



Animated discussion in Junior Primary assembly

FROM THE JUNIOR SCHOOL HEAD'S DESK

Before we went on half-term and before we came back and held our wonderful public speaking evening, and our Grades 2 and 5 music soirée, the Senior Primary girls and teachers and I spoke about reports in assembly. It seems longer than a week ago, and lots has happened since - just ask your daughter - but I am going to try to recollect some of what was discussed. Why? Well, because assembly is one of the best forums we have for conversation and a live exchange of ideas between girls of different grades, and girls and their teachers, and it is one way that we get to explore the range of experience and perspectives that constitutes our school community. Discussions in assembly can also provide us with useful data as long as we remain aware of the forum's limitations: its lack of anonymity, the performative nature of some of the responses, and the power relations that animate exchanges among peers from different grades and between the girls and their teachers, including me.

The girls' willingness to contribute to public discussion also diminishes over time with the Grade 7s requiring a personal invitation or provocation to respond - in most instances. The girls in the Junior Primary demonstrate other tendencies with the youngest among them still grappling with the demands of turn-taking, raising their hands, and staying on topic. A recent assembly on families held by Mrs Di Benedetto resonated with all the girls and their response to questions about who did the most work in their family, or which member of their family was funniest incited furious debate.

I was reminded of Mrs Di Benedetto's assembly when the discussion on reports with the Senior Primary girls turned to the reception of the documents by their families. Most of the girls, gratifyingly, spoke about reading their reports with their parents and acknowledged that they felt supported and, dare I say, loved through the process. And it was the experience of feeling loved that was most commonly cited among the Junior Primary girls in response to Mrs Di Benedetto's request for a definition of the word "family". This is good news for our community, great news in fact.

When I asked the teachers to comment on the report-writing process, they spoke to the girls about the practical importance of documenting progress and identifying areas of strength as well as areas where more intentional effort was needed; they spoke about the value of report writing for their development as teachers and how it enhances and refines their approach and practice; we touched on the need for clear communication and our relationship with the girls and their parents; we referred to the collegial experience of report writing and checking and how the final document, the thought behind it and the words chosen to express it, is, in many ways, a labour of love. That word again...

I spend time reading and thinking about the value of giving and receiving feedback in our environment. On his website, economic journalist and *Financial Times* columnist Tim Harford, describes constructive feedback as the act of identifying a set of particular points and listing them clearly, "with reasons, examples and the occasional word of encouragement." He adds, "Such feedback is standard in certain environments - Olympic coaches, editors on deadline and schoolteachers all provide focused constructive feedback if they're any good. But it is rare for criticism to be quite so practical: it's usually vague and verging on flattery or cruelty."

I know reading your child's report is not always comfortable; I also know, despite our best efforts, that our feedback is not always as clear or understandable as we would like. Mistakes, stubbornly, persist. Please engage with us at parent afternoons so that we can give your children what they deserve: focused, constructive feedback that will help them grow.

As we approach the end of the Trinity term, I would like to take the opportunity to say goodbye to teachers who will be sorely missed by our community: Yolandi Geyser (Grade 000), Vicki Jonker (Junior Primary Sports co-ordinator), and Lunga Seele (Senior Primary teacher and mentor). We wish them well as they embark on different adventures and thank them for the indelible mark they have left on our school.

SARAH WARNER
JUNIOR SCHOOL HEADMISTRESS

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

In Junior Primary Chapel, the different grades take turns saying the prayers. In Grade 1, the girls use pictures instead of words when preparing their prayers. The images produced by the girls below are an excellent example of how to use pictures purposefully when our words fall short of what we want to express.

REVD RAKGADI KHOBO
CHAPLAIN



Ava Nana



Juliet Mogale



Rachel Adelaar



Lilitha Makalima



Taylor Kloeck



Tumelo Hermanus

NEWS FROM THE ART DEPARTMENT

Throughout the Trinity term, the Grade 0s have been exploring three of the elements of art, namely: shape, line, and colour. The girls had lots of fun exploring various shapes when they went on a shape scavenger hunt around the school. We looked at how everything in the world around us can be broken down into simple shapes and lines. Our investigations culminated in the girls' creation of beautiful oil pastel cacti. The focus on shape, line and colour is clear, and the end result is mesmerising.

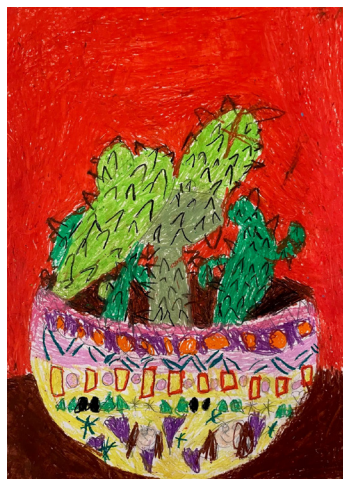
ADÈLE OLDFIELD-SAMMONS
ATELIERISTA



Salma Kahn



Abigael Simmer



Amelia Geldenhuys



Asa Bimha



Basia Ralebitso



Isla Roman



Lehakwe Kukama



THE ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB

With the cold season of winter upon us, conversation in the Junior Primary environmental club led to talk about the seasons and weather. The girls brainstormed words such as air, atmosphere, temperature, windy, rainy, sunny, hailing, snowy, foggy, and cloudy. They also mentioned the weather patterns of spring, summer, and autumn. The lesson concluded with the girls creating cool posters and receiving feedback from their peers and teachers.

ANESHREE NAICKER AND REFILOE KOIKOI
JUNIOR PRIMARY TEACHERS



PUBLIC SPEAKING

Girls from Grades 4 to 7 participated in a Senior Primary public speaking evening. The girls read aloud from texts, delivered speeches, performed dialogues, and recited poetry in Afrikaans, English, isiZulu and Sesotho.

LINDA SMITH
SENIOR PRIMARY TEACHER



NOTICES

SCHOOL MAGAZINE 2023



?

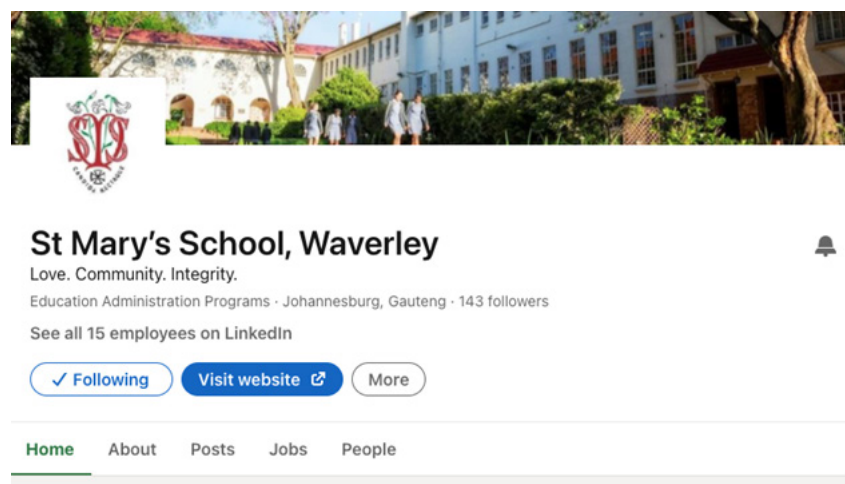
2023

We will once again be offering you the choice of receiving the annual St Mary's School magazine in a digital format version and / or a hard copy version. Please click the link below for further information and to make your choice:

<https://jberning911.wufoo.com/forms/x1hc4zj20jlany5/>

KATHY MITTENDORF
HEAD OF MARKETING

ST MARY'S LINKEDIN HANDLE



Account name: St Mary's School, Waverley

The modern generation requires modern innovations. We are pleased to announce that St Mary's recently added to our digital presence. LinkedIn is a platform used by employers and employees, but it extends beyond the world of employment. LinkedIn allows for better connection between members within an organisation. St Mary's has created a LinkedIn profile in order to help notify Old Girls, parents, and prospective students of upcoming events and current achievements. We hope to help present students find job shadowing opportunities, and to help past students with job placements through this digital community. Our profile will allow students from every decade to keep in contact, along with validating the claimed qualities seen on student profiles. The benefits of this platform can be reaped by all members of the St Mary's community.

Connect to our LinkedIn page, and help us to paint the metaverse red.

LUCA BOTES
Form V (and champion of the St Mary's LinkedIn account)

NOTICES CONTINUED

ED-ADMIN PARENT PORTAL

St Mary's uses a school management information system called Ed-Admin to distribute termly school reports and to provide parents with an opportunity to inspect and amend personal information recorded in our database.

Below, please find details as to how to access this Ed-Admin St Mary's portal:

- You will require a Parent ID whenever signing into the parent portal. If you are unsure of your Parent ID, please email portal@stmary.co.za with both your and your daughter's names and surnames for assistance.
- To access the St Mary's portal, please click on the link below or visit the school website on www.stmarysschool.co.za and click on the portal login on the top right of the page. <https://stmarysw.ed-space.net/pparentportal.cfm>
- Enter in your Parent ID and choose forgot password. Please ensure that you enter the email address that St Mary's has on record and enter in the CAPTCHA code.
- You will then receive an email. Once received, click on the link in order to set up your password. Choose a secure password; you will then receive another email to confirm your password has been changed. You can now proceed to log into the portal.

If you experience problems logging into the secure portal, please contact portal@stmary.co.za.