



Brescia House School

19 June 2020

Dear Parents, Staff and Pupils

Winter has settled in and we hope that everyone has been able to keep warm. The girls have dressed warmly in their civvies and seem to be happy being back at school. Today is the end of the first week back at school for Grade 11s and most of the Primary School. We thank parents who have communicated with us if their daughters are not able to return to school. The live online lessons and recordings are available to girls who cannot physically be back at school. We ask parents to support the school by ensuring that all other girls are at school to receive face-to-face tuition. Staff have felt that the face-to-face teaching allows for better learning as discussions can take place and pupils are able to interact immediately and learn together.

Transformation and Diversity:

Brescia House School continues to be committed to transformation and diversity as this is one of the School's Strategic imperatives. The Strategic Plan states:

Brescia House School aims to be a school that is open and accessible to all with an understanding that each individual is unique in terms of race, orientation, age, beliefs, etc. Brescia House School is intent on supporting social transformation and redress of cultural bias and believes it should be integrated in a strategic and coherent manner, in order to give rise to great opportunities, efficiencies and benefits, for the school and therefore society as a whole.

During this week we have had online meetings with our alumnae and have also received emails from alumnae and current girls requesting to engage with the school about their experiences at Brescia House School. We have set up several meetings in this regard and are planning an alumnae discussion forum as well.

To show our continued commitment we share with you the following:

- We are continuing with our Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) workshops in partnership with an external service provider, Cohesion Collective. The Grade 11s will be participating in a workshop on Monday 22 June. As a follow up to their workshop in the first term, Grade 12 will also have discussion on Monday.
- Staff also participated in an EDI workshop in September last year and will continue with ongoing training with Cohesion Collective.
- We have employed Ms Veliswa Mehana, as our Social Cohesion Coordinator. Ms Mehana has an LLB qualification and will be assisting us by providing a safe space for girls to reach out.
- We recognised and discussed with the Board the need for a black social worker to join our Counselling department. Last term we began the process of interviewing for this post and we are now finalising this appointment.



Brescia House School

- The next phase of this process will be to organise a parent online webinar followed by smaller face-to-face discussion forums.
- Our Head of HR, Mr Gareth Low, who has been at Brescia House School since December last year, is in the process of reviewing and updating various policies such as the staff code of conduct.

Serviam and Ethos:

We thank all parents, staff and girls who have continued to support our community outreach collections in the spirit of Serviam.

The Mass that Father Tshepo conducted on Friday 12 June in our own chapel was very special and it reinforced our close connection with the Bryanston Catholic Church. We are grateful to both Father Keith and Father Tshepo who helped us with the Grade 4's first experience in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, last weekend.

COVID-19

Our girls have responded well to the COVID-19 protocols in place at school and are encouraged to continue being aware of social distancing, washing their hands, sanitising and wearing their masks at all times.

Calendar:

Our term 2 calendar was communicated in a previous letter. Although other schools may have different dates for ending and starting the terms, we confirm that our end of Term 2 will be Friday 31 July and Term 3 will begin on Monday 31 August.

The half-term dates are from Monday 6 July to Friday 10 July. Matric and Grade 11 examinations will begin on Monday 13 July.

Staff will be working remotely in the first week of the August holidays to finalise reports, which will be issued on Wednesday 5 August for the Primary School and Tuesday 11 August for the High School.

Take care, keep warm, stay safe and be kind.

St Angela Merici, our Foundress, reminds us:

"You will accomplish more by kind words and a courteous manner than by anger or sharp rebuke."

Regards

Ann Owgan and Loredana Borello
Heads: Brescia House School