



HILTON COLLEGE

*A letter from*

# The Head

*No. 19-10 / 25 July 2019*

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another term packed with opportunity and possibility.

The role that Grandparents and women play in nurturing our young people will be celebrated this term. Our boys will demonstrate their newfound skills and knowledge through a range of assessments and exams. Soccer season is upon us, a sport that continues to grow from strength to strength and we look forward to the opening of our upgraded field and pavilion. We will be preparing the matrics of 2020 for their leadership responsibilities and will start identifying the next generation of great Hiltonians, as the 2021 enrolment process gains momentum. The Hilton Arts Festival (13-15 September) promises to be one of the best ever. It is all quite breathtaking, and someone said it was a quieter term?

This term is also a time of reflection as we begin our healing process after the painful events endured at the end of the second term. Our OLE programme, various tours and Speech Day provide good fora to do this. Boys will continue to be challenged to think about what type of citizens they should strive to be. On that note, I've enclosed a redacted version of the address I gave to boys at our first assembly last week, which may be of interest to you.

Through all of this I continue to be full of gratitude for the wonderful people who sustain our institution through the good and the challenging times. I'm also excited by opportunities that we've been able to give to existing staff, and new people who are joining our team. Some of you may be aware of these changes but, as is often the case in a busy organisation, some of you may have missed these. I've enclosed a summary to bring everyone up to speed.

Thank you for allowing us to partner with you in developing the talents and ambitions of your wonderful sons. What a privileged, rewarding and exciting prospect.

Yours in faith and hope,

George

# *A letter from* **The Head**

## **Changes to staffing and staff roles**

At the end of the second term, I announced that Mr Tony Shuttleworth has been appointed as Second Master. This is in keeping with a change in structure that will see two Deputies from 2020.

The second Deputy Head is Mr Kgomotso Motlogeloa, who will join us from January 2020. Mr Motlogeloa is currently Acting Headmaster at Southdowns College in Centurion, prior to that he was Deputy Head at Jeppe Boys High where he taught for 15 years. Mr Motlogeloa is a dynamic educator who has excelled in boys' school education. I look forward to introducing him to you in the new year.

The position of Sports Director needed to be filled as a result of Mr Tony Shuttleworth being promoted to Second Master; I am delighted to announce that Mr Darryn Gallagher has been appointed to this position, effective as of the beginning of August. Mr Gallagher has been Director of Hockey for the past three years and his work in this code has been exemplary. Mr Gallagher has significant experience in sport in schools and, alongside his own South African Hockey representation a few years ago, he understands the standard and requirements to continue the tremendous work that our sports department has achieved to date.

Another position that has been vacant, is that of Director of Academics and I take great pleasure in announcing that Mrs Hanlie Dry has been appointed to this position. Mrs Dry has excelled as HOD of Economics and as our Grade 11 and 12 Coordinator to date, and has demonstrated her ability to get the best out of boys in the classroom. Mrs Dry will ensure that our primary focus of Academics is led and honed as we endeavour to deliver the best offering on this front.

I am especially excited about these critical appointments as I know these people will ensure that we continue to improve as a school, offering the best possible education to your sons.

Further to the above, I am very pleased to announce the following staffing additions:

- Dr Janna de Gouveia, an Educational Psychologist, joins us in the Wellness Department as a replacement for Mrs Lizelle van Niekerk. Janna has worked with young people for more than 10 years and will ensure that our practices in this arena are enhanced dramatically.
- Ms Alexandra Stewart has been appointed to a part-time French teaching post. Ms Stewart has just submitted her Doctorate in Francophone Studies and she is a welcome addition to our French Department.
- Ms Lindo Ndaba is our new Pearce Housemanager, replacing Mrs Kerry Carlisle who has moved into an admin role for our farming operation. Ms Ndaba comes to us from Cowan House where she is spoken of warmly.
- Ms Vanessa Wedderburn has joined us as our new Falcon Housemanager. Ms Wedderburn has experience in the hospitality industry, joining us from the Hilton Bush Lodge.

I am delighted about these people joining our team and know that we will all enjoy their contribution to our great school.

# *A letter from* **The Head**

**Assembly 16 July 2019**

This term there are several events that will require your focus: Exams, Project Weeks and expeditions (Grade 8 Camp, Grade 9 Hike, Grade 10 Journey and Grade 11 Career Week).

I could admonish you to ensure that you do your best and that you aim high and achieve everything you would hope to achieve...and all of that would be true and important.

But I think there is something stronger and more compelling to aim at...

Perhaps I can help you to think about how we all can improve...

I believe that an education ultimately aims to ensure that we all become better citizens, able to improve our world for all who live in it.

The great traditions of our world are based on others before self. This sounds counter culture to the predominant rhetoric of self-awareness, self-esteem, self-achievement, self-assertiveness, self-aggrandisement ...

School, although a sometimes contrived construct, creates an opportunity to learn some of these lessons in life. You are a part of a dorm and a house. We are all a part of this school - something far greater than each of us individually. So we can understand the collective over the individual and his or her needs.

Here are some concrete pointers and challenges:

- 1) Kindness - How kind are you? How do you develop kindness?
- 2) Generosity - How generous are you? How do you develop generosity?
- 3) Virtuosity - How virtuous are you? How naturally and often do you stand up to do the right thing?

Last term we battled with a few boys making foolish choices. Many of these choices revolved around substance abuse but most of these boys made unwise choices leading up to being involved in substance abuse. Negative peer pressure played a part; anxiety and social stresses created challenges; access to excess cash and the desire to be the guy beating the system all motivated poor, foolish choices.

Some people go to prison as a result of foolish choices. Some people ruin lives as a result of poor choices; sometimes their own lives but always many others' lives too. Drunk driving can cause untold ruin - it's a choice someone makes.

I need you to understand that the use of Dagga, in whatever context, as a MINOR, at this school - REMAINS ILLEGAL. For the young men over eighteen who may think that the privacy ruling applies, it is important to remember that Hilton College is NOT a private place. Dealing or distributing an illicit substance is criminally punishable - this is no small matter.

I want to tie this thinking back to my earlier points about how we develop character and worthwhile character traits.

Societies that become lawless do not become lawless overnight. It is a slow process. It begins with turning a blind eye here, not addressing a small indiscretion there, allowing a pattern of behaviour to become endemic.

South Africa has a monumental mountain to climb to reverse trends of allowing corrupt practices. My own opinion is that this began in our tragic past when groupings of people had to operate clandestinely to survive. This happened on both sides of the colour divide. This was as a result of a brutal unjust regime that refused to acknowledge people as people. But it was a learned behaviour: groups always looked after each other at the expense of another group. I do not believe 'state capture' happened over the last 9 years. I believe South Africa was captured when the brutal Apartheid regime was in power. You see, patterns of behaviour don't just happen - we allow them to happen.

We allow ourselves to end up in serious trouble when we choose wrong over right. When the famous code of silence robs us of the truth. When Hiltonians will go into businesses one day and allow fraud and mismanagement as a result of some warped sense of honour among brothers? Young men, think again.

# *A letter from* **The Head**

Assembly 16 July 2019 (continued)

If one considers the 2nd World War and the horror it brought, I believe people who survived the horror were led to think about life differently. There was a communal determination to live above the perverse ideology that one people was better than another. When it came to food, there was an agreeable approach to living that ensured that all people would adhere to rationing so that there was sufficient food for all. In short, human behaviour changed as a result of the tragedy of war - the people had experienced horror and chose to change their behaviours to avoid another calamity.

When will our behaviours change?

Single use plastic has evoked strong emotions from many. The worst predictions have our oceans looking like a rubbish dump by 2050 - you won't need your surfboard as you won't be able to use it on any beach in the world. Will our behaviour change then, when it may be too late?

You see, we humans don't change behaviours easily - only when a crisis hits. We in this audience are even more vulnerable. We come from significant means and as such, can buy a measure of immunity from the travails of everyday struggles that others may face. But, when that beautiful beach house is no longer valuable nor desirable because the ocean is no longer a place of beauty, who will be the affected ones then? No-one is above certain challenges.

So, before I get too side-tracked with a negative narrative, I want to challenge you because I don't believe it is all negative. I believe that many of you seated in this audience hold many of the answers for the challenges we face. I only hope that we do not need to endure and survive a calamity before we change our behaviours.

So, what behaviours can you and I change?

Can you be kinder this term? Can you determine to help one person every day with one small act? Can each of us choose right over wrong when we are faced with the choice today, tomorrow and throughout this term? Can we be bold enough to work at developing a habit of virtuous choices?

Can we have the best exam session ever, by virtue of every boy choosing to learn and to do his best? Can we change a behaviour that currently ridicules those who work hard by rather honouring them for their efforts just as we do our sports stars? Can we choose to emulate those boys who give of their best in the classroom and who wear this badge with honour and pride?

I am a dreamer. It's a free pursuit so I won't stop dreaming.

I dream of the tremendous person each one of you is. I dream of the unique contribution each one of you can make in our troubled world. I dream of a school where every boy aims to do his best, gives his best, lives his best. I dream of a school where every boy chooses to be an active part of this particular community to which we all belong for a season in our lives, in the knowledge that there will be other communities in our futures that this one is preparing us for. I dream of a South Africa that rises above populism, that is a place of justice for all, that eradicates poverty, that is a place of hope and not fear. I dream today for tomorrow. You make up much of my tomorrow and so my dream is for you and your innate ability to be more than you may currently appreciate.

It is an adult's job to inspire the next generation. It is our job to give you the tools to set you on your way. It is our job to guide you and to correct you when you stray.

It is your job to question, to learn, to embrace opportunities.

It is our collective job to listen, to trust and to try and be better today than we were yesterday. Good results are pleasing but good people are enduring.

Let's begin step by step, act by act, decision by decision.

Young men arise.