

Weekly Update, Monday 13 September 2021, 09:30



**ST CHARLES COLLEGE**  
S O U T H A F R I C A

Dear Parents

### **The best day of the year**

On Friday we ran the Dash and celebrated afterwards with chocolate donuts. In the afternoon and evening we held the Matric Dance on the Harwin fields – a splendid occasion even with all the restrictions and limitations. Each day we try to say yes, but that comes at a cost to all those who wrestle with making decisions that balance promoting positive living while maintaining discipline under very challenging conditions. I am so grateful to have a team of staff who go the extra mile to fight for ways to make what others consider impossible a reality for our boys. It almost felt like a normal day, and I think we all needed it.

### **Adjusting to new levels of engagement**

While it was exciting to hear the President move the country to adjusted level 2, we should recognise that this decision has been taken more as an economic imperative than as a result of the subsidence in infections. The biggest change is not the levels, but the mindset developing around a storm of ethical dilemmas that are looming on the horizon, and which will impact on how we will interact in the future.

The disturbing trend is a reluctance to get vaccinated. The Government has secured enough vaccines for the entire adult population which means that every adult has the option to protect themselves. This reduces the tremendous anxiety that many have carried that they would inadvertently cause the death of loved ones. The responsibility now shifts to those who exercise the right not to get vaccinated. However, it will be interesting to see how this plays out as one person's right to risk their own death is balanced against the rights of others to live their lives to the full. Signals coming from other countries are that medical aids, life insurance etc. will be at the very least more expensive for those who elect not to vaccinate. Spectators returning to sport and cultural events will soon be governed by an electronic vaccination passport, and access to school sport will be similarly governed. Most severe are signs that employers may have the right to discontinue employment of employees who do not get vaccinated. These measures have the potential to divide society in new ways and we are watching this space with great interest.

### **A tribute to our own medical support staff**

Our goal each term is to make it first to the midterm break and then to the end of the term, to finish strong. This Thursday evening we will celebrate our Annual Speech Evening, a hybrid virtual and physical event. Getting our matrics through their academic preparation while trying to play sport and hold cultural events has been very demanding, but I wish to pay tribute to our nursing staff and the doctors who have given their advice when we needed extra wisdom. Our College has the lowest incidence of disruption and that has been due to their dedication and commitment. We all owe them a debt of gratitude and if you have occasion to encourage them, I think that would be exactly what they need as we head into the next quarter where decisions are likely to be even more difficult to make.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allen van Blerk', written in a cursive style.

Allen van Blerk

Principal