heart of the college is the same (and some parts even smell the same!) but the significant difference is the girls. If I were to generalise and summarise it in one word, it is their engagement. They engage with their friends more openly and I'm sometimes speechless at what they share with one another. It is so healthy as they are in tune and are so affectionate and warm.

They engage with social issues on such a mature level and debate opinions with rigour and respect. They have incredible savvy and a sensitive social conscience which is fundamental to their being. Their courage, knowledge of issues, commitment to outreach projects, and authenticity, are so admirable and I feel excited by the impact so many of our young women are bound to have in their areas of influence.

This current generation of St Anne's girls engages with adults with such ease. They have a charming confidence which I find endearing and I appreciate how they pop into my office for a quick chat, or join me on a walk in the grounds to talk side-by-side, or arrive as a posse to address an issue. They talk readily to teachers and coaches. I don't remember feeling comfortable enough to engage so openly with adults. I notice too how much they love their friends' parents and greet them with such delight and warmth.

They engage wholeheartedly with their studies, sport and cultural activities. Their self-discipline, high expectations and a fabulous sense of fun are evident. They are led superbly by the staff who raise the bar and offer support, and the level of the girls' achievement is excellent.



This generation deals with a lot of pressure which is of international concern. As their guardians, we need to ensure that they develop resilience (popularly referred to as grit), that they develop a healthy self-awareness and mindfulness, that they grow relationships that will support their identity and give them a sense of community. I believe wholeheartedly that the St Anne's environment is a very privileged one as these aspects are foremost in our minds as we endeavour to prepare these dynamic young women for the exciting, yet demanding, world that they will enter.

It would be wonderful for there to be a few more opportunities for you as parents to mingle, so, together with the PLC, we'd like to invite you to tea before collecting your daughters from Saturday school. Please diarise Saturday 16 September 9.00 a.m. This Saturday is the day after the Chanel Ball, so we hope many Form 4 parents will be around, as well as other parents. Please support this initiative and pop in for a cup of tea on Front Lawn before collecting your daughters at 10.00. The PLC is also looking at other options to encourage more social interaction with parents.

I hope you enjoy a wonderful half-term with your daughters. Please ensure they sleep a lot and return to school rejuvenated. I hope that the Form 6 girls have a productive time studying for Trials as well as having some fun time with you as a family.



Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie Martin".

**MRS DEBBIE MARTIN**  
**DEPUTY HEAD: PASTORAL**

## *Dates to Diarise*

### **Friday 8 September**

Women of the World Luncheon, hosted by The Old Girls' Guild, 12.00pm

### **Saturday 16 September**

Parent's Tea on the Front Lawn, 9.00am

### **Wednesday 20 September**

Music Supper Concert in the old Indoor Centre, 18.30pm

*Bookings open after Half Term*