



St Mary's School
Waverley
Founded 1888

St Mary's School, Waverley

Statement

on

The Christian identity and ethos of St Mary's

*Lord Jesus, Child of Bethlehem, bless our school
and all its members, past and present.*

Be with us in our worship, in our work and in our play.

Inspire the hearts of those who teach and those who learn.

Train those who rule, and those who obey,

that all may offer Thee the perfect service

which is worthy of Thy Love.

*Who livest and reignest, with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
ever one God, world without end.*

AMEN

The mission of St Mary's School

1. The school prayer expresses the mission of the school. The mission of the school in education is well summed up by former headmistress, Dodo Pitt, in her foreword to the *History of the School 1888-1978*:

“Fundamentally our aim in education is the same as it was in our early days: to teach striving after perfection rather than satisfaction with mediocrity: to educate for the future, for social responsibility, and total commitment to ideals.”

Our history establishes a spiritual foundation

2. St Mary's was founded in 1888 by the Reverend John Darragh at the request of Bishop Bousfield, the first Anglican Bishop of Pretoria, with the express intention of providing a Christian education for girls. Originally in Jeppestown and then Belgravia, the school moved in 1934 to Waverley. From the very beginning there was a close connection between church and school. At the time of its incorporation as an association not for profit in 1924, the school was under the management of the Sisters of St Margaret (East Grinstead). From 1946 to 1963 the Sisters of the Community of St Mary the Virgin (the Wantage Sisters) took over the

running of the school. St Mary's continues, 125 years later, as an Anglican church school.

The out-working of the Christian faith

3. At St Mary's, education is not restricted to the classroom. The girls are led to fulfil their potential through their activities in the classroom, on the sport fields, in the music rooms, on the stage, in the debating chamber and in the many other activities the girls and their teachers engage in. All the co-curricular programmes of the school will contribute to the girls' spiritual development and the Christian gospel is shared implicitly and explicitly in all its activities.
4. As an Anglican church school, St Mary's is both an educational and a gospel community where the education offering will be based on the tenets of the Christian faith according to Anglican character and practice. The school is committed to living out as well as teaching the Christian faith.
5. All that is said and done in the school will seek to represent -
 - The God who reveals the truth about Himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, His action in history and through the prophets
 - The God who reveals Himself in Jesus His Son, living among us and dying and rising for us
 - The God who reveals Himself in His Spirit working in the living faith of the church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason
6. The spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of each girl will be based on the values and virtues of the School's Christian tradition: love of God and love of neighbour, the pursuit of truth and justice, the challenge of service and duty, the experience of trust and forgiveness.
7. Girls are exposed to powerful secular and material influences. As an Anglican church school, St Mary's will seek to provide a coherent, alternative world view which will enable each girl to make courageous and principled decisions about lifestyle and values, encouraging service to the community and unselfish behaviour. Each girl will be encouraged to discover her capacity to be a leader, and especially an ethical and moral leader in the world in which she lives.
8. Thus, at St Mary's, Christian education is not restricted to the chapel. All aspects of the school's life will contribute to the girls' spiritual development.
9. These are the principles, values and ethos which informed the foundation of the school and for which it continues to exist. They also inform the school's commitment to its community affairs programmes, its relationship with neighbouring schools and the broader community more generally.

St Mary's recognises the authority of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa

10. St Mary's recognises the authority of the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg in all matters relating to its Christian identity and ethos.
11. The Bishop is a member of the Board of Directors of the school. In addition, the Bishop is the "Visitor" to the school. The Bishop must be consulted by the Board if or when the necessity arises for the appointment of a head of the school and the

Bishop's ruling as to the character of the religious instruction to be given in the school and in all matters spiritual and pastoral is final. The heads are installed in their positions by the Bishop at the beginning of their tenure.

12. As the school is a diocesan institution, declared as such by the Bishop under the Rules of the Diocese of Johannesburg, the school is summoned to elect a lay representative to attend Diocesan Synods. The chaplain, holding the Bishop's licence, is also summoned to attend Diocesan Synods. The school is part of the wider Anglican community in the Johannesburg Diocese.

The role of the school chaplain

13. For many years the chaplain of St Mary's was provided by St Luke's Church in Orchards on a part-time basis. With the ordination of women in 1992 there have been assistant chaplains who are also members of staff.
14. In 2010, the school appointed its first full-time chaplain, an ordained priest of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.
15. The chaplain is employed by the school and is appointed by the head of the school in consultation with the Board and with the approval of the Bishop of Johannesburg, who licenses the chaplain to the school. The appointment of the chaplain may be terminated by the head only after consultation with the Bishop.
16. Within the overall structure of the school, and working in partnership with the head, the chaplain has special responsibility for:
 - the oversight of the spiritual identity and ethos of the school
 - the pastoral care of all members of the school community, the girls, and the staff
 - the liturgical and devotional life of the school
 - Christian nurture and formation within the school and
 - development, implementation, and supervision of teaching programmes on the Christian life and faith

The Board of Directors and heads

17. The Board of Directors of the school, led by the chairman, has the responsibility to ensure that the mission and purpose for which St Mary's School was established is implemented and developed. The preservation and development of the Christian character of the school in the Anglican tradition is a responsibility of the Board as custodians of the foundational principles, values and ethos of St Mary's.
18. The head of St Mary's School is the spiritual head of the school and, with the chaplain, is responsible for leading and upholding the ethos and Christian values of the school. The head and the head of the Junior School are formally installed by the Bishop of Johannesburg at a ceremony at the beginning of their tenure.
19. As leaders of the school, they will both be practising Christians. Before appointment, they will be expected to show how they would be able to contribute to the protection and promotion of the foundational principles, values and ethos of St Mary's.

The staff and pupils

20. Those who seek an education or a post at St Mary's should be able to discern and must accept and respect that the Christian faith is at the heart of the character and life of the school. Not everyone within the school will claim the Christian faith as their own with equal conviction, or at all. It is important for the school to ensure that other views and faiths are respected among the staff as well as the pupils. Those who appoint staff have the responsibility to ensure that the school's commitment to the Christian faith is clear within a lively and stimulating diversity.
21. Nevertheless, staff, pupils and their parents must be willing to be part of the St Mary's community, one informed and built on the school's foundational principles, values and ethos.
22. Accordingly -

- **Staff**

St Mary's seeks to employ teachers of integrity and of the highest calibre professionally. St Mary's may therefore employ those of other faiths or of no particular faith who, for whatever reason, seek a post at the school. Staff will be required, whatever their faith, to acknowledge and respect the Christian faith, to uphold the foundational principles, values and ethos of the school and, according to their conscience, to contribute professionally and personally to the spiritual life of the school.

- **Pupils**

St Mary's accepts girls of other denominations and faiths. It does so on the condition that all parents and girls entering the school seek an education in harmony with the foundational principles, values and ethos of St Mary's and of its whole community. They must accept that a child is admitted to the total school programme, which includes co-curricular programmes and activities of the school, and not some of them only.

As St Mary's is an Anglican church school, it is an essential part of that total programme that all girls are required to attend all the religious observances of the school and, in particular, attend chapel assemblies, Eucharists and Divinity lessons. They must respect the Angelus which is rung every day during the school day. While they must attend in a respectful and reverent manner, no girl will be compelled to participate actively in practices not appropriate to her own beliefs.

Care will be taken to ensure that no pressure will be brought to bear on them or to convert them or to influence them in any way to abandon their own faiths.

Provision will also be made for those girls who are fulltime boarders.

- **Parents**

The foundational principles, values and ethos of St Mary's and of its whole community, as described in this document, will be explained to parents wishing to enrol their daughters in the school so that their decision to enter their daughter into the school is taken with full knowledge and acceptance. By signing the Conditions of Admission, they associate themselves together with the St Mary's community, freely and despite the other choices which they could make, in the belief, common to the rest of the community, that the faith-based

nature of the education offered by the school, and its foundational principles, values and ethos, is what they wish for their daughters.

23. At all times the school will encourage staff and pupils to respect other religious beliefs and build a climate of tolerance and understanding of diversity.
24. The school will not allow or provide for the formal practice of other faiths at St Mary's. Permission will be given for girls to take time off to celebrate their especially important or special official religious festivals.

Documents and statements

25. The Christian faith is central to the life of the school. It is a fundamental and guiding principle and not an additional or incidental feature. It will be expressed in all aspects of the school, its character and mission statements, in the school prospectus, its aims and objectives, its policies and schemes of work.

Worship in the school

26. The chapel stands physically in the centre of the school. Worship will always be at the heart of St Mary's. There will be a daily time of worship and the Eucharist will be celebrated regularly. This provides a point where all the school is and does, can be offered to God. It provides an opportunity for the heads, staff and pupils to share what is of value to them and what is cause for joy or sorrow. It is a time for reflection and a time to give praise to God for his goodness.
27. Because this is a time and place where the school gathers from time to time as a body to express its foundational principles, values and ethos, attendance is compulsory for all girls.
28. The Angelus is rung every day.

The teaching of Divinity

29. Every girl in the Junior School is, at present, required to attend Divinity lessons on a weekly basis. The focus of these lessons will be to teach the Christian faith and morality. The lessons are based on the Bible as the Word of God. Lessons will be conducted in such a way that respect is shown to the diversity of belief and background of the pupils. Divinity lessons will be taken by the chaplain or other suitable members of staff under the chaplain's supervision.
30. In the Senior School there are no Divinity lessons. Life Orientation lessons will be grounded in the Christian faith when teaching on matters of morality, lifestyle, relationships, life choices, community services etc. Various religions will be studied. The chaplain will contribute to the content of these lessons.
31. In its teaching on the Christian faith and on matters of morality, life style, relationships, life choice, community services etc, care will be taken to educate girls about other faiths and to teach respect for the values and principles of those faiths.

The use of the school chapel

32. The school chapel is not merely a meeting place or venue. It is an Anglican church and the chaplain a licensed priest in the Diocese of Johannesburg.

33. Accordingly, the school chapel may be used by Old Girls, members of staff and pupils or parents for weddings and funerals but only after consultation with the head and the chaplain and with their permission. Ideally, both weddings and funerals should be conducted in the church where they are members and the use of the school chapel should be seen as an exceptional privilege which will be allowed only under certain circumstances.
34. The chapel may be used for weddings where there is good reason why the couple's home church is not convenient. These services must be conducted according to the Anglican marriage service and conducted either by the chaplain or, with the permission of the chaplain and the head, by another Anglican priest.
35. Anyone seeking to be married must undertake marriage preparation and counselling. All arrangements must be made with the chaplain in good time and services can take place during term time only. No second marriages, where a former spouse is still alive, may be arranged before a special licence has been issued by the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg.
36. The school chapel may be used for funeral or memorial services only after consultation with the head and the chaplain and with their permission. It is an appropriate venue for those with a close connection to the school only. The service will be according to the Anglican order and will be conducted either by the chaplain or, with the permission of the chaplain and the head, by another Anglican priest.

Baptism, Admission to Communion and Confirmation in the St Mary's school chapel

37. Girls may be Baptised and admitted to Communion in the Junior School at their request with their parents' permission. They must first undertake a period of instruction which will be provided by the school chaplain or a member of staff.
38. Girls in the Senior School may be confirmed at their request with their parents' permission in Forms III to V or when they turn 16, after a period of preparation led by the chaplain.
39. Where appropriate, the Baptism of babies of staff members or others closely connected to the school may take place after a period of instruction and in the context of a school Eucharist.

Conclusion

Throughout its long history, St Mary's School has retained its close ties with the Anglican Church. Its Christian ethos and values underpin all that is said and done. The chapel is central to the life of all who work or study there.

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SCHOOL AT JOHANNESBURG ON 4
FEBRUARY 2014

ND Carman

Chairman, Board of Directors

DM King

Headmistress

S Moreo

The Rt Revd Bishop, Diocese of
Johannesburg

G Lee

Chaplain