

OLD STITHIAN ASSOCIATION

10 June 2020



Dear Old Stithians

Statement on Diversity and Transformation at St Stithians

On Friday 5 June 2020 a letter was sent to staff and parents of St Stithians College by our Council leadership, namely, Gary Morolo (Chair of the St Stithians Council Endowment Trust), Carel Nolte, (Chair of the St Stithians College Council), Ntombi Langa-Royds (Deputy Chair of the St Stithians College Council) and Motseki Majake (Chair of the St Stithians College Council Transformation Committee).

The Old Stithian Association felt that the basis of this letter should be shared with our alumni:

From the College's founding in 1953 until the 1980s, when the first black students began to be enrolled, St Stithians was characterised by an all-white student body. Since the 1980s, St Stithians has been on a journey of growth and change as a South African school contributing to the creation of a new transformed and inclusive society in the democratic era.

St Stithians College and the Old Stithian Association remain on a journey which requires courage, openness, humility, determination and commitment to change and transformation. There is much to celebrate and there is much to learn. When some in our community feel real pain, fear, anger and confusion that is the time to recommit to staying the course.

The ideals of the College and the Old Stithian Association are purposefully high. In those moments where they fall short, the organisations want to look towards learning, healing and real dialogue, always conscious of their role both as an educational institution and a beacon of hope.

It is important that the College is firm and determined when they address transgressions involving racism. They need to reflect and be clear in defining our understanding of what racism is, and how it is manifest as well as the intent and the consequences of racist language and actions. Being honest that our community (indeed our country and our world) is not of one mind in these interpretations should not scare us, but rather be seen as an opportunity to learn from each other.

The College has taken swift action following revelations of deeply troubling social media clips involving some of our students have been widely shared. The College has recently completed formal investigations and considers the findings of the investigations to warrant a disciplinary process and charges are now being drawn up. In this process we have relied on the expert assistance of well-respected lawyer Shamima Gabie.

Our campus Director of Diversity and Transformation, Noma Shange is working with the Saints community and will drive our visible fight against racism, racist behaviour and other scourges such as homophobia and sexism.

St Stithians College acknowledge and value the contributions of our Alumni in sharing their experiences at the College. We would like to extend an invitation to all our past and present students to share their lived experiences for the purpose of educating all our stakeholders and implementing significant change. If there are any exclusionary practices that you have experienced or seen, please share with us for the betterment of our College by emailing sharingfortransformation@stithian.com or you can contact our Transformation Office on (011) 5776042 on weekdays between 2pm and 4pm.

While structural change is not the only part of our journey, it is an important one, where great strides have been made. The College Council's membership strives towards inclusivity and representation, and as such is predominantly black and female. The learner intake continues to grow with the number of black students that choose our College.

The building of new communities is a dynamic and iterative process of learning and unlearning. Together let us work through our fear, anger, cynicism and hurt to contribute to true #SaintsExcellence.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Israel Skosana', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Israel Skosana

Chair of the Old Stithian Association