



# Newsletter

Dear Parents

I have thoroughly appreciated the positive interactions I have had with many of you as I settle into this special school. I think I have met most of you and have been made to feel most welcome. I have, by request, included a photograph of myself, for those whom I have yet to meet. Please may I extend an invitation to everyone to feel welcome to pop into the office, to an Assembly or to any of the school activities for us to meet each other. Perhaps the parent interviews straight after Half Term might be a super opportunity for this. At the end of this week, I will have spent a total of 38 wonderful days at St Katharine's and I am looking forward to many, many more!



St Katharine's School  
[www.stkatharines.co.za](http://www.stkatharines.co.za)  
23 June 2017

Some of the happy events we have shared in the last month include:

## A very Happy 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday to St Katharine's!



On Friday, 12 May 2017, we celebrated the School's 101<sup>st</sup> birthday. It seems I might have inherited the nickname, Mrs Dalmation from this occasion! It was super for the girls and staff to share the birthday with

Sophia Maske, the oldest girl, and Mackenzie Goeller, the youngest girl in the school, who had the pleasure of cutting the cake. We also had the opportunity to honour the founder of the school, Mrs Fielding.

*Please note that there are commemorative St Katharine's history books still available. You are welcome to contact Mary Salmon with regards to obtaining one.*





### **James Shone, Nicola Aylward and Richard Stanley**

Thank you to the parents, staff and friends of the school who managed to attend the presentations by James Shone and Nicola Aylward, as well as the Ascension Day service at The Ridge. Although quite different in content, both James and Nicola encouraged us to find what gives us and our girls 'air in our balloons', to find ways to be calm, mindful and grateful and to live each day well. Mr Stanley reminded us that our 'portraits' not only contain what we look like on the outside, but more importantly what we look like on the inside. He encouraged us to remember that our inner beliefs, values and perspectives could be captured in a painting of us and we should make sure of what we want them to be! They are all very special messages of which we must remind ourselves every day.

### **Jazz Band**

Our jazz band played so well at Assembly in the week and then at the Pridwin Jazz Festival on Sunday, 21 May. We had the only all-girl band amongst bands from Redhill, Pridwin, St John's, the Pridwin staff and friends band and the Joburg Youth Jazz band! I am sure that the parents who participated in the picnic enjoyed it as much as the St Katharine's staff members who accompanied the girls.

### **Netball**

The new league system for netball has catered for more matches in match week, as the girls play a mini tournament on match days, and more practices in non-match week; with the tournaments in place for a number of Saturdays as well. The girls reported back at Assembly and they were proud of the progress they have made. The staff and coaches are also proud and determined that the girls start their next season on the good note on which they finished their league matches.

The inter-house netball last week saw each member of Darling, Keller and Nightingale playing passionately for their house, with Darling coming out on top by one point! Well done to all the girls!

Well done to the Grade 7s who took on the staff in a very energetic match. There were red faces and deep breathing from both sides at the end of the hard-fought battle. The score remains a secret!

### **Hockey**

As of last week, all the girls are learning the game of hockey in the afternoon sports slots, with the team girls staying on for an extra team practice. We wish all the girls the very best as they attempt to be the best they can be on the hockey field.

### **Cross-Country**

We have run on the road around the school and then up and around a St Katharine's family property during the last few weeks. This cross-country slot is not instead of hockey, but an add-on for the girls who just love to run and who want to get fit. We have had a mom join us and we welcome all the girls who feel that they would like to make a start. There is a bit of walking too!

### **Robotics and the curriculum**

The Grade 6 and 7 girls had the pleasure of visiting Pridwin School last week for a session on robotics. The girls thoroughly enjoyed programming a vehicle to move, stop, recognise colours, follow a line and much more. The staff witnessed engaged pupils who were



prepared to acknowledge their mistakes in their programme, pupils who persevered until they corrected their errors and pupils who were not embarrassed to get it wrong at times. As educators, this is what we are trying to achieve in the rest of the curriculum as we grapple with what it means to learn, to teach and to set up our girls for lifelong learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **Safety and Security**

### **Afternoons at school**

Although the girls are allowed a great amount of independence at St Katharine's, we do not think this should detract from our responsibility of keeping the girls safe. Supervision in schools is of paramount importance. We will be sending out the afternoon waiting and collection procedures after Half Term. Please read them carefully and we appeal to you and your daughters to adhere to them in the spirit of safety.

### **Escombe Avenue**

Please be reminded about Escombe Avenue and the congestion that occurs at times when the school has a number of functions on at the same time. Please could we ask all the drivers to be patient, to be courteous and to pull off the road as far as possible for drop-offs. This is the start of the day for us and our girls. If we can be shining examples to them as we negotiate the space with each other, they will be less stressed for the academic day.

### **Knitting**

Girls, moms, dads and family members, you are all invited to knit squares for Mandela Day. There has already been a delivery of squares in anticipation of sewing them into blankets for the people who need the warmth the most. A basic pattern can be found on the next page of this newsletter for you to follow. **We also need volunteers to sew the squares into blankets. Please let Mary Salmon know if you are able to help us with this request.**

We wish all our Muslim families a very happy and blessed Eid. May this special day bring peace and happiness. We also wish all our girls and families a wonderful Half Term and, to all of those who are going away, to travel safely.



Karen Symons



## Traditional St Katharine's Instructions to knit squares

### Materials and Equipment

- Double Knit readily available from Checkers Stores in 50g balls or any haberdashery
- One pair knitting needles [see below]. Some shops sell short needles for children so that these are easier to manage than the longer needles.

### Instructions for a baby blanket for beginners – 15cm x 15 cm squares

Cast on whatever feels most comfortable to you:

22 stitches on 4 mm needles

31 stitches on 6 mm needles and knit 38 rows (depending on the tension) – this should give you a square of 15cm x 15cm. (24 of these squares make a decent sized baby blanket)

The younger children or beginners may prefer to use larger sized needles and slightly thicker wool. Experiment with the number of stitches required to create a square.

Row 1: Knit.

Row 2: Knit.

Rows 1 and 2 form the 'garter' stitch knitting pattern for your square. Continue knitting as per these two rows until your square is as long as it is wide. See the instructions below \*\*\*\*

### Instructions for larger squares – 20cm x 20cm squares

Cast on whatever feels most comfortable to you:

44/45 stitches on 4 mm needles

40/42 stitches on 4.5mm needles

35/36 stitches on 5 mm needles

Rows 1 and 2 form the 'garter' stitch knitting pattern for your square. Continue knitting as per these two rows until your square is as long as it is wide.

\*\*\*\*To ensure your square is 20cm, either use a tape measure or form a triangle by folding one corner of your square over to meet the opposite corner as shown - if all sides are equal, then you have a square!

Cast off / bind off. Leave a 50 cm tail (for sewing the squares together).

We would suggest that the finished result is dense without too many holes, for added warmth. You can use different types of wool or wool blend yarns, acrylic yarns or perhaps double up lighter weight yarn such as 4 ply. But whatever your yarn weighs, make sure your squares are warm and cosy.

Making the knitted squares as consistent in size and weight as possible will help those who volunteer to join the squares quickly and easily into blankets. The knitted squares have been designed at (20x 20 cm) to make sure that they can be quickly made. The smaller 15 x 15 cm will take a little longer but might be easier for some.

Blankets can be knitted, or if you can crochet, that is fine too. Blankets should measure 150 cm x 200 cm. (Standard single bed size). You can decide on your own size squares, your own colour, but preferably a darker colour so as not to show up dirt too easily.

