



Principal's Weekly Update: 11 May 2026

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

Dear Parents, Guardians and Grandparents

Mother's Day

I hope that the wild and windy day on Sunday didn't get in the way of your being appreciated. As a mother of a boy, thank you for your commitment to this adventurous mission – so rewarding in the long term, but fully deserving of every commendation for the extreme faith it takes on some days. People often look at Navy Seals for perseverance, but I think mothers would win that competition hands down.

'Prepare, adapt and keep moving'

It's probably not solid ground to follow the advice of a clip from a Facebook-doomscroll sage, but this does make sense – and it's the reason why we had a good day this Saturday. Both staff and parents from Clifton Prep and Senior School paid you and your sons a great compliment at the conclusion of a great day of sporting fixtures, stating how impressed they were by, and appreciative of, the values that they experienced in their visit to Harwin Road this past Saturday. As the only two boys-only through schools in the province, we have a unique opportunity to build a friendship emphasising the whole-school together in action.

Great news on the aircon campaign

For the teachers who wrestle with wriggling boys when it gets hot, I hear that the challenge is on to get the most sign-ups for My Difference cards, channelling trickles of *My Difference* rewards towards the funding of the air conditioners. Last Monday afternoon, after releasing the appeal to work together as a community on the air conditioning project, I was greatly encouraged by an email from a father on behalf of his family: *'Your team has never been overly pushy when it comes to donations, etc. I am happy to contribute to the "aircon campaign". Please sign me up for one aircon for a classroom.'*

Rating Upgrade for Pietermaritzburg and November 4

It's no secret that South Africans are less than impressed by municipal government, but I have seen some positive signs over the last year that give me hope. A year ago, a prominent businessperson I spoke to rated Msunduzi at 4 (out of 10), which pleasantly surprised me. I have seen three things in the past week which would warrant an upgrade from 4 to 4+.

If there is something you must do on November 4 this year, it is to vote. Every vote does count – not just for the basic seats, which are determined in ward elections; all votes also carry a proportion value in determining the remainder of the seats. That means, every vote counts! Please remember that every single voter on the extreme left, and the extreme right will vote. The sensible middle has a huge responsibility to balance the equation and ensure that moderate, constructive politics dominate.

Independent education

Allowing children to think their own thoughts and teaching them how to express them respectfully are two of the reasons parents subconsciously choose independent education. Richard Feynman said, "I would rather have questions that can't be answered than answers that cannot be questioned," and I agree. For a boy, it doesn't mean you don't have to cut your hair – there is a very clear answer to that question – but it does mean that your thoughts have value and potential.

The world loves reducing life to the most basic steps, but we think education can only be done once, and that it's not basic at all; thinking is messy, it is hard work, and it does not fit into prescribed boxes. I want the next leaders of my country to think independently and to be led by a strongly resourced conscience, so that in every aspect of community life, we would be found following the scriptural instruction to:

"Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God." Micah 6:8

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allen van Blerk'. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'A' and a circular flourish.

Allen van Blerk
PRINCIPAL