



5 August 2020

Dear Saints Family

One of my great privileges is the ability to walk on our beautiful campus. As I walked this morning (Sunday, 2nd August) the day after Founders' Day, I had an overwhelming sense of gratitude to all who have walked alongside us for the past few months.

My first 100 days in office has certainly not been what I had anticipated yet our community has rallied together, and it was fitting that we ended our tumultuous second term with Founders' Day. We have been inundated by messages of congratulations and gratitude from across the country and beyond, I doubt anyone will ever forget the picture of our matrics, with masks standing on the ampersand 1,5 metres apart to the singing of our National anthem.

I am deeply grateful to Alistair Stewart, Head of Advancement, Barbara Beauchamp, Olga Carr and the Advancement Team for all their efforts in ensuring that despite COVID-19 our College would not miss a Founders' Day. I would also like to thank Carita Hammes, Eddie Clayton, Tarryn Clur and Linda Glass whose responsibility it was this year for producing the music for this event. It is important that we acknowledge all our music staff for ensuring that music continued to be a main feature of our celebrations despite the challenges of COVID. Furthermore, we also extend our thanks to the entire Founders' Day Committee for all the hard work behind the scenes to ensure that our history books have a story to tell.

As I walked, my intention was to also ascertain what we needed to attend to during the month of August to ensure that our campus was ready to welcome our students in September, the details of which you will receive from your respective school heads. With the exception of a few road kerbs requiring painting and pruning & cleaning of our beds – the College will be ready to receive our students.

Security

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Fidelity Security Services (FSS) as they start their journey with St Stithians College. Many meetings and planning have been held prior to their start, and we are excited to see how this partnership with them develops to make the campus an even more secure environment for all who use it. All the staff from Special Ops 99 were interviewed, screened and assessed according to FSS's employment criteria. Some of the staff were found not to be to the standard that FSS require for an educational facility, so these people are being offered jobs in other sectors, some staff opted not to join FSS, others moved to FSS and have stayed at Saints – in total 19 guards move to FSS. So, you will see some new faces, but in general, we feel we have a good team on site.

To note one change with regards to access control – the new ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) system has been installed and is now working. All vehicles that were already registered with the College at the time of installation have been added to the system. When you arrive at the booms, please drive in the centre of the lane to allow the cameras to pick up your registration number and for the boom to open. You do not need to scan your hand at the goose-neck any longer (these are in the process of being removed). If the booms do not open, there's a good chance your vehicle has not been registered on the system for some reason or other, so please contact Deanne Schnaier on 011 577-6381 / opspa@stithian.com and she will check the system and be able to advise if there is a problem and what is needed to be done to remedy the situation.

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE. MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

With the recent arrival of FSS, other new systems are being implemented over the next few weeks and these will be communicated in due course.

New Grounds Depot

In the next few weeks, the new Grounds Depot near the recycling depot will be complete and Servest will relocate from their current site near the Girls' Prep to the new site. Once this move happens, we will be hard at work to demolish some of the existing structures and tidy up the area to allow it to be used for parking. We shall also lay paving to create a pathway to the Girls' Sports Pavilion.

Girls' Prep Classroom Upgrade

At the start of the year, we initiated the upgrade of the Girls' Prep grade 5 classrooms. Then COVID-19 struck, and the project was put on hold. By the end of August, the renovations to the building will be complete and we will start with the landscaping part of the project. During August, the temporary classrooms will be removed, and that area tidied up. The Girls' Prep will remain fenced off thus increasing their playground space.

Service Providers on Site

From the 24 August 2020, Higher Ground will be open for breakfast, lunch and dinner with the Government guidelines being followed at all times (no alcohol will be served, and curfew times adhered to strictly).

From the start of term 3 (31 August 2020), the Cupped Coffee trailers will be operational in all the schools as per normal and Seattle Coffee will have the one shop at the Squash Courts/Aquatics Centre open and depending on the COVID-19 situation, will consider if they open the Astro shop. The Sports Republic Shop and Stythian Shop will also be operating as per pre-Lockdown from 31 August 2020.

Exercising on Campus

We are pleased that we are now in a position to open our campus to our families for exercise for the month of August. We ask that you please adhere to the requests below:

1. Only students, staff, parents and Old Stithians Association members to be permitted onto campus to exercise during the month of August;
2. Only walking (with or without dogs), jogging or cycling to be permitted around the ring road / mountain bike track;
3. We ask staff and parents to pre-register their intention to use the campus to exercise during the August holidays by completing a form in the link below:
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TusweXC7eU2E7eXtis_x551KjS04ImxKqFBbMXOLHkxUMERHUzdXOFgzUldZU0pCRkdCM0ZURU9aWC4u
4. Anyone who enters during the August holidays will need to be screened at the Peter Place gate;
5. Once screened, they will get a sticker which will confirm that they can also exercise;
6. Access through Peter Place gate only;
7. Must wear mask at all times;
8. Hours allowed to exercise 06h00 – 18h00;
9. No sports facilities to be used;
10. Anyone wanting to exercise must park on the grass on the eastern side of the astro turf only;
11. Exercise can be with no more than 4 people in a group.

We will review the situation at the end of August and will communicate with you if we are in a position to continue with this arrangement in September.

Condolences

Our deepest condolences to the bereaved families in our Saints family who have lost a relative, friend, colleague or acquaintance due to Covid-19 or other causes. We continue to keep you in our prayers.

Finance

A letter focussing on the finances of the College and budget 2021 will be issued this week.

Women's Day 9th August

Our country has one of the highest statistics with regards to gender-based violence. In the month of August, when we celebrate and honour women, Bishop Purity in her Founders' Day speech appealed to all of us to take a stronger stance against this pandemic. The Bishop reminded us that as a College we are committed to the upliftment of women and I quote:

"This year we celebrate 25 years of the opening of the Girls' School at St Stithians College! In a male dominated space and era, the College leadership was progressive enough to place the issue of gender equality on the table. If good education is good for boys – it is good for girls. Education remains important in the struggle for the full participation of women and men in society. The African saying is true, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a nation"

We are incredibly proud of the history of our Girls' schools and although a younger sibling in our family of schools, they have embraced the traditions of their older siblings while forging their own path. A very happy 25th birthday to our Girls' schools.

I hope the August holiday is an opportunity for our students to take a break from their screens and find time to rest and spend time outdoors as the weather warms up. Thank you to One and All for walking with us as we negotiated our way through the challenges of this past term. I leave you with the last two verses of a poem entitled One Weave of Faith, written by Ruth Everson:

**The Chapel doors are open:
Sunlight paints fruited blessings through stained glass,
The Good Samaritan waits, counting One and All.
The call comes to us, to you and to me:
'Journey along a path of prayer ...
Towards building others'.**

**This great ship of St Stithians, brothers and sisters,
Sends out men and women of 'substance' to offer their talents to the world.
'Be not afraid' to go, for to put your hand into the hand of the other
Is to hold the hand of God. We can only journey together,
Woven as we are in a Celtic knot, through and into each other.**

**So now, 'Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be though my vision, O Ruler of all.'**

Warmest wishes

Celeste



**Celeste Gilardi
Rector: St Stithians College**