

VG News

Celebrating 129 years of excellence!

27 March 2026, Volume 2

Message From The Principal



Dear VG Community

What a remarkable and fast-paced first term it has been. As we reach its conclusion, I hope that all our learners have made the most of the many opportunities presented to them this year. From the tennis courts to the swimming pool, the Science classroom to the stage, VG is dedicated to fostering environments where every individual can find their voice and shine in their own unique way. Sadly, we end the term on a sombre note. Ms Oerson, a dedicated member of our VG community who served as a cleaner for more than 13 years, passed away unexpectedly. We hold her family and friends in our thoughts and extend our sincere and heartfelt condolences during this difficult time. She will be missed.

I also hope that our learners have paused to reflect on the privilege of being part of such a special school community – one supported by committed and caring staff – and have taken opportunities to show gratitude to those around them.

The year ahead will not slow down; in fact, it is set to become even more demanding. I encourage both learners and staff to use the April break wisely: to rest, recharge, and spend meaningful time with loved ones in preparation for a busy and productive Term 2.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to a very successful and fulfilling first term.

Sincerely

Mr Schmidt



SPORT



As the term drew to a close, that meant that another exciting hockey season was upon us. All hockey teams have been up and running and have played in various festivals and matches. A busy close to the term, resulted in a number of matches being played with great enthusiasm and enjoyment.

A young and inexperienced First Team got the season underway with a heated and tightly contested match against the Old Girls over Founders' Weekend. After being called out, the young VG side rose to the occasion and delivered a stellar performance, bringing home the Old Girls' Trophy and keeping it for another year. They then participated in the Opening Festival and produced some good phases of play across the 3 matches they played.

We still await the outcome of provincial selections, but we remain hopeful that a number of girls will be selected. The First Team depart for Graaff-Reinet on the 27 th March 2026 to participate in the Union High Sports Festival and we wish them all the best. Our u16 age group has seen an increase in numbers and have provided the school with tremendous depth. The u16s have participated in the Gill Sports Day and Pearson u16 Festival respectively, and although results haven't been on their side, they have produced some good performances across both festivals. Special mention must go to the mighty u16B side, who have started the year unbeaten.

Our u14 side started the year off tough. Losing all their fixtures at the Opening Festival but quickly turned things around, going unbeaten at the Alexander Road U14 Sports Festival. Under the guardianship of Ms Tandile Deyi, they grow strength to strength. The hockey season is well and truly upon us and the growth and performances displayed across the last month, make for an enticing 2026 season. With depth and a will to get better, the VG ladies will embark to make the season memorable and



HOCKEY REPORT



SPORT

NETBALL REPORT

The u18 netball team took part in the Kirkwood Festival. They played 5 games and faced strong opposition in each of their games. Although we didn't secure any wins, the girls showed determination, teamwork, and kept a positive attitude until the final whistle of their last game was blown.

The U14 Netball girls participated in the Alex Road Festival in P.E. They played against Despatch, Victoria Park and Framesby. The day was filled with brilliant netball and our VG girls' fighting spirit, respect, immaculate defence, perseverance and positive attitude translated in a win in our second game against Framesby.

Well done girls!



SPORT

NETBALL REPORT



In a previous newsletter the Fun Gala results were published. These are the results of the Championship Gala and the overall Inter - House Gala positions.

Championship Gala:

4th : Thursford
3rd : Graeme
2nd : Dorset
1st : Ruthville

Overall positions:

4th : Thursford
3rd : Graeme
2nd : Dorset
1st : Ruthville

Victrix Ludorum Results:

Swimmers must swim five of the eight events. Only their five best times are considered for Victrix placings.

U14:

Joint winners: Alibongwe Mthembu and Mila McConnachie

U16:

Runner Up: Kylie Daniels

Winner: Daniella McLean

Open:

Runner Up: Viola Stoloff

Winner: Joylyn Chikiwa

Congratulations to everyone who took part and for the work that the House Executive put in. Some Grade 12s were particularly sad when they worked out that they were about to swim their last race ever!



TOP TEN GRADE 8

1. Tunce Lathi
2. Jakavula Iviwe
3. Kanana Uzosule
4. Nongubo Mivuyo
5. Shogole Kearapela
6. Mhlobo Elam
7. Mthetho Nakweziphi
8. Mcophele Imanathi
9. Daweti Kungazo
10. Stamper Esethu



TOP TEN GRADE 9

1. Mclean Daniella
2. Mushid Darissa
3. Mullin Stella
4. Radovic Cassandra
5. Nnadozie Ifeoma
6. Christian Maya
7. Landu Iminathi
8. Mdingi Amila
9. Dyani Asakhanya
10. PLaatjies Leigh



TOP TEN GRADE 12

1. Wilhelmi Rachel
2. Nongubo Kwakhanya
3. Gqamane Okuhle
4. Nnadozie Amanda
5. Rwanqa Manyana - Thina
6. Yapi Yakhanani
7. Kesa Lusanele
8. Tshete Asiyolise
9. Mbolekwa Lilitha
10. Nogqala Lyonke



TOP TEN GRADE 11

1. Mbutye Liyabona
2. Chikiwa Joylyn
3. Dingani Okusha
4. Giyose Zazi
4. Nxakala Iphendulwe
6. Waka Lathitha
7. Mamani Aqhama
7. Maxhaua Mbali
7. Zwane Immanuella
10. Stoloff Viola



TOP TEN GRADE 10

1. Kadye Sally
2. Moller Sarah
3. Bokbaard Caitlin
4. Veliti Luchulumanco
5. Ntlabathi Mivuyo
6. Ludwane Iminathi
7. Ndamane Endinako
8. Jezi Luvelo
9. Santi Lithalethu
10. Marthinus Beyanté
10. Pikoli Iphendule



Chess duo to compete at national stage

By Benevolence Mazhinji

In a remarkable display of tactical prowess, Yamkela Qhankqashe and Sarah Moller from Victoria Girls' High School have qualified for the prestigious South African Junior Closed Chess Championships (SAJCCC). The two players will compete in this national event from 29 March to 3 April in Rustenburg, North West.

The SAJCCC is the pinnacle of youth chess in South Africa, featuring a gruelling 90+30-time control. Moller's coach, Vianco Freeman, said that this means, "Each player begins the game with 90 minutes on their clock, and after every move made, 30 seconds is added to their remaining time." For Moller and Qhankqashe, this tournament means they have earned a spot among the top tier of South African juniors, placing them in direct contention for a position on the national team.

Qhankqashe will be competing in the under-20 age category. Unlike many competitive players who follow a rigid coaching schedule, she carved out her own path to the national stage through self-determination. "I started learning chess in grade six," she says, noting that it was a requirement at her school to participate in every sport. Though she took a break from the board until grade 10, her return to the game has been nothing short of impressive.

She qualified for the Mzansi Provincial Tournament, which is a recognised event where players compete for a spot in the national championships. Achieving a top 10 finish in this specific tournament is one of the primary ways a player earns an invitation to the SAJCC. She said the opportunity came as a surprise. "It's a big opportunity," said Qhankqashe, "I didn't think I'd come this far, so I really appreciate it." Her training is largely independent and modern. She sharpens her tactical awareness by practising with puzzles on her phone and studying opening strategies on YouTube. Even within her school residence, she seeks out competition by playing against others in her hostel.

Moller enters the championships as the second-highest-rated under-16 female chess player in South Africa and the number-one player in her region. She views the game through a lens of extreme discipline and describes the preparation for nationals as a "long, time-consuming process". She said, "It's a brutal process where you spend hours with game theory, openings, middle games, and end games. You try to perfect everything in your play, so you don't have any errors when you actually play".

Working with her coach for up to three hours at a time, Moller utilises high-level computer analysis to



Chess champions Sarah Moller (left) and Yamkela Qhankqashe.
Photo: Benevolence Mazhinji

sharpen her edge. She uses these tools to run through her previous games, noting that the machine helps her "capitalise on mistakes better". I know what to do, when to do it, and how to do it," she says.

Despite her high ranking and technical expertise, Moller is honest about the mental strain of elite competition. She admits that "even if it's the smallest game, I feel nervous". To combat this, she relies on a professional routine taught by her coach, closing her eyes, taking a breath, and taking a sip of water. She approaches the board with a mindset of total equality. "You're starting with the same pieces and the same board," says Moller, "your opponents don't have any advantage over you".

Both players share a deep admiration for the mentors who have guided them. For Moller, her inspiration starts close to home with her own coach. "I really admire my chess coach," she says, noting that she looks up to the immense effort he puts into his own journey after returning from a break. Qhankqashe also attributes much of her growth to the guidance of a former mentor. She speaks highly of her previous coach, Leroy Maisiri, expressing a strong desire to continue practising under his tutelage. While she admires global stars such as Magnus Carlsen, it is the personal encouragement from local coaching that has fuelled her recent comeback to the sport.

With the countdown to the championships in Rustenburg underway, both Moller and Qhankqashe are immersed in the final stages of preparation, including fundraising for travel costs. To meet these needs, the girls have even organised a raffle and other fundraising efforts to help them get to the board. As they prepare to face South Africa's best, they carry the pride of their community and the hope that their hard work will lead to the national colours they have spent so many hours practising to earn.

GM

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

From 19-22 February, four VG girls took part in a combined Silver and Gold Hike that took place around Grahamstown and at Assegaaai Trails. Our brave Silver Hikers; Emily Stoltz, Owethu Mini and Zerah Rizvi, completed 48km over three days and two nights.

Our motivated Gold Hiker, Nicole Swart, covered a total of 80km over four days and three nights! We camped out, cooked on fire, and walked for hours through the beautiful wilderness which was finally getting its first drizzle in weeks!

Congratulations to these girls for signing themselves up for an experience that they knew would challenge them physically and mentally. They are to be commended on how organised and motivated they were, as well as how well they supported one another along the way.

A big thank-you to Assegaaai Trails for hosting us and thank you to Mr Ngqingili and Ms Bengis-Wright for accompanying the girls.



DEBATING

On the 7th of March the junior debaters travelled to East London to compete in the Merrifield Junior Debaters Festival. Congratulations to Amila Mdingi, Abigail Green, Lunathi Mkosana and Liyanda Kutta who each received a best speaker award in one of their debates.

On the 14th and 15th of March the seniors debaters took part in the senior Rhini Debating League tournament. The debates took up all of Saturday as well as Sunday morning. All the girls must be congratulated on all the hard work they put in and the growth they showed during the tournament. The 1st team broke in 4th place which means they will be debating next term in the semi-finals and finals for a slot at the provincial competition.



ECO CLUB

A week ago, the VG Eco-Club won the WESSA Environmental Award 2026 for community activities rendered in Makhanda.

We are proud of our adventurous group of girls who have participated so enthusiastically in diverse weekly Environmental Service Activities that serve the wider Makhanda Community. These girls have repeatedly stepped out of their comfort zones to get their hands dirty in new environments.

Eco-Club activities over the past year have included: repeatedly clearing invasive wattle on Mountain Drive; helping with nursery and garden work at the Old Powerstation; inviting a guest speaker to educate us on snakes; doing a presentation on the concept of Eco-Bricks in assembly and inviting the school to partake in an Eco-Brick making competition; clearing invasive Lantana Stones Hill; visiting the Grahamstown SPCA; hiring a skip and initiating a river clean-up along Evans Street after a very interesting talk with one of the River Rescue stalwarts, Helen Hollerman; repeatedly cleaning up rubbish along the river in the Botanical Gardens and around Grey Dam; and finally teaming up with Nombulelo High School to do some work on their “remembrance garden”.

From the eco-club: We are so grateful to the many people doing positive things for our local surroundings. Thank you for inspiring us and for sharing your passion and knowledge with us, for giving us suggestions of where help is needed and for making spaces available for us to serve in.



ECO CLUB



GRADE 9 OUTING

The Grade 9s enjoyed a fun and well-deserved outing to Assegai Trails after their test week. With beautiful weather setting the scene, learners spent the day hiking, spotting wildlife, including buck, giraffe, and a tortoise they fondly nicknamed "Torty"/"Tiddles". and taking part in activities like table tennis and volleyball.

It was a wonderful opportunity for them to bond, make new friends, and unwind together, topped off with some delicious hotdogs. A fantastic way to end a very busy term!



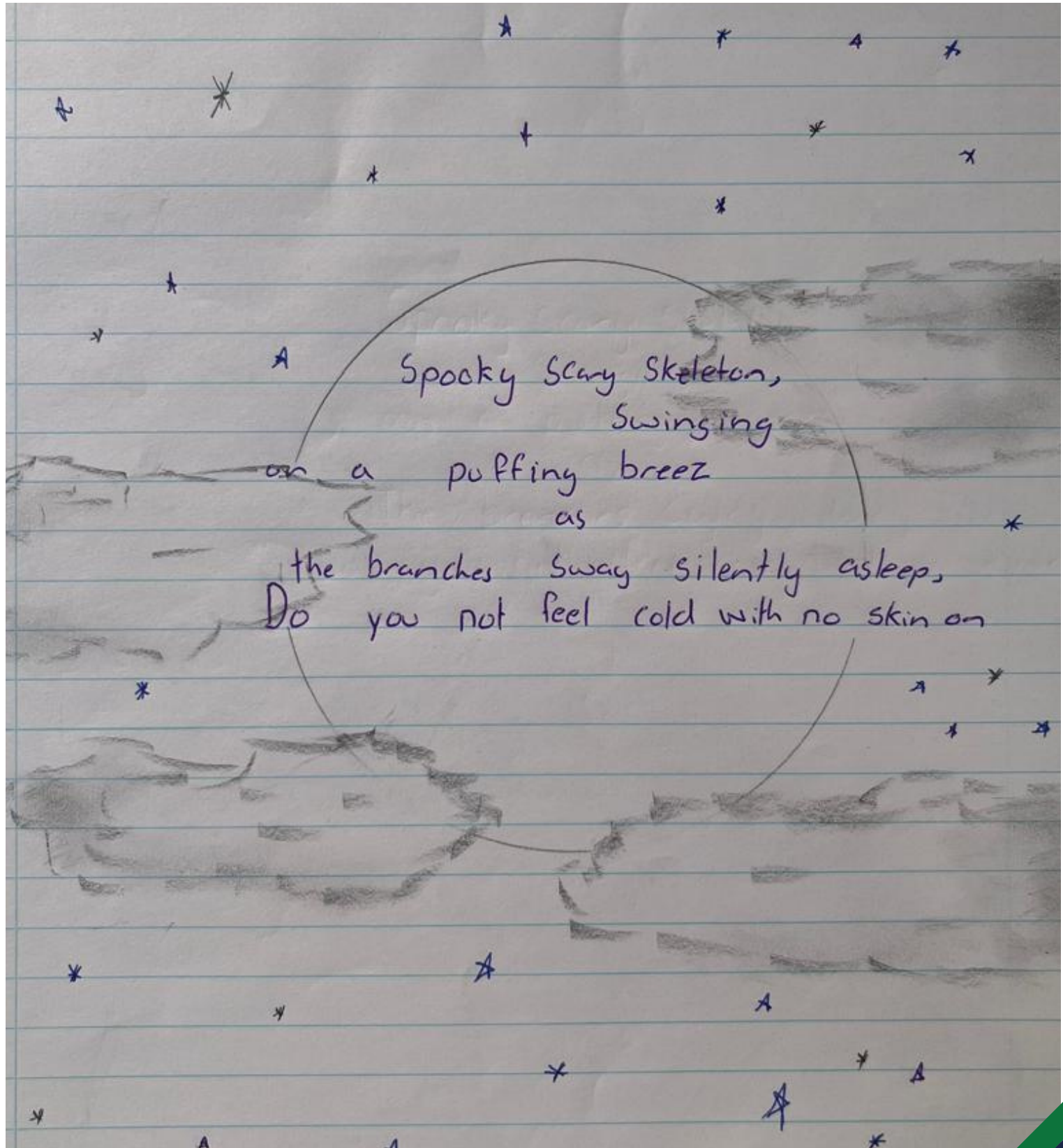
GRADE 12 OUTING

The leadership team had a leadership course that aimed to unite the team and achieve team building skills. They engaged in various activities such as playing childhood games and other fun activities. This was an opportunity of creating bonds and coming together as the leadership team of VGHS



PI DAY CELEBRATION

Pi Day is celebrated around the world on the 12th March. Pi, the Greek letter, is the symbol used to represent the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter – an important mathematical constant. Pi has been calculated to over 314 trillion digits. As an irrational number it continues infinitely without repetition or pattern. To fifteen decimal places it is 3,141592653589793. To celebrate pi day this year we invited learners to write a poem using the digits of pi for the number of words in each line of their poem. Here we share the winning submission.



Winning poem in the Pi Day competition



Join our family in

2027

Victoria Girls' High School

A Centre of Excellence for Young Women of Africa

APPLICATIONS OPEN:

23 MARCH 2026

Close: 27 July 2026 at 15:00

With fully-equipped, state of the art classrooms and sports facilities, a vibrant and dynamic Music School, and with the Johan Carinus Art Centre on our doorstep, we are your school of choice!

Boarding houses run with the help of our dedicated VG hostel mothers and staff.

NO ONLINE APPLICATIONS. Hand in at the office or courier only.

communications@vghs.co.za

www.vghs.co.za ~ 046 636 1550

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Textbooks

Our textbooks are vital to assist us in the learning process. Learners are to ensure their books are covered in plastic. We also have plastic available at the Book Room. Learners may ask to come and recover/cover their textbooks. At the end of every academic year, all school property should be returned. Items not returned need to be paid for. Textbook replacement cost is R250 per textbook. Please ensure that all textbooks are taken care of. Any problems or queries regarding textbooks should be directed to Ms Retief.

SGB

Victoria Girls' High School
School Governing Body
Election date: March 2025
Feb 2026 (By-Election)

Schmidt Warren Principal

Coetzee Tessa Parent

Frans Natasha Parent

Jadi Nokulunga Parent (Treasurer)

Ludwane Abongile Parent

McLean Gregory Parent

Nnadozie Remi Parent

Wilhelmi Brendan Parent (Chair)

Retief Anna Educator (Secretary)

Van Staden Katherine Educator

Magwala Asanda Non-Edu Staff

Mbolekwa Lilitha Learner (Captain)

Kesa Lusanele Learner (Deputy)

Strydom Maristie Ex-officio



MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL CAPTAIN



Dear VG Community

The second half of the term has truly been a vibrant and memorable one, filled with exciting activities, meaningful moments, and opportunities for growth. Guided by our theme, "Do It Yourself," learners were encouraged to take initiative, stay motivated, and make the most of every experience.

One of the highlights of the term was the much anticipated Concert in the Park. It was a joyful event where music, laughter, and community spirit came together beautifully. Learners showcased their talents and creativity, making it a day to remember for everyone who attended.

Another special occasion was Founders Weekend, where we welcomed back our old girls. It was heartwarming to see past learners return to walk down memory lane, reconnect with friends, and share their journeys. Their stories inspired current learners to continue striving for excellence and to value the traditions of the school.

The term was also packed with various sports events, where learners demonstrated teamwork, determination, and school pride. Whether on the field or on the sidelines, the spirit and enthusiasm were undeniable. Alongside this, a range of cultural events gave learners the chance to express themselves through art, music, and performance, highlighting the diverse talents within our school.

Of course, the term also brought the challenge of test week, where learners had the opportunity to put their knowledge to the test. It was a time that required focus, discipline, and preparation, qualities that align perfectly with our theme of taking responsibility for one's own success.

As we reach the end of this busy and fulfilling term, it is important to remember the value of rest. Taking the much needed break allows us to recharge, reflect, and return stronger and more motivated for the next term. Rest is not just a pause, it is preparation for what lies ahead.

Let us carry forward the lessons we have learned, continue to embrace the "Do It Yourself" mindset, and come back rejuvenated, ready to achieve even greater things. May we move forward with love and kindness.

With love, Lilitha



MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY CAPTAIN



Dear VG Community

Well done you made it through the first term of the year and now only 3 more to go!!! This term has been packed with events from Founders' to concerts to matches, it's definitely been a rollercoaster and in this past week we had tests as-well to add to the list. I truly hope your results are able to teach you something that you can use in the next term and that you had fun despite the chaos. The excitement that this term carries is definitely one of my favourite parts of the first term. The upcoming term is definitely going to be a stressful one with exams on their way so please take care of yourselves and each other and don't forget to smile and enjoy everything you can to the fullest.

Best of luck and a restful holiday to all of you. Happy Easter!!

Love Lusa

NEWS FROM OUR BOARDING HOUSES

Eleanor Brown and Renfrew House

The girls enjoyed a simple game of hide-and-seek held at the Renfrew House Hostel. This activity was intended to give the girls a break from studying and relieve the pressure of test week preparations. It was also meant for them to explore the Renfrew House hostel, since many had never been there. And many of the girls did not know the setup of the house, which made seeking more difficult and hiding more fun!

The painting and debate discussions weekend activity was both engaging and enjoyable. The painting session created a relaxed and creative atmosphere, while the debate discussions encouraged critical thinking and active participation. It was great to see girls confidently sharing different perspectives in a respectful space. Our last weekend activity aimed to create a sense of relaxation as it was shortly after the end of test week. So, the entertainment committee came up with movie night where all the girls lay and watch a movie they picked. Thus, the entertainment committee suggested that the theme should be "comfy" where they all bring in their blankets and teddy bears to watch the movie comfortably.

Well done to all the girls for all your hard work this term! We hope you will have a wonderfully restful holidays with your loved ones and friends.



Barnard House

The BH girls enjoyed being spoilt with cupcakes and apple munchies for test week. The girls just opted to watch movies on their laptops for relaxation. Some girls played netball as a form of relaxation. The girls also had a swim in the pool too.

The grade 10s had their outing to Port Elizabeth on Saturday 21st March which they thoroughly enjoyed. They did two activities in Port Elizabeth: Ten Pin Bowling and Go Carting.

We as the staff would like to wish everyone a joyous time with their families and also to enjoy the Easter Weekend with their families. Stay safe and be vigilant at all times.

To those girls travelling with their families: may you have a safe journey too.



NEWS FROM OUR BOARDING HOUSES



NEWS FROM OUR BOARDING HOUSES



REST IN PEACE



It is with deep sadness that we share the untimely passing of our friend and a colleague, Ms Devorn Oerson, following a short illness. Devorn was a cherished member of our VG family and we are deeply devastated by this loss.

Devorn was admired for her warmth, kindness and the positivity she brought to everyone around her. She had a bubbly personality that lit up a room and was known as a charming, friendly and polite person. Her thoughtfulness and genuine care for others touched all who had the privilege of knowing her.

During her time at VG, Devorn embraced school life with enthusiasm and integrity. She was respected for her sincerity, her consideration and her steady, reliable character. She approached both her duties and relationships with care and maturity. Her warmth and kindness left a lasting mark on our staff and learners alike.

Her passing leaves a profound emptiness in our school community. Devorn's life, though far too short, brought joy, compassion and light to all who knew her and her memory will live on in our hearts.