



# St John's Preparatory School

St John's Preparatory School  
Houghton  
Tel: 011 645 3100 / 087 550473

27 January 2012

Newsletter Number 1

## From the Headmaster...

I wish you all the very best for 2012 – may you have many significant successes this coming year! I especially extend a hearty welcome to all the new boys, as well as to Mrs Debbie Powell, our front office secretary, and Ms Thuli Ngidi, our new intern. I have no doubt that they have all felt welcome in this special community and I wish them a long and happy relationship with the school.

Our thoughts, love and continued prayers go out to the Raney and Morojele families for the tragic losses of their beloved sons, Peter and Phetiso, during the December holidays. The world is certainly a poorer place without these two special boys, but we were the richer for having had them walk amongst us and we will treasure many happy memories.

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## Extracurricular timetable

As you are no doubt aware, we have made some significant changes to our extracurricular timetable, eliciting a mixed response from parents. Although it is not yet 100% perfect, I am confident that we are on the right track. And so, as mentioned at the parents' evening, we will be re-addressing concerns after the half-term break. However, I feel that this is an opportune moment to try and explain our reasons for making the change and to discuss possible modifications.

Our philosophy at the Prep School is to present boys with the opportunity to try out as wide a range of activities as possible. When they are more mature and enter the College, they will then know which activities they really enjoy and have a clearer idea of where their talents lie.

## Reminders from the Diary

- 31/01 Housemasters' Assembly  
Hair & Uniform Inspection
- 03/02 Assessments in English LII & UII  
Assessments in Afrikaans & isiZulu LIII & UIII  
Swimming Gala
- 08/02 New Parents' Tea
- 10/02 Assessments in Maths LII & UII  
Assessments in History LIII & UIII  
Swimming Gala
- 13/02 Cornwall vs St John's 1st XI  
Cricket
- 14/02 Housemasters' Assembly  
Hair & Uniform Inspection
- 16/02 Chapel Collection  
Prep Cricket Festival
- 17/02 Assessments in Afrikaans & isiZulu LII & UII  
Assessments in Geography LIII & UIII  
Swimming Gala  
Kids' Lit Quiz Regional Finals

We also feel that it is unfair to make Prep School boys choose and so we try to include all activities possible in their schedule, without too many clashes or choices. This prevents any peer pressure from, for example, boys not wanting to sing in the choir and choosing to do cricket, and vice-versa. However, this does necessitate some trade-offs as we juggle the facilities we share with the College to fit everything in.

After two weeks of careful monitoring and after several conversations with parents and teachers, the following points are evident:

- Music activities (Choir, Orchestra, Marimbas and Jazz Band) have never been better attended, as the only other option boys have is to go to supervised prep.
- Boys from the same age-group are playing sport at the same time and it is not easy for boys to avoid participating.
- Parents of senior boys (LIII - UIII) love the fact that their sons are returning home having done most of their homework.
- Parents and teachers of some junior boys (UI - UII) are finding that a Thursday is too long a day for the boys and they are tired when they get home. They also feel that some of these boys benefit from parental involvement when doing homework.
- Traffic late in the afternoon is a problem.

When we revise the schedule at half-term, we will take all these points into consideration.

May I take this opportunity to thank all the parents who have voiced their opinions; we do value your input. Please feel free to come in at any time for a chat. All we ask is that you endeavour to look at the big picture with all its complications and know that whatever we do at this magnificent school is done in the best interest of the boys we all care about.

**Patrick Lees**

**Headmaster**

**lees@stjohnscollege.co.za**

# From the Second Master's Desk...

It has been a wonderful start to the new term and year and we would like to wish every family in the Prep a prosperous and successful year. In particular, we would like to welcome our new UI boys to the Prep!

We would like mention a few points as we start a new year. For many of you, these are merely reminders, but please do have a careful look through the items mentioned.

We welcome feedback, so please do get in contact with us should the need arise. The welfare of your boys is extremely important to us, and we are in a partnership with you, as we endeavour to grow and develop your sons into fine young gentlemen.

## **Team Lists Online**

We will have all our sport team lists online this year. The procedure to view your son's team list online is as follows:

- Click on **School Communicator**
- Click on the **Resources** tab
- Scroll down to **Prep: Sport**
- Click on **Easter Cricket Teams Online**
- Click on your son's specific team
- Click on **Allow**

The team list will appear with an explanation of all the match specifics.

In addition to the online lists, the team lists are also posted onto the Sports Board 24 hours before the match. We strongly encourage the boys to read the noticeboards. The U9 age group is the only age group which will be given a letter as well.

## **Sport Practices and Matches**

Please ensure that your son arrives at practice on time, and that he is correctly dressed. It is imperative that your son arrives thirty minutes before his match starts. If your son cannot attend a practice or match, please inform the coach timeously, so that a replacement may be found.

## **Lightning**

We are very aware of the threat of lightning, particularly during the summer months. The school policy is that the boys will come off the field immediately at the first sighting of lightning. Thereafter, the situation will be monitored and a final decision will be made by the coaches.

## **3Gs**

Maintaining our 3Gs (**G**reeting, **G**rooming and **G**rounds) depends on a strong, on-going partnership between the school and the home. Please remind your boys that these three things are extremely important. Please also ensure that your son's hair is cut, his uniform is neat and tidy and that his shoes are polished.

We have been impressed with the boys' greetings and would like to remind boys to doff their cap or hat when they greet someone.

### **Supervised Prep**

Supervised Prep begins at 14:00. When there is voluntary prep, your son is allowed to go home. However, if you have not collected your son by 14:00, he must return to the Prep Rooms, and you may collect him there. In the interests of safety, boys may not wait for parents outside these venues during prep time.

### **Lost Property**

We have implemented a new Lost Property system this year. The procedure is as follows:

- The new venue for Lost Property is the **Library storeroom**.
- Lost Property may **ONLY** be collected at **break**, during the week.
- It is the **boys' responsibility** to fetch their belongings from Lost Property.
- One intern will be on duty a week. A list of names will be displayed on the Lost Property notice board for the term ahead.
- A list of all the names of boys who have lost items will be displayed on the Lost Property notice board every week.
- Furthermore, names will be read out at one of the assemblies during the week, to remind boys collect their items.
- Boys have one week to collect their belongings. If they fail to do so, they will be required to help the Lost Property Department the following week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, during break (the boys will be allowed to eat their lunch while they are helping).
- After midterm, whenever the boys lose items, they will be required to **pay R10** per item to Mrs Powell in the Front Office. The money collected will go to charity.

Please ensure that all of your son's clothing is **labelled** – from socks to hats. If something is labelled, it can be returned to your child much more easily. We believe that the boys need to take responsibility for their belongings and the above-mentioned policy has been designed along these lines.

### **Communication**

This is arguably the most important point of all. We cannot stress enough that communication is the glue that binds school and home. Please do communicate with us; in order that we know the problem or concern, and then that we can work towards a solution. We are committed to ensuring the well-being of your son and we would like to play our part in his growth and development. Again, please email the relevant staff member so that we can assist you.

### **Boys Arriving Late**

We have many boys who are arriving late for school and this is a concern for us. We do realise that traffic is an issue. However, line-up starts at 07:20 and many important notices are announced at line-up. It is difficult for boys who arrive late to start their day on track, as they have to play catch up for the rest of the day.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should the need arise.

Craig Verdal-Austin

Second Master 011-6453116 [verdal@stjohnscollege.co.za](mailto:verdal@stjohnscollege.co.za)



## From the Eagle's study...

### Starting the new school year

The start of a new school year can often bring on great angst and anxiety – for parents as well as for their children.

My daughter started every year of her primary school life crying because she “did not know enough” to be in the new grade. Being told she would be taught everything she would need to know did little to lessen the pain. For her, being in a higher grade meant she had to be cleverer than she was the year before, and she certainly did not feel it! As her mother, I was beside myself knowing she was unhappy, but not able to do much about it.

My son, on the other hand, could not wait to take the year by the scruff of the neck and shake it up to suit him! My fear for him was that he may find the year bigger than he was. Two very different approaches to deal with as a parent!

Whatever your son's approach to dealing with the new year, you can help a great deal in preparing him for school. In her article in *The Sunday Times* (15 January 2012), Judith Ancer outlines a few worthwhile suggestions:

- Read with your son from an early age – he will have markedly higher scores later on in school than his peers whose parents did not read with them (research done by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2009, on 5000 15 year-olds, in 18 different countries).
- Show a *genuine* interest in your son's day. Ask specific questions, not just “What did you do today?” So much happens in his day that he often does not know where to start, so he simply answers, “Stuff.” In her article, Ancer quotes Andreas Schleicher (special adviser on education to the OECD) as saying this “...can have the same impact as hours of private tutoring”. Ask about what he learnt, his project, his speech, any special activity he may have taken part in.
- Be involved and informed. Know what is happening at your school. Go to the parent evenings; listen to the talks; go to the teacher-parent meetings; know what is expected of your son.
- Keep books, magazines and newspapers in your house. Talk to your son about what you are reading. Ask *his* opinion on topics and listen to him.
- Turn off the TV sometimes.
- Monitor your son's progress – not because you are comparing his results to those of his peers, but because you are genuinely interested in *his* learning.

Ancer writes that as parents, we sometimes expect a great deal of help for our sons from experts. While it is certainly a team effort, we cannot keep waiting for someone else to help our sons. It all starts at home.

*You can be the difference.*

Caroline Rimmer

[rimmer@stjohnscollege.co.za](mailto:rimmer@stjohnscollege.co.za)



## From the IT Desk...

All students have school-supplied Google Accounts in the format [14904@stjohnschool.co.za](mailto:14904@stjohnschool.co.za), also with ChangeMe12 or ChangeMe11 as the default password if they are new or have not accessed them previously.

Passwords can be changed after log in.

To access the mail client, boys can use any of the following URLs:

[mail.stjohnschool.co.za](mailto:mail.stjohnschool.co.za)

[www.google.com/a/stjohnschool.co.za](http://www.google.com/a/stjohnschool.co.za)

[www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com)

If they use the first two URLs, they only need to enter their student (tuck-shop) numbers as the email username, and then put in the password.

However, if they however use the [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com) URL, they need to use their full email address as the username, e.g [14904@stjohnschool.co.za](mailto:14904@stjohnschool.co.za)

Happy emailing!

David Mulenga

[mulenga@stjohnscollege.co.za](mailto:mulenga@stjohnscollege.co.za)

## 4CTea



### January 2012

#### Helping with new classmates

Travin Bouwer    Stefano Cavalieri    Ben MacQueen



#### Settling down well in their new school

William Vine-Morris    Andrew Geerdts

#### Merit for Grade 5 Piano

Ryan Stopforth



## Sports Results

### Cricket

Versus The Ridge	Result	Individual Performances
1st	Won	T McKernan 3 for 19 A Bester 3 for 5 E Chilvers 62
2nd	Lost	J King 16 B Vermeulen 15
3rd	Draw	N Lansdown 30 D Greeff 4/19
4th	Lost	A Levendig 3 wickets M Chamberlin 3 wickets
U10A	Draw	K Lion-Cachet 31& 2 for 2 D Segal 31 D Lowery 2 for 3
U10B	Won	T Beswick 2 for 6 D Broodryk 2 for 6 R Wilford 43
U11A	Lost	B Milton 15 J Lees 11
U11B	Lost	J Scholtz 15 N Forbes 2 wickets
U11C	Lost	N Haripershad 2 wickets D January 2 wickets E Yilmaz 12
U11D	Won	

**Basketball**

<b>St Peter's Festival</b>	<b>Result</b>
1st Team	Played 5, won 5
2nd Team	Played 5, won 4
<b>Sacred Heart Festival</b>	<b>Result</b>
U11	Played 5, won 5

**Class Mums 2012**

Class	Mum
Lower II Z	Claire Stride
Lower II V	Cheryl Browne
Lower II T	Glen Krynauw
Upper II H	Maria Rumsey
Upper II B	Lesanne De Sousa
Upper II F	Shelly Maynard
Lower III C	Heather Allasio
Lower III T	Regan Berry
Lower III M	Bronwyn Mackie
Upper III L	Jannine Nolan
Upper III H	Kelly Houlston Mandy McKernan
Upper III G	Liliane Elliot Kate Greef

**St John's College Shop****New opening times from 1st February****Monday & Wednesdays: 7am to 3pm****Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 10am to 3pm****For stationery and labels, as well as all your sports clothes, jerseys, bags and socks**

## Just One Bag



On 2nd December 2011, Jordan van der Walt and Minky Mothabela opened the "Just One Bag" campaign at the Glen shopping centre.

865kg's were collected and distributed to various charities in the Southern Suburbs of Gauteng.

Well done, Jordan!



***Richard van der Walt, Jordan van der Walt and Dr Andrea Marshall (Scientist of the Research Programme for Manta Rays)***

On Friday 9th December 2011, a Golf Day at Bryanston Country Club was held to raise funds for "Just One Bag" and The Marine Megafauna Foundation. (Tofu Beach, Mozambique).

Manta rays are being poached in the same way as the rhinos and will also become extinct if the poaching is not curbed. Well done, Jordan!

R15 000 was raised and 1.5 tonnes of maize - for Jordan's contribution to the research of Manta Rays, Dr. Andrea Marshall has named a Manta Ray after Jordan.

### LOST PROPERTY

**Lost property will now be open during break only**



**In order to instil a sense of responsibility, please remind your son to go and collect his lost property rather than collect it for him**

## Notices

### Art club and extra classes

From the beginning of next term, Mr POCO is starting an Art Club (for LIII and UIII boys) and extra art classes for junior boys. Senior boys are encouraged to join the Art Club on Tuesdays from 14h00 -15h00 or Thursdays from 15h00-16h00. Juniors may arrange extra art lessons with Mr POCO at alternative times and on alternative days.

We hope to see the senior boys joining the Art Club to create various exciting art works with mediums they do not normally use in class, such as print making, photography, oil painting and many more. This will be a fantastic opportunity for any boy who wishes to develop his art skills.

For further information e-mail Bruno POCO on [poco@stjohnscollege.co.za](mailto:poco@stjohnscollege.co.za)

### Extra Math Lessons Individual tuition offered

Mrs M Hauptfleisch

Call 011 442 1854

083 256 7714

### Italian Language Lessons

Small age appropriate classes and individual tuition offered outside school hours at St John's.

Experienced mother-tongue graduate teacher using communicative method of conversation, maintaining cultural ties for solid IEB foundation.

Contact Lisabetta on 082 682 2859 or

[Lisabetta@iafrica.com](mailto:Lisabetta@iafrica.com)



### EXTRA MATHS LESSONS

Lower III & Upper III boys in Mrs Jean Clarence's  
classroom

Every Thursday 15h15 - 16h15 All Welcome

**HAIR**  
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Professional Hairdressing  
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children with ADHD,  
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082 462 6813  
for an appointment  
at competitive prices

Tues-Fri 8-5pm  
Sat 8-1pm

*Why God Made Little Boys*

GOD MADE A WORLD OUT OF HIS DREAMS,  
of magic mountains, oceans and streams,  
prairies and plains and wooded land.  
Then paused and thought, "I need someone to stand  
on top of the mountains, to conquer the seas,  
explore the plains and climb the trees.  
someone to start out small and grow,  
sturdy and strong like a tree". And so  
He created boys, full of spirit and fun  
to explore and conquer, to romp and run  
With dirty faces, and banged up chins  
with courageous hearts and boyish grins.  
And when He had completed the task He'd begun,  
He surely said, "That's a job well done."

Author unknown

