



PARKTOWN BOYS'
HIGH SCHOOL



Dear Parktown Old Boys

School Update 20 April 2020

I hope this communication finds you well in these stressful and trying times. It has been just over a month since we celebrated Old Boy's Day and a lot has happened since then. As integral members of the school community I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to speed as to what is happening in and around the school.

Those of you who managed to attend Old Boy's Day would have seen that we are in the process of dedicating the steps leading from the hall down to the top field, in honour of **Enock Mpianzi** who tragically passed away at the start of the year. This initiative is on the back of the fundraising initiated by the Alumni Steering Committee and which was well supported by our alumni.

As part of honouring Enock's legacy we will be naming the main stairway, which passes through the two Lion Statues at the Memorial Hall down to the fields, in his name. This will inspire every boy that walks through the school in the future, to make use of the opportunities they have to reach for their dreams and to be a positive influence for those around them by standing up for what is right and ensuring that every voice is always heard.

Kevin Stippel

The unveiling of the Enock Mpianzi Memorial Stairway will happen at a suitable time and with the consent and presence of his family.

It is also with sadness and a heavy heart that I need to inform you that our Estate Manager, **Carlos Rodrigues**, passed away on Sunday morning.

Carlos was known as a gentleman around school and was always willing to assist even as his health deteriorated over the years. He was well-liked and respected at the school, and this loss hurts us all. Carlos became a member of the Parktown family in 2015 and will be sorely missed by all of us. Our thoughts and prayers are with Norma, his wife, and his family during this most difficult time.

Kevin Stippel

At the time of composing this letter, we heard the tragic news that former Springbok and 1966 Old Boy, **Paul Bayvel**, had succumbed to stage 4 lung cancer. Undoubtedly those old boys lucky enough to have played with Paul will fondly remember his passes that set them on the way to scoring numerous tries and having an unbeaten season in 1966. Paul went on to play for Transvaal and is one of the best scrumhalves to have played for the Province. Paul also played 10 Tests for South Africa between 1974 and 1976. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Bayvel family, as we remember a true Parktonian and South African Legend.



Paul Bayvel in action during the 1976 All Blacks. The Springboks won the series 3-1 with Paul playing in all four games.

$$\boxed{\text{Lion}}^3 + \boxed{\text{Boys}} \times 2 + \boxed{\text{School}} + \boxed{\text{Sports}} + \boxed{\text{Music}} + \boxed{\text{Arts}}^2 + \boxed{\text{Academics}} + \boxed{\text{Community}} + \boxed{\text{Environment}} + \boxed{\text{Technology}}^2 + \boxed{\text{Sports}} = \boxed{\text{The Parktown DNA}}$$



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Due to the nationwide lockdown, instituted by the President from the 26th of March, the School has had to move from a classroom-based environment to an online platform in a short space of time and without the ability to meet and plan such a transition.

From the start, we committed to a dual process that would ensure that all missed teaching time would be caught up. This remains the case and is a position supported nationally by the Department of Basic Education. Possible scenarios included the suspension of planned June and October holidays, trimming of the curriculum and extended school hours. All these are still being discussed, but our mandate is that no boy will be disadvantaged due to the current situation.

Our academic programme has been split into three phases.

- **Phase one**, of our programme focused on revision work to keep boys occupied after the ‘school holiday’ finished on the 31st of March.
- **Phase two**, began on the 14th of April and will run until the end of April (and beyond if necessary). This is a full online programme using Google Classroom and Zoom as the main platforms. Subject teachers load recorded lessons and exercises on a weekly basis that follows a normal school timetable. We have been through a massive upskilling process and continue to refine the programme as we deal with teething implementation issues.
- **Phase three**, would be implemented should there be a further extension to the lockdown (beyond April) and would expand to include live streaming of classes across all subjects.

We have also been able to identify the small percentage of boys with no access in terms of going online. We are working with this group to ensure that we can reach as many boys as possible. All subjects now operate Whatsapp groups to help with spreading information and in assisting with queries and questions from boys.

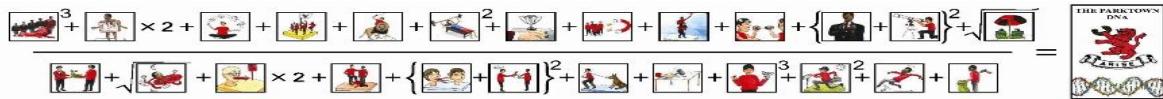
We have weekly staff meetings online with almost 70 participants and remain in constant communication with our parents, SGB, Steerco and the Foundation. This all means that the school continues to function as close to normal as possible, during these ongoing times of uncertainty.

We are confident in our systematic approach in covering the work required. This is part of the bigger strategy developed by the Academic Committee for the 2020 academic year.

As part of our outreach programme we are also assisting under privileged high school students in Hilbrow who are linked to the non-profit organisation, Evolution – Boxing and Life Gym, to provide access to our material and to assist with catching up work once the restrictions are lifted. The school and boarding house also made a donation of food and bedding to the Every Nation Church in Bryanston which is housing homeless people in our area.

I was heartened and inspired this week by the message from O'Neill Chihwayi, our Headboy, where the importance of community and looking out for one another was a key point made. You can view his video at <https://www.facebook.com/174354369300274/posts/2847431531992531/>.

In terms of recovering parts of the winter sports programme it is too early to tell what the overall impact will be but I can tell you that the consensus amongst the headmasters of our traditional rivals is that all will be done to recover what we can in the remainder of the year once restrictions are lifted.





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There is also a new sports portal that has been opened on our website, www.parktownboys.com, detailing training programs for the various sports.

Some of our boys have been posting videos of them training while in lockdown and are definitely worth watching to see the resolve of our young men (there are many more to see if you visit the school Facebook page):

Melusi Sibiya (Open Rugby) <https://www.facebook.com/174354369300274/posts/2827248354010849/>
Yorke Chetty (Open Hockey) <https://www.facebook.com/174354369300274/posts/2827492923986392/>
Nicholas Townsend (U14 Hockey) <https://www.facebook.com/174354369300274/posts/2837387122996972/>

There has also been a weekly video message from myself as the Acting Headmaster that has gone out to the School Community, the links below are for your interest:

19 April: <https://youtu.be/MpcTb-bxVYw>
12 April: <https://youtu.be/rO4LyFkU-UE>
6 April: <https://youtu.be/LEaxQvh-C4w>
30 March: <https://youtu.be/0is3n2CpKOY>

As an Old Boy community, I can appreciate that the announcement of the extension of the lockdown from the President last week will have a different impact on each of us and that the financial and social sacrifices felt are different, depending on your personal situation. We are all intrinsically linked within the Parktown community and I'm fully aware of the mental toll this will have on all of us. This is the time to support each other as a community in whichever way we can.

Yours faithfully



**Mr Kevin Stippel
Acting Headmaster**

This letter is being released in conjunction with SteerCo

Jay Steve

**Mr Mark Botha
Chairman of SteerCo**


Mr. Marc Desfontaines

Mr Marc Desfontaines

[Signature]

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