

Principal's Weekly Update: 16th March 2026



Dear Parents, Guardians and Grandparents

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

Clarity is not always better

Every generation seems to raise the notion that what the world needs is clarity – led by someone who is courageous enough to sort evil out, once and for all. That really hasn't ever worked very well, and it doesn't seem to be working out very well now, either. I trust that we will not be giving out Nobel Peace Prizes to people who start wars anytime soon.

Boys are simpler than you think

I do not mean this to sound sarcastic, but rather to say that most boys like systems to be fair, and to know that somebody cares about them. They will run through walls to protect, raise their hands to tackle impossible challenges and are quick to forgive. They can be messy; they crave significant voices to tell them they are on track – and it can be scientifically verified through brain scans that they are able to not think at all for quite long periods of time.

Sport has become a high-risk activity – so many people watching, so many expert critics (who could not do better themselves), so much pressure. In a very unequal landscape, we will have great moments and rough moments this winter season – and regardless of winning or losing, I have never seen a schoolboy give less than their best for their school or their team. I have, however, heard someone say that we should never tell boys that we are proud of them; rather, we need to say that they should be proud of themselves because of their effort, their attitude and the way they contributed. That is probably a good way to make sure they don't think we love them because of their accomplishments.

Anticipation of adventure makes time last longer

When boys are little, time seems to extend forever. Their days are filled, by design, with new experiences, and every day is marked by segments of meaning and growth. Not so for adults. We do the opposite, literally making our lives a series of routines so that we will not have to think deeply. The closest adults get to a series of unfamiliar episodes of adventure is the bucket list brigade. It's the anticipation of something positive in the future that makes time stretch – but don't wish time away – your wish may come true.

When the mountains threaten to crash into the sea

I am unsure exactly how farmers and business owners do it, but I am grateful for the conversations I have with people who are doing good things – even when life dishes up overwhelming trouble. Watching and hearing how you keep going is more than enough for me to want to be a stronger, better person and to make sure that I never give in to the obstacles of life.

The past week I had to deal with disappointment – and that does not make me special in any way, but it is extremely encouraging to know that in this place I don't bear the weight alone – there are people here who fight alongside me and make sure that we always turn every step backwards into two steps forward.

Our perspective depends on knowing that our fears are given power when we allow the circumstances around us to appear bigger than the God who stands beside us.

"But in the day that I am afraid, I lay all my fears before you and trust in you with all my heart." Psalm 56:3

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allen van Blerk', written over a white background.

Allen van Blerk
PRINCIPAL