



THE VERITAS

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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Penny Mullan



“If you’re brave enough to say goodbye, life will reward you with a new hello.”

~ Paulo Coelho

The week that has passed was dedicated to celebrating the Class of 2021; a remarkable group who have served Springfield with excellence and with joy.

The last week that matriculants spend at school is traditionally termed ‘silly week’. Oftentimes, for teachers, the experience is akin to ‘scary week’. But not for these Matrics. They have shared pizza with the teachers in the staffroom, had dress-up days, parked on the Avenue and rekindled their childhood on a waterslide in the garden. They have had their last lessons in each of their subjects and teachers and fellow students have found meaningful ways to wish our Matrics well for the examinations that lie ahead.

Of great significance was yesterday’s celebratory events that included the Grade 12 Valedictory Mass and Awards ceremony. Our School’s spectacular gardens make for the perfect setting to reflect on the learning that has taken place in these surroundings and to appreciate the people who have stood alongside cheering them on and sharing in the fun.

Tonight sees one final celebration in the form of the Matric Farewell and beyond that lies the writing of their final examinations. As a community, let us all hold the Class of 2021 in our daily thoughts and prayers that they may have the calm and the confidence to achieve in a manner that reflects their unique potential.

In my address to the Matrics during yesterday's awards ceremony I said that how we begin is important as it sets the tone for that endeavour, but it is how we end that defines our character. Eighty-nine young adults, who are grounded by their values and whose characters will see them soar, are about to take on the world!

PENNY MULLAN
Head of School



MESSAGE FROM THE JUNIOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Alison Dunn



Twelve is not an easy age to be...

In the technological age in which we now live, with social media ruling our lives and a cell phone being an extension of one's arm, I think twelve years old, or being in Grade Six or Seven, must at present be a very difficult age to be. The reason I say this is that it is only legal to join the platforms of Facebook, Instagram and TikTok (and probably a number of others) at the age of thirteen.

You might be interested to know these facts about our Grade Six and Seven girls:

1. Every single girl in our present Grade Six group was born in 2009, thus turning 12 during the course of this year (there are still two eleven-year-olds in the group who only turn twelve in November)
2. Four of our Grade Seven girls are still twelve (they have birthdays in November and December).

Therefore there are sixty girls in Grade Six and Seven at Springfield for whom it is, right now, illegal to be on Facebook, illegal to be on Instagram and illegal to be on TikTok.

My question to the parents of those sixty girls, plus to the parents of every grade younger than that, is: have you allowed your daughter to have access to those social media platforms, and, if you have, are you aware that what she is doing is illegal?

Cell phones are banned from school in the Junior School. Cell phones are paid for by parents and given to their children. Nothing a child does with or on a cell phone happens during school time or on school property. Cell phone usage is completely and utterly the responsibility of parents. And it seems, twelve is the age where it all gets difficult. I truly sympathise with parents of 12-year olds today. And yet, in my mind, it's easy - it's illegal, so it's forbidden. Stick with WhatsApp - your children are allowed that.

TikTok is the one that really worries me. At least on Facebook one has to accept a friend before they become a follower. With TikTok one can just stalk any person's account and latch on to it - very dangerous indeed, and that is what our 12-year old Grade Six girls are doing right now - illegally - on one of their teacher's accounts. How can a teacher be blamed for that? . I would go so far as to say that it is not even the children who are at fault here - they are at the age where they will try, if not supervised, to do many things that are not allowed - it is the parents who need to take responsibility for their children's illegal acts, especially when these happen on a device given to them by those responsible for them.

Nevertheless, we want to help you, parents, by offering advice and assistance in parenting your children. Earlier this week you received a lengthy communication from Mr Meehan and me, specifically regarding social media usage of children. In that communication was an invitation to an online webinar for parents being hosted by Springfield, on Monday evening at 18:30. I am sure this will offer enormous help to you, so please join on the following Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81874298093?pwd=bGl6O1RRMUhNdS94YXdabWRkQzhmQT09>

Meeting ID: 818 7429 8093

Passcode: 65739

Wouldn't life be so much easier if there were specific cell phones just for the under 13's that performed only one function - that of a telephone!

I would like to add another tip for our Senior Primary parents: It seems that the Netflix series *Squid Game* is a hot topic of conversation amongst the girls at the moment. This is totally unsuitable for children to watch. These articles (see links below) clarify this more.

https://digiisocial.com/lets-talk-squid-game-and-childrens-exposure/?fbclid=IwAR3tuept-TIIydcLlx95WV_mPXyMOXAUFWN16OgtQZqDCGKGcYlPFzC6ntc

[Schools urge parents not to let children watch Netflix's Squid Game amid fears of copying dangerous scenes | The Independent](#)

So I guess it's the TV remote as well as the cell phone that parents have to monitor! Good luck to you all.

ALISON DUNN

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