



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE



STRATEGIC PLAN: 2018 - 2023

To 125 & Beyond

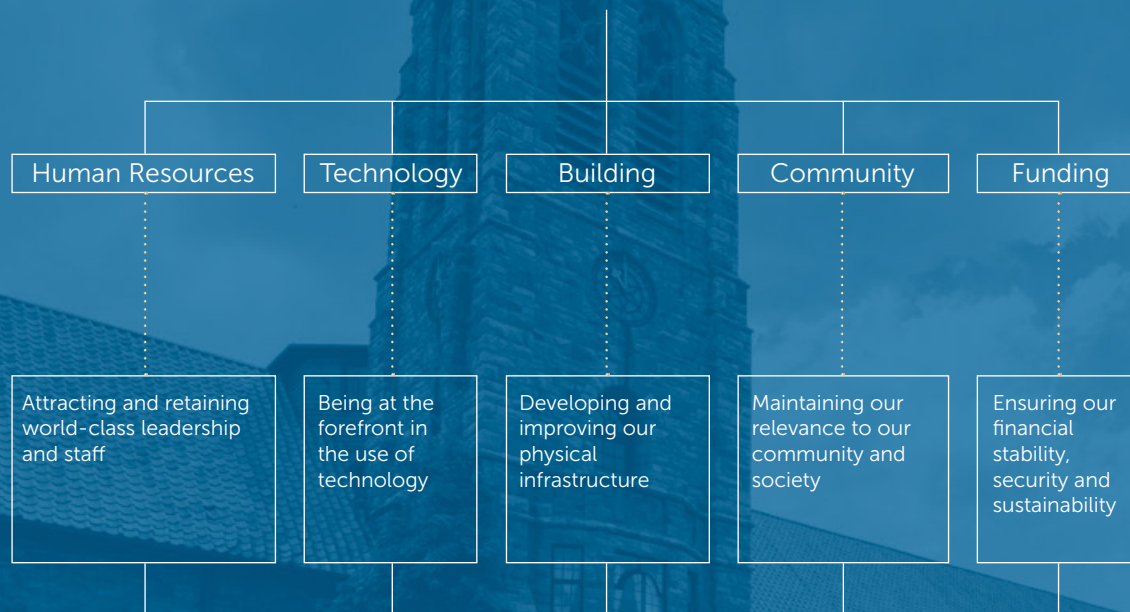
VENTURING FORWARD IN FAITH

To 125 and beyond

By building on our values, using key strategic enablers we can strive to become **who we aspire to be**.

A leading Anglican boys' school in Africa, attracting and retaining world-class staff, embracing the use of technology, developing our infrastructure and remaining relevant to our regional context.

OUR KEY FOCUS AREAS



OUR STRATEGIC ENABLERS

BALANCE. BODY, MIND, CHARACTER.

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St John's College, Johannesburg is, and will continue to be, an Anglican Day and Boarding School, accepting girls into The Bridge Nursery School and the Sixth Form. Founded in 1898 in Johannesburg, it enables formation in body, mind and character relevant to a changing environment.

Our spiritual ethos and educational practices are defined by the School Prayer, written by Father James Okey Nash in 1906. Specifically, St John's College, in the service of God, is a home of:

Religious discipline – meaning fair and just parameters and consequences, tempered with compassion; whilst acknowledging and accepting Johannians of all faiths, our religious practices and school regulations are consistent with the traditions and teaching of the Anglican Church and the Book of Common Prayer.

Sound learning – St John's must be benchmarked against the best in the country and the world in the academic arena.

Goodwill – respect for students and teachers alike, involvement in service and community partnerships, particularly to our neighbouring communities must be the sign of a Johannian.

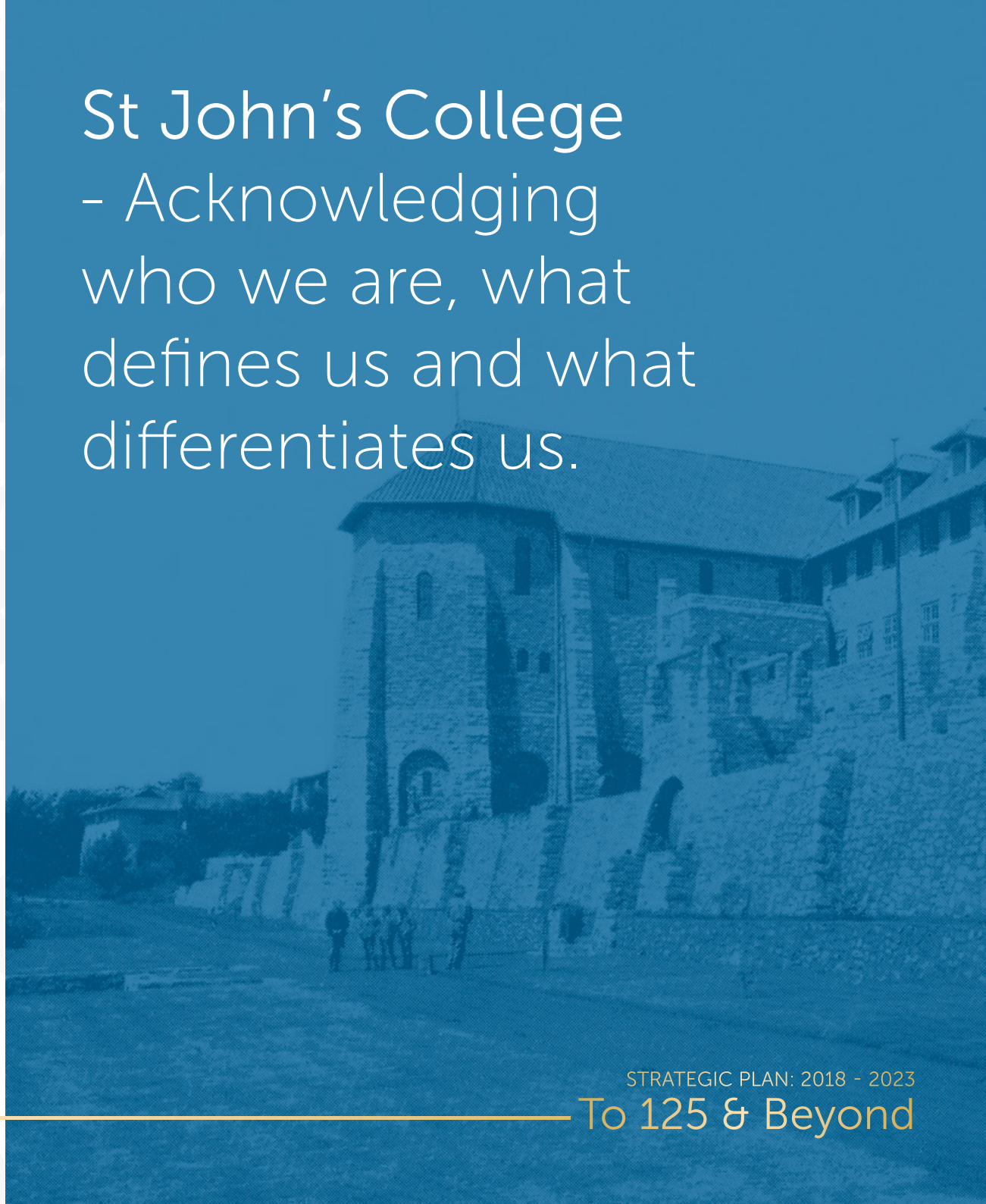
St John's College aims to produce Johannians educated in "body, mind and character" meaning:

Body – sport, exercise and respect for oneself are integral to a St John's College education.

Mind – offering curricula that explore diverse subjects, challenge every individual and contribute to producing critical thinkers.

Character – resilience, grit and moral fibre should be hallmarks of Johannians.

St John's College - Acknowledging who we are, what defines us and what differentiates us.

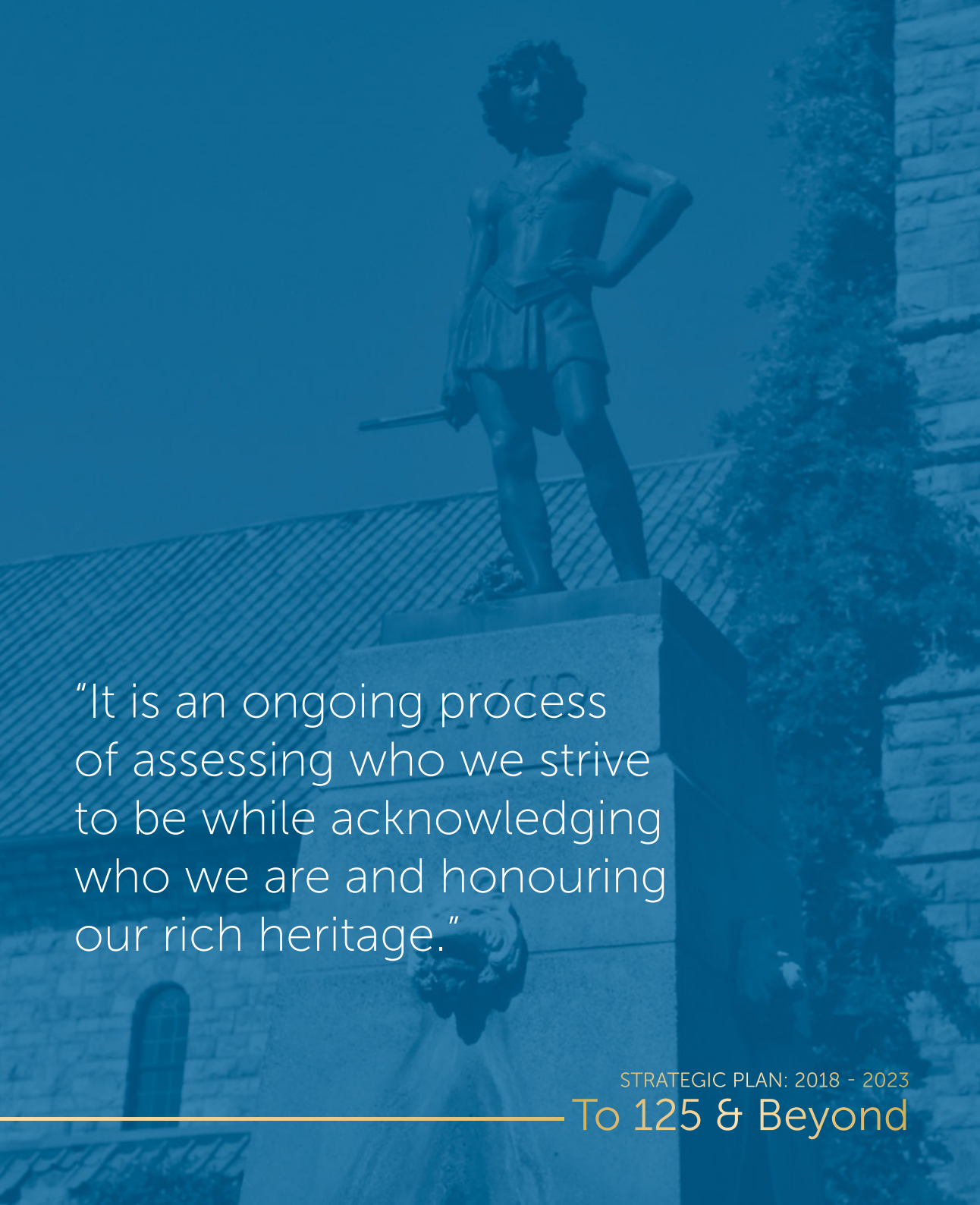


Introduction

In striving to be a world-class Christian, African school, St John's College needs to regularly interrogate its vision and priorities. It is an ongoing process of assessing who we strive to be while acknowledging who we are and honouring our rich heritage.

We have a solid foundation on which to build. Our Centenary Scholarship programme for black students has now allocated over R250 million to this worthy cause and counts amongst its graduates, leaders in many fields. The St John's College Foundation continues to build our endowment and now also supports several community ventures, notably the successful St John's Academy programme, which has now been expanded to the St John's Preparatory School.

Over the past decade, Council has undertaken several noteworthy capital-intensive infrastructure projects including the well-used gymnasium, the splendid new Pre-Prep, additions to Sixth Form boarding, and the purchase of additional properties in our precinct. In addition, generous donors have contributed funds towards several other projects, including the indoor cricket centre, the Barrow Squash Centre and the water polo pool.



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Forging the future

We now need to ensure the sustainability of what we have achieved over the years. Our strategic plan to 2023 is key to ensuring St John's College continues to set global standards in Africa and continues to distinguish itself by building on our differentiating characteristics.

Our strategic planning acknowledges that there are certainties in the educational environment, which include an ever-increasing demand for quality, affordable education in the face of a decreasing availability of quality staff; the increasing role of technology in the classroom and the changing role of the teacher as a facilitator of technological integration; a growing demand for boarding and a strategic transportation system to ensure better access to the school; improved facilities; changing global socio-political circumstances and a disrupted South African educational environment; and the increasing cost of utilities, building and education.

In addition we must ensure that we are resilient enough to withstand uncertain and unpredictable circumstances which may include changing social and political expectations, the disruption of traditional teaching models, an increasingly competitive independent schooling sector, and the prospects of persistently low economic growth.

THE FIVE KEY PILLARS OF OUR MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY ARE:

1. The attraction and retention of world-class staff
2. A building plan focused on fulfilling the needs for quality 21st century teaching and learning
3. An emphasis on information technology appropriate for 21st century education
4. A focus on transformation, diversity and community engagement
5. A funding plan that allows us to implement our strategy and make St John's College sustainable for decades to come.

Importantly, each of these strategic imperatives should be interwoven into each other with an overall funding plan ensuring sustainability, allowing for a harmonious and effective teaching environment, the appropriate use of technology being applied in every setting and transformation transcending all areas.

Council's focus is on implementing this strategic plan over the next five years, with the help of the St John's community, which continues to contribute to the sustainability of the school and reciprocate the generosity of those that have come before us.

As we strategically look to the future, we aim to sustain a comforting, Christian environment that is innovative, builds body, mind and character for the 21st Century and sets global standards in Africa. Through our strategic framework, we can all help to achieve this to 125 years of the school's existence and well beyond.

To 125 and Beyond

Council has identified and advanced five key strategic enablers to help St John's continue to distinguish itself as a leading Christian African school

1. The Human Resource Plan

We need to continue attracting, retaining and developing the best staff to deliver curricula incorporating customised teaching and critical thinking, in a caring, knowing and loving environment.

Most of Council's budget is allocated to teachers' salaries. We are surveying teachers' needs and exploring trends locally and internationally to ensure that we provide the most stimulating and secure environment in which to nurture the finest teachers. Salary benchmarking, staff benefits, continuing education, local and overseas conferences and exchanges, performance measuring and identifying areas of specialised teaching and coaching all form part of the strategy.

We are evaluating the St John's organisational infrastructure – across all schools - to improve efficiencies. Salary packages are being reviewed against ISASA and international benchmarks, and job descriptions, terms of contracts and performance management systems - to recognise and reward - are being revisited.

We are actively identifying quality black teachers and expanding our teacher intern programme, internally and externally. The curriculum is being evaluated to incorporate critical thinking skills, customised teaching, and care – a “knowing and loving” philosophy. We are integrating specialist sports staff into the school, and academic staff into the extra-curricular programme.

Staff surveys and workshops conducted across the school have been conducted and have highlighted areas of staff concern. These include the relationships and interaction between some parents and staff and a strategy to improve this is being actioned.



2. The Technology Plan


The increasing use of technology is changing the way in which basic processes in education are being carried out. Specifically, the Council's "Tech Masterplan" will address six key areas:

- i) Learner development and IT curriculum
- ii) Staff development and enablement, with an accelerated outlay of technology devices to teachers
- iii) Technology infrastructure and equipment improvement
- iv) Support service efficiency
- v) Database expansion and synchronisation (student, parent, past-parent, Old Johannian, staff, ex-staff) and improved security
- vi) Responsible technology citizenry

In exploring greater integration of IT into the curriculum, apart from increasing the use of technology in teaching and communication, we will explore the creation of St John's College online portal/technology and the development of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

Council has already laid the foundation for this plan to succeed via the appointment of Melvyn Lubega, an Old Johannian and Rhodes Scholar, to chair the sub-committee on technology. Melvyn's post-graduate thesis at Oxford was titled "The Big Switch On: How a new education technology policy influenced teacher perspectives on their relationships with students." His leadership of this process has had an immediate impact and will continue to permeate through the school, influencing everything from broadband quality to technology facilities and teaching methods.

Thus far much progress has been made. The budget for ICT has increased significantly, a helpdesk service audit has taken place, the ICT curriculum was reviewed, staff ICT development is in progress, wi-fi and firewalls are being rolled out, and the College and Prep schools have had ICT laboratory upgrades.



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3. The Building Masterplan

Building projects are either Council-funded from the development levy or donor-funded where donors may donate towards specific projects and drive fundraising initiatives. Investment in infrastructure is an ongoing necessity and has evolved over the years with school architect and Council's Building Committee at the helm. Council is also responsible for funding the maintenance plan and property purchases.

The extension and renovation of the Preparatory School is the current project, as the school takes on the challenge of converting 100-year old classrooms into modern teaching spaces appropriate for 21st century learning without disrupting the unique feel of the Prep, the oldest part of our school.



New Preparatory School building

There must be a global and local emphasis on the importance of 21st century skills, to which agility and adaptability are key. The strategic academic goals since 2010 have been to focus on creativity in the curriculum and to encourage collaboration and critical thinking. This requires teaching for deep understanding, with a focus on enquiry-based learning, maker-learning and project-based learning – while integrating the use of technology. The new buildings are designed to facilitate this strategic goal.

The new block design incorporates:

- Light and space: to allow the boys the room needed to move and work quietly and freely
- Flexible learning areas and adaptable furniture: to encourage collaboration, creativity and self-directed learning
- Cutting-edge technology: to allow for blended learning in classrooms and provide easy access for research, self-directed learning
- Staff work areas: to have well-designed, productive work spaces, which are critical for staff to do their work and feel valued.
- Environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient design.

In addition, a Therapy Centre is planned for easy access for the boys needing support during the school day, with an emphasis on the bright, positive space needed for these interactions. A new centre is being developed to stimulate enquiry-based and maker-learning in the STEAM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Maths). Staff Research Areas will be developed in line with the trends of leading schools globally, facilitating ongoing professional learning and active research work.



The Prep project has two phases. Phase 1 is the construction of the new building. Phase 2 involves the renovation and expansion of existing classrooms and will start after Phase 1 assuming that cash flows are adequate.

Donor-funded upgrades of the water polo and basketball facilities are in the planning stages. Consideration is also being given to establishing indigenous landscaping to give the College grounds a distinct South African look and feel and integrate our gardens with the nearby Wilds heritage park.

Additional facilities identified as part of future medium-term building strategies include an expansion of boarding facilities, additional staff accommodation, a proposed new music venue, an expanded Sixth form, a museum and a heritage precinct, and additional tennis courts.

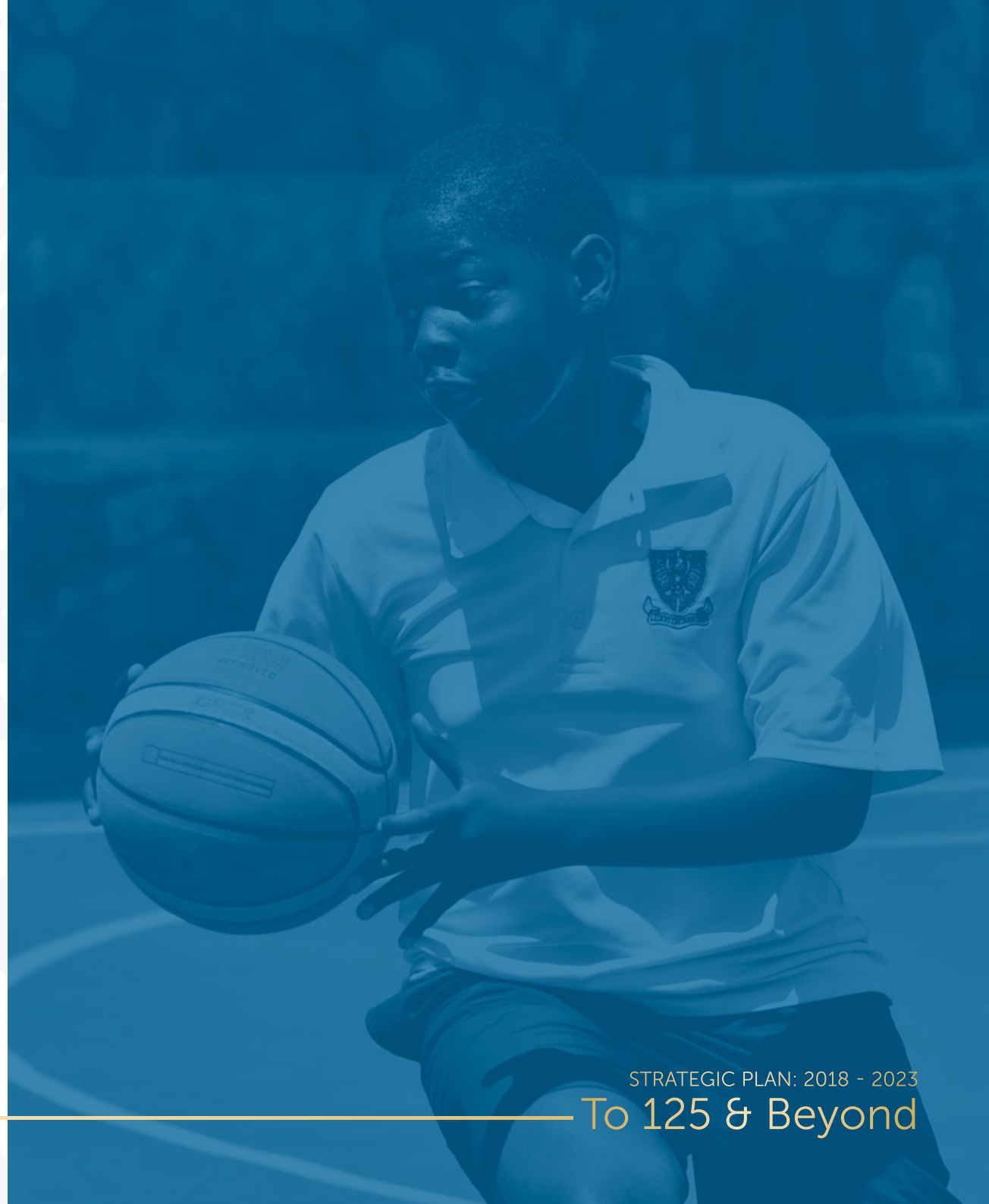
Multi-purpose basketball facility

A new multi-purpose basketball facility is needed, which will completely revolutionise how basketball is managed and bring St John's College basketball into the 21st Century. Basketball growth at St John's College has been significant. As a modern and relatively new sport at the school, there has been an exponential rise in the number of players. St John's College hosts annual Under 13 and Under 19 basketball tournaments, which have become a highlight on schools' basketball calendars.

The existing facilities are under immense pressure and the proposed multi-purpose facility would allow courts to be available all year round. The vision is to have a facilities that can better meet the sport's demands and host tournaments on-site.

The proposal includes an upgrade of the current basketball courts. Additional, multipurpose courts are proposed on Edean Field and could also be used for Prep hockey and soccer. A grandstand, change rooms and entertainment facilities could be shared with the proposed water polo facility.

This development will be primarily donor funded.



Water polo precinct: phase two

St John's is one of South Africa's premier water polo schools. 2011 saw the completion of phase one of the development of the water polo precinct - an international-size rim-flow pool, one of the best school water polo pools in the country. But a lack of funding at the time meant the surrounding facilities were not completed.

Approved phase two plans include improved facilities that will allow St John's to host big derby games and tournaments, which will contribute to keeping our status as one of South Africa's leading water polo schools.

The phase two plans entail a viewing terrace onto Edean Field, a walkway link to the Valley Pool pathway, player changerooms (home and away), a covered time-keeping area, storerooms, a pergola, and improved spectator seating for all weather conditions.

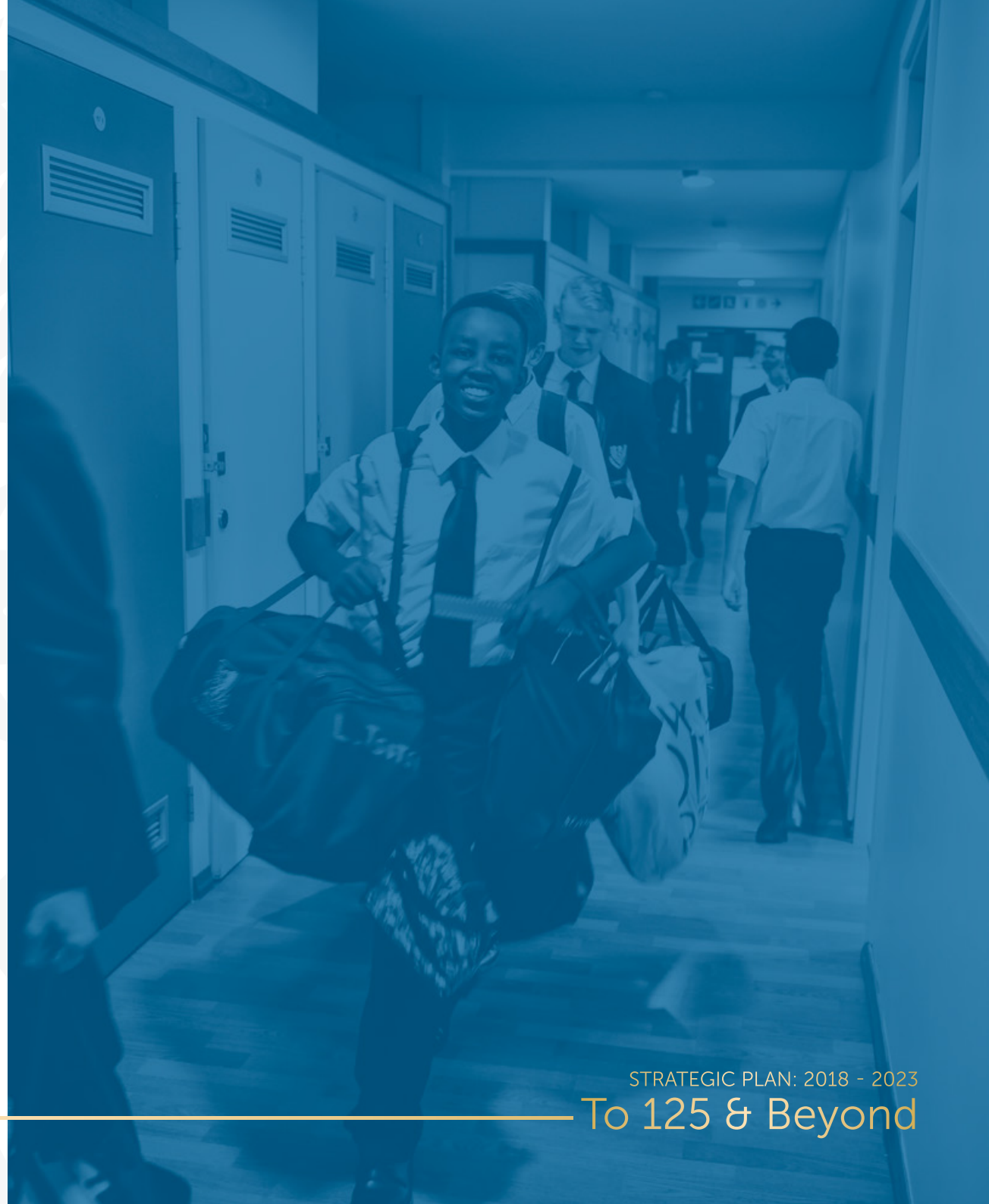
Most of the development will be externally funded. However, the Foundation is assisting and supporting the fundraising efforts for this project.



Boarding and Staff Housing

Increased traffic congestion, busy academic and extra-curricular student programmes, the attractions of a weekly boarding environment and the need to provide more termly boarding facilities for students from afar who see St John's as their school of choice are all factors driving the increased applications for boarding which currently far exceeds the number of boarding places available. Council's Finance Committee has been briefed with drafting a business model for additional self-funded boarding spaces.

Similarly, there is a great demand for staff housing and additional on-campus living will complement the offering available to strategically attract high quality staff.



Music Block Facility

Over 120 years St John's has acquired a reputation as a school of excellence for music – but the music department has grown considerably in the last decade, putting strain on the present facilities. Redesigned venues are needed for Drama, Art and Music - with the space to move and make a noise, and a modern, technologically advanced learning environment for music. Also planned are individual teaching spaces, ensemble spaces and a magnificent performance venue of an international standard, which could host a symphony orchestra, choir, drama productions, and provide a regular meeting space for the Preparatory School.

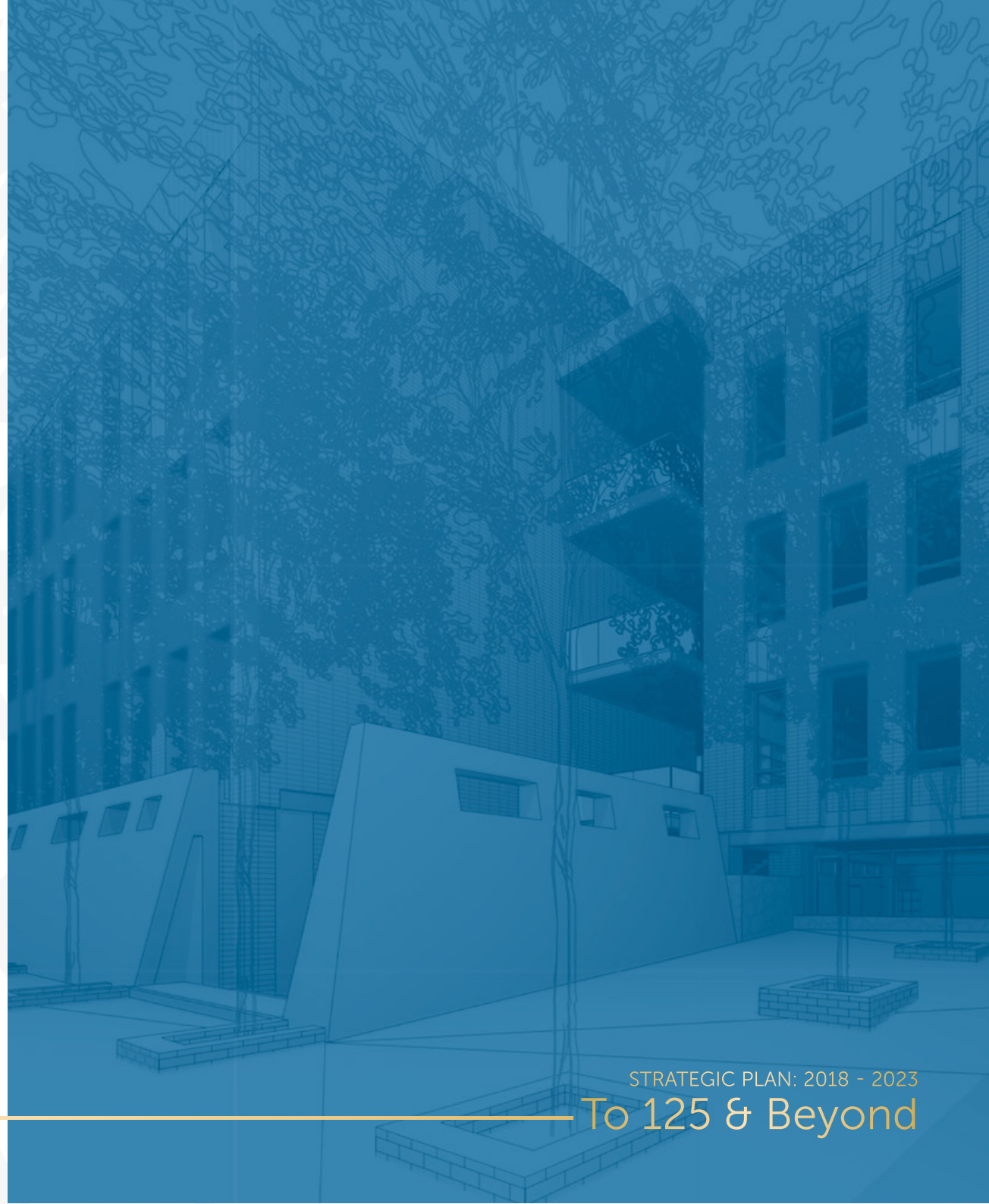


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Designing for Environmental Sustainability

There is a global responsibility to protect the environment and St John's needs to demonstrate commitment and leadership in this field. There is a potential for crippling water shortages in the future, and the school needs to mitigate the increasing costs of power and gas. As such all new buildings are to be as "green" as economically possible. The design is driven by the idea of "eco" learning being an inherent part of everything the students do.

The architects have planned to take the new buildings "off-grid" as far as possible with the installation of photovoltaic collectors planned for the rooftops. Any excess power produced will feed heat pumps to supply hot water to the pool, thus also reducing the school's gas costs. Using the existing pool pumping system, pool water can be recycled to flush toilets in the event of a water failure.



4. The Community and Transformation Plan

St John's College has its origins in the heart of Johannesburg. It is vital St John's does not operate in a vacuum. Our community engagement plan explores each aspect of our school and its relevance to South Africa, our environment and the communities with whom we interact, and incorporates our transformation strategy.

The Transformation Office is tasked with leading transformation and diversity initiatives, creating and developing practices, policies, programmes and curriculum materials that create a culture that embraces diversity and fosters belonging at all levels of College life.

Transformation is not just about compliance and following equity regulation. It is about an active strategic and sustainable institutional shift towards the creation of a more just and equitable society.

In one of the world's most unequal societies, community engagement is an important core pillar of any academic institution. St John's makes a commitment to orientating itself towards the needs of our broader society and, in particular:

A commitment to social justice, equity and fostering belonging: this means that management commits to social justice, equity and fostering belonging by admitting that inequality is wrong and can only be corrected with decisive strategy and action. This must be taught to students in our school and equally manifest in how the school conducts its core business.

Organisational productivity and effectiveness plan: while the social justice commitment is key, employment equity and diversity is a business imperative for a school. For instance, as more and more students within our school come from differing backgrounds, including townships and different social classes, it makes business sense to employ staff who understand these contexts and are therefore able to transfer their contextual idioms into their teaching and learning.



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Diverse, inclusive and engaged workforce: all members of staff are important stakeholders in driving the transformation strategy within our school. Ensuring an inclusive and empowering work environment is the end-result of effective employment equity and diversity management implementation, it necessarily results in a sound, open and rich institutional culture.

This process has been given momentum by the appointment of new Deputy Heads in the Prep and College to specifically manage this portfolio. A review of all governance and transformation initiatives has been completed and the recommendations are being implemented.

In addition, the new Transformation and Diversity Committee was launched in 2018 with multiple work groups exploring key areas. These include:

- Curriculum
- Pastoral care for staff, students and parents
- Admissions
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Support and operations staff
- Culture, heritage, signs and symbols
- Community engagement
- Old Johannian Association
- Parents and Community

The intent is to explore key focus groups and implement meaningful change in our staff development initiatives, admissions and procurement processes, community engagement, and to critically examine our culture, symbol and ethos. Pedagogical and curriculum development is being debated, with consideration given to compulsory conversational isiZulu/indigenous language. The focus is on ensuring we honour our commitment to South Africa whilst celebrating our past.

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5. The Funding Plan

Sustainable funding underpins all of our other plans. St John's College aims to raise R125 million by its 125th anniversary in 2023. This money is budgeted to be spent on endowments (50%) via the Scholarships and Bursaries Programme, and capital projects (50%), as described in the Building Plan. Additional corporate funding will be sought for the St John's Academies.

Council is working closely with the St John's College Foundation to raise these funds, via the 125 Committee. The St John's College Foundation, together with the Old Johannian and Parents' Associations, is playing a key role in driving the community and fundraising initiatives through a series of events in South Africa and abroad.

The foundation's "125 Sustainability Campaign" includes a series of coordinated fundraising drives locally and offshore, to drive the school strategy. Many of these will be community-orientated and enable us to celebrate being Johannians.

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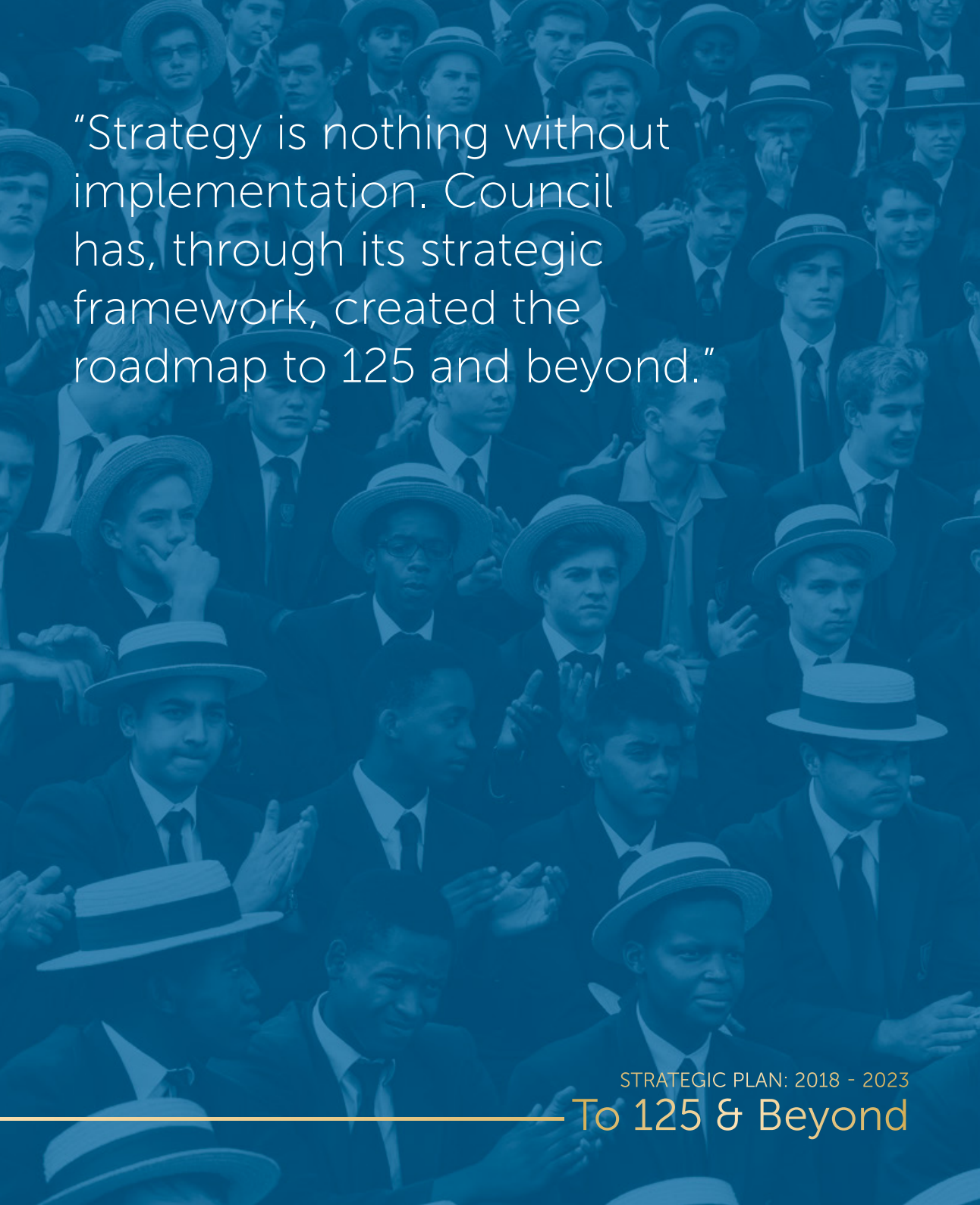
Conclusion

St John's is the school of choice for many because of the Anglican Christian ethos and heritage of excellent education in "body, mind and character" that have determined the rhythm of the school day for over 120 years. We will remain true to these origins while strategising how to educate Johannians for a rapidly changing South Africa and world.

Strategy is nothing without implementation. Council has, through its strategic framework, created the roadmap to 125 and beyond. Now, implementation is critical for it to succeed.

The plan has been widely communicated to key stakeholders in our community. Council has taken ownership of driving the plan and allocated specific tasks to sub-committees and individuals who are empowered to execute the vision. To track progress, each task has a specific timeframe against which Council can review progress and against which delivery is measured. Ultimately the Heads of the three schools and the Chairman of Council will share the responsibility of implementing and reporting our vision.

We look forward to updating the St John's community as milestones are met and we make progress towards becoming who we aspire to be: A leading Anglican boys' school in Africa, attracting and retaining world-class staff, embracing the use of technology, developing our infrastructure and remaining relevant to our regional context.



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