



6 February 2020

Dear Saints Family

Camps and outings: risk and safety

I write to you on the important matter of risk and safety in relation to camps and outings organised by the schools of St Stithians College. I do so on behalf of the College Executive Committee, which consists of the Rector, the Heads of School, the Heads of the Campus Departments and the Superintendent Chaplain. As in all school activities, the safety and care of our students and staff who participate in camps and outings are a top priority.

You will be aware of the tragic deaths of two students participating in school camps at the start of the academic year, tragedies that have drawn much publicity. We express our heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and to the school communities involved as they mourn the loss of young lives.

It is critical for all schools to implement comprehensive and intentional safety procedures and management of risk, and to keep these 'front of mind'. Our staff responsible for camps and outings act with authority delegated and are formally supported by the College; and they apply well-established operating procedures to ensure conditions of safety for the students in our care. We thank our staff who participate in, and assume responsibility for, camps and outings as significant features of value-add in a St Stithians education.

In promoting best practice, it is right and proper that our procedures are subject to regular review. To further strengthen the College's best practice, we budgeted in 2019 for the appointment at the beginning of this year of a full-time Health and Safety consultant to work with our staff.

Outdoor education is a valued component of the offering of St Stithians College, bringing distinctive experiences and learning opportunities in our journey of educational excellence. Outdoor education typically takes place in a natural environment, rather than a built environment, and involves new and different experiences to regular everyday learning. There is much evidence that outdoor education promotes a love for and understanding of our natural world; as well as education in leadership and social and emotional intelligence.

These natural environments may contain risks and possible dangers — indeed, learning about, engaging and managing these is an important value-add of outdoor education. We are indeed proud of our sixth school, Kamoka Bush School and the educational programmes it runs on a leased portion of a game farm near Modimolle. 'Adventure' is one of the ideals of the international Round Square organisation to which St Stithians is affiliated, and which has excellent protocols for the management of risk and safety on camps.

As the College Executive Committee, we endorse the value of outdoor camps and day-outings that provide educational stretch and enrichment. To ensure that we take all reasonable efforts to mitigate risk, and to optimise safety as we embark on these activities, we implement careful planning and review. Included in

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE. MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

this emphasis is the importance of educating our students about appropriate and thoughtful behaviour when participating in camps and outings.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Nuttall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Dr T A Nuttall
Rector