



ST STITHIANS COLLEGE

A South African School Making a World of Difference

8 June 2015

Dear staff and parents of St Stithians College

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Gayle Harris as the 2nd Head of the Junior Prep. She will begin her tenure on 1 January 2016.



Gayle Harris's career in education spans 18 years. At Hillcrest Primary school she was Head of the Foundation Phase and a member of the Senior Management Team. She then taught at Umhlanga College, a school affiliated to Durban Girls' College. In 2009, Gayle was appointed as Principal of Cygnet Preparatory in Westville, Durban. As principal, she has grown and developed Cygnet as a Junior Primary School, building on its long history as a nursery school.

Cygnet is poised to roll out Senior Primary classes in 2016, and Gayle has led the preparations for this. The school is culturally diverse, and a recognised feeder school to a number of senior primary schools in the district. As a member of the Board, Gayle has significant governance experience, in addition to well-rounded management experience.

Gayle has played a leadership role in regional committees of the Southern African Heads of Independent Schools Association (SAHISA), and is currently a representative on the national committee of this structure which falls under the umbrella of the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA).

In 2007, Gayle obtained a Masters Degree in Education from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, specialising in Leadership, Management and Policy.

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The recruitment process for the position of Junior Prep Head was managed by the Rector and the HR Director, working closely with an executive search company. In addition to placing an advertisement prominently in the electronic and print media, an extensive search was conducted with high levels of professionalism. The interest in the position affirmed the high reputation of St Stithians College.

A strong pool of short-listed candidates participated in three rounds of interviews, with rigorous questions, discussions and presentations, as well as psychometric assessments. The last two interview panels included members of the College Executive and St Stithians Council members including the Chair, Deputy Chair, PTA Chair and representatives of the St Stithians Trust, the Methodist Church, the Old Stithian Association and the Transformation Committee.

The job description of the Junior Prep Head was distilled into the following core criteria which shaped the recruitment process:

- Significant experience as an educational leader of a dynamic learning community
- Strong emotional intelligence and ability to work with, and lead, others
- Commitment to promoting synergy among the schools of St Stithians
- A role model of Christian witness and leadership through service
- Enthusiasm for the opportunities and challenges of leading a South African school in the 21st century in the context of national transformation

The interview panellists were impressed with Gayle's outstanding qualities as an educationalist and as a leader. She has the experience, energy, values and vision to lead the Junior Prep into its next phase as the 'gateway' into a St Stithians education.

Gayle has two adult children, a son and a daughter. We look forward to welcoming her to the St Stithians family.

Yours sincerely



Dr T A Nuttall
Rector
St Stithians College

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