



THE RIDGE SCHOOL



From the Headmaster's Desk

January 2018 #1

Dear Parents

Happy New Year to you all. May 2018 be a year when promises are fulfilled in meaningful reality, plans give way to provision, and beauty and blessings are yours in abundance.

Here at The Ridge we are looking forward to welcoming your lads back to school this Wednesday morning as an exciting new year of learning and adventure gets underway. In particular we are delighted to welcome the 76 new boys and their families who join our extended Ridge family for the first time.

As you look forward to dropping your boys off at school on the 17th January it is appropriate to update you all on a few matters and to bring a few reminders to your attention in order to help to facilitate a smooth and happy start for all of us.

Staff news

We are delighted to welcome a number of new members of staff onto our Ridge staff team:

- [Fayonaaz Patel - Grade 0 class teacher](#)
- [Holly Ferrer - Grade 2 class teacher](#)
- [Maresca Opperman - Grade 4 class teacher](#)
- [Deidre Leibrandt - Grade 6 class teacher and Head of Natural Science](#)
- [Agnes Jooste - Learning Support specialist teacher](#)
- [Claire Lord - Learning Support specialist teacher](#)
- [Sarah Green - Junior Primary Music teacher and specialist instrument coach](#)
- [Ntobekhaya Semoko - Front Office and School secretary](#)
- [Joy Seabi - teacher intern](#)
- [Melissa Roux - teacher intern](#)
- [Fezile Shabangu - teacher intern](#)

Class lists for 2018

Parents are reminded that there is a very thorough process that our teachers and members of the management team have been involved in as they allocate your sons to specific classes. There are several factors that are taken into account. These include but are not limited to learning styles, classroom dynamics, friendship groups and diversity of the respective class groups. Needless to say, we are governed by the obvious logistical constraints that dividing sixty-six boys into three classes per Grade will impose on us. There has again been a great deal of thought given to appropriate groupings, and plenty of intentional consultation amongst class teachers, Heads of Grades, Deputies and myself as Headmaster.

Our 99th Year

As much as we all understand the significance of the Centenary celebrations that are now a mere twelve months away it is important that we savour, celebrate and enjoy all that this 99th birthday year will be bringing our way. This is, of course, particularly pertinent when one considers that our Grade 7 boys, and their mums and dads, deserve to have the reassurance of knowing that every effort will be made to recognize and make the most of a year that, in its own right, will stand alone as a prominent milestone in the school's history. As they say, you can't get from 98 to 100 without going through 99, so let's make the most of it.

Junior Prep Upgrade

We were looking forward to welcoming you back with the news that the demolition is well underway. Unfortunately, due to a delay in the issuing of a building certificate by the Johannesburg Heritage Counsel, the demolition crews will only be able to start towards the end of January.

In the meantime, the building site has been secured and enclosed within the necessary hoarding profile. This area is strictly out of bounds for all and especially for the boys. We will be keeping all parents informed about developments on a regular basis with progress updates being communicated through by the builders, the project manager and myself.

Our Temporary JP Village

Our Grade 1, 2 and 3D boys and teachers will be testing out their 'new' facility in the days ahead this week. It is very much all systems go with the class teachers having worked hard to set up and prepare each teaching and learning space so that the boys can enjoy all that the start of the academic year will be holding in store for them. Understandably, this is a once off 'Village' adventure and Mandy Herold and her team are determined to make the most of it.

Orientation programme ... what it means to be a Ridge boy

While the JP lads will be enjoying getting used to and acclimatizing to their new Village surroundings, the SP boys will spend two days this week being reintroduced to their broader schooling environment and working with respective class teachers to understand timetable and system changes that they will have been introduced to.

In addition, we believe that it is appropriate to focus attention on the concept of the *Ridge Right Stuff*. A chance to engage with all our boys in respective class groups, as we draw attention to and emphasize our expectations when it comes to the conduct and becoming of Ridge boys. Specific sessions have been set aside and will be conducted by individual teachers and members of the management team as we highlight right behaviour, appropriate language, good manners, and respect of self, each other's and one's own property. IT user protocols will be re-enforced, and they will be reminded about how Ridge boys ought to behave on the fields of play, what becoming community builders can do for the community at large, and what empathy, compassion and acceptance of another needs to look like.

High School Expo

An early prompt to interested parents that we are hosting our annual High School Expo in the Nicholson Hall on the afternoon of 1st February. There will be at least thirteen prominent independent and state schools from within the greater Gauteng area, and from further afield, displaying features of their educational uniqueness whilst sharing something of what sets them apart and what their particular niche offering is by comparison to other leading schools.

This is an open invitation to visit the exhibition in order to ask some questions of the representatives from each school, to engage in some fact-finding about chosen schools, and perhaps to find out some more about what for you might be lesser-known schools.

Reminders

Parents are reminded to please make sure that your son's hair is appropriately cut before he returns to school on Wednesday morning, that his uniform is in order (summer blues to be worn on Wednesday for boys in Grades 1 – 7), and that all school clothing, personal belongings and sports equipment are clearly marked.

We look forward to welcoming your sons back to school and to sharing quality time with each of you as we begin this next chapter of your lad's learning adventure in the weeks and months ahead.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Stanley'.

Richard Stanley
Headmaster