

# PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

St Charles College is committed to offering an essentially Christian education to boys.



## FIRST IN THE WORLD



**Hugo Rennings was beaming when we told him that he had achieved first place in the world for IGCSE Physical Science. After his successful set of IGCSE results Hugo is now in Grade 11 and studying towards his A Levels.**

### INTERNATIONAL CONFIDENCE

Each year St Charles College boys feature prominently on the list of Excellence in the World Awards following the release of the re-examination results.

The effect of writing the same examinations as their peers across the world is international confidence. Despite decades of being told that South Africans are last in the world for Mathematics and Science, we have been undeterred in

proving that with determination, focus and excellent teaching, that South African children are every bit as capable as their international counterparts.

To date, we have come first in the world in AS Level Mathematics (three times), in AS Level English Language and Literature (once) and now in IGCSE Physical Science.

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### Cambridge Assessment International

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge learners prepare for their future with an education from Cambridge.



Cambridge International School

# FIGHTING THE ELEMENTS

As you might be aware, St Charles College is involved, through the Love PMB movement, in a war to speed up the re-siting of the landfill site and to enforce good management of the site until it is moved to the new location that has been earmarked. We do also have to be realistic about the possibility of further disruptions through fires that may affect us in the interim period, and to this end we have had to reprioritize our capital expenditure for this year to ensure that we can run independently if necessary.

## AIR CONDITIONING

### Pre-Primary School

We are grateful to parents in the Pre-Primary School who have offered to assist us with our intention to air condition the classrooms in the Pre-Primary School. The running costs of air conditioning is high but they will not run all the time and will only be used when temperatures go above a certain level or in the case where smoke may be directed our way. We believe that our smallest clients

are the most affected and we will start with them.

## AIR WATER ELECTRICITY WIFI

### Whole College Contingency Plan

The entire floor above the dining room which was previously our Grade 9 boarding establishment has been transformed into an assessment centre and classrooms which meet the new requirements of an international examination space. The upper floor has been fitted with air conditioning which is used only when conditions warrant it, but the space is large enough to fit the entire school in and if necessary for the whole boarding establishment to be accommodated overnight. The upstairs bathroom facilities were retained and we are able to run a self contained unit for the entire College if required.

## WATER

We have been running boreholes for three years now. One borehole is for human consumption and the other (unfiltered) is used for maintaining fields and playing surfaces. The College is currently able to run independently of the municipal water supply.

Through generous donations and prioritization, a network of irrigation pipes has been installed. The Old Orchards Field is now automatically irrigated, and the Oval will be next. As you can imagine, the process is invasive and getting the timing right is critical.

## ELECTRICITY

In his SONA address, the President announced the establishment of a Smart City. The idea of a 'smart school' is very much in our minds and with automated irrigation we have taken a step towards that goal. We have conducted an audit of our electricity network and established two phases of action:

1. Address the immediate need for a generator to mitigate interruptions of load shedding.
2. Systematic re-laying of the electricity network of the College over several years for smart control.

## WIFI

The entire campus now has WIFI and after the initial network was laid out we found it necessary to place WIFI access points in each classroom. This has dramatically improved the capacity to support the updating of the Senior School boys' devices.





# Why Universities are not full

2019 and many students found their final results below the minimum entry requirements.

## High Quality Exemptions

You may be surprised to know that several Universities were not full in 2019 and 2020 - especially since schools love to advertise 100% pass rates and above 90% University exemption rates. The reason for the problem is that while more pupils achieved exemptions, the quality of passes achieved was poor and getting worse.

Our 2019 Grade 12 results were modest by normal standards with a 73% exemption rate. However, the quality of the exemptions achieved means that these boys have a higher probability of getting into the tougher courses and of passing their first year of University. In 2020, the exemption rate is projected to be above the

## Top in South Africa

Jason Lazarov will receive several Cambridge brilliance in the world awards at a ceremony to be held at Melrose Arch, Johannesburg on 18th of March. Jason was the top AS Level student in South Africa in Mathematics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry.

Jason also achieved a remarkable average of 90% for his A Level Examinations.

## University of Pretoria Vice Chancellor awards full Academic Scholarships to two St Charles College boys

We have heard the good news that both Joshua Mayo and Jason Lazarov have been awarded full Academic Scholarships to study at the University of Pretoria in their respective courses.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**81% of the grade took AS Level Mathematics**

*Mathematical Literacy*

is currently included in the requirement of passing four subjects at 50% to gain an exemption. This means that many exemption students have really only passed three subjects at 50% and should not be surprised when universities do not allow them access to courses with decent entry requirements. The NSC Core Mathematics results dipped in

norm at over 90%, but the value of this statistic is in the number of boys who have taken the tough subject combinations. It is reassuring to see that higher Mathematics was passed by over 80% of the grade. We believe that this may be unrivalled in South Africa.

AS LEVEL SUBJECT	A	B	C	D	E
Mathematics*	17	13	10	20	10
English*	8	18	20	14	4
Physics	16	12	9	8	4
Biology	4	8	8	4	3
Chemistry	8	5	12	4	3
Geography	4	3	4	9	3
History	0	1	4	2	3
Art	0	0	2	1	1
Economics	3	2	8	2	2
Business Studies	1	0	6	4	8
Afrikaans	6	14	6	19	12
French	0	2	0	1	2
German	1	0	0	0	0
Accounting	4	1	2	3	3
Music	0	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>14.6</b>

**Table of AS Level subject passes obtained by the 2019 Grade 12 group.**

\* a C symbol at IGCSE for English or Mathematics may be used in conjunction with AS Level subjects to obtain a full exemption.



industry standards.

### Practical Component

The practical component of these courses carries a high weighting and favours those who are technically minded and have an eye for detail or imagination to solve real-life practical problems.

### The Welding School

The welding school continues to gather momentum and also provides a standalone qualification that will set many boys up with skills that can be directly used in current real life.

## ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL IN ACTION

The Environmental Council will play a vital role in taking the College toward the goal of zero contribution to the landfill site by December 2021. Planting trees is another excellent way to take our environmental goals forward.



### Our Third Year of Technical

We have been running our technical option for two years now and many boys have already been positively affected by the new program.

Our intended partner, Pearson, is working through the red tape of South African NQF registration to have the qualifications recognized as AS and A Level equivalents in South Africa.

### Recognition at AS Level

While waiting, for Pearson, we evaluated a subject offered by Cambridge, called *Design and Technology* which is already accepted as an AS Level and A Level subject and is also recognized as a University exemption subject. We

have around 20 boys taking the subject currently at IGCSE Level and AS Level and it looks ready to grow quickly.

### The Full Cycle of Production

The courses involve the whole process of production including design, construction and testing for market readiness which directly links to careers in industry. Boys who complete the course will have skills and knowledge to pursue a manufacturing career.

### Meeting Industry Standards

Boys will work with plastics, metal and wood, learning to draw and design both on paper and using CAD, and will use laser printers and cutters to produce work at current

**The Old Boys of 1989** generously donated funds to plant indigenous trees. The trees now line the edge of Smith field adjacent to the newly built, Hurley House.



# Hurley House Opening



Mr Nel is the first Housemaster of our newly built Hurley House. As part of the opening ceremony, Mr Nel read out the 'Saints Call' written for his charges in this incredible new facility.

**“Let this house be every house.  
For it's the lives we touch and mould;  
This is what truly binds us,  
forever Saints, forever blue and gold.”**

We are grateful for the support of the Board who understood that the exchange of space which the new boarding establishment provided, was a sensible option and a great benefit to the entire College.





# THE HARD YARDS

While at least three large capital projects are queued for attention, 2020 will first be marked by the transformation of the spaces in between. The focus of the Primary School areas will be the physical transformation of the landscape through a network of paths and entrance spaces, that provide safe access and integration with the already extensive network of paths that have been laid over the past two years.

The drop off zone and aftercare areas for the Junior Primary School especially, will soon be positively affected.



## PRIMARY SCHOOL DIGITAL

There is no doubt that digital is exciting and offers many applications that can support enquiry based learning. However, there are definite concerns with the overall effect of exposure to digital media.

### **A Change to Applied Technology**

We have together agreed to obtain a bank of tablets which will be used through the grades to support investigations. We will monitor the effectiveness of this approach and adjust accordingly.

### **Mitigating the Effects of Blue Light**

However, parents should be more concerned with limiting time on cell phones which is where screen time is most addictive and potentially destructive. The blue light emitted by electronic devices is the reason many children and adults can't sleep. That last check of the cell phone just before bed is part of the reason children and teenagers are staying up late. TV has a similar effect. This can be mitigated by turning on the blue light filter on devices and turning off devices and televisions some time before bed time.

### **Important**

A computer, device or machine is a tool that must enhance learning and make us more fully human —and not less. The ultimate learning experience is debate and discussion with other human beings. In the years to come, it is going to become increasingly easier to yield to machines and we will have to make a special effort to maintain the real experience of learning to be human from real people.

# #lovepmb

There will be a public report back of the information we have regarding the progress of the landfill site on

**Date: Thursday 5th of March 2020**

**Time: 6-7pm**

**Venue: Epworth School**

As we speak actions are being taken at the landfill site to comply with directives stemming from the letter addressed to the Premier recently. Yesterday, members of Love PMB accompanied by representatives of the Human Rights Commission visited the landfill site and can verify that officials are hard at work trying to remedy the intolerable state of the landfill site.

Our role in #lovepmb is to support all actions that head in the right direction. While those on the ground are working hard with the resources that they have (totally inadequate) it is going to take much more to bring the landfill site within the prescribed operation conditions. We will be actively assisting the navigation towards a new site which has been identified and the interim management of the current site until such time as it is decommissioned.

The air quality measurements at St Charles College and St John's D.S.G. are concerning but do not consistently breach the tolerances allowed by environmental laws. However, the readings at Sobantu, a settlement which is directly adjacent to the landfill site and in the direct line of the prevailing winds, are up to 1000 times the lawful limits.

## **No one should say "I did not know"**

As a city we have a responsibility to ensure that the poorest and least resourced communities among us are cared for. As middle and upper class society produces most of the refuse that is causing the current problem, we have an even bigger responsibility — and no one should say: "I didn't know".

## Blood Donations



The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) staged a dinner to acknowledge the role of all clinic controllers in the Midland's region, at the Victoria Country Club on Friday, 21 February 2020.

St Charles College was given an award for achieving an annual total of 250 donations in 2019. This is a personal record for the College thus far. This is an amazing achievement by our boys. Every pint of blood collected saves three lives. Collectively our boys saved 750 lives through their unselfish blood donations. Congratulations to our brave young men who have acknowledged their social responsibility.

**Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.**

Philippians 2: 14-15