

Dear Parents and Guardians

For the past two years, the College Executive has approved the flying of the Pride flag for a short period of time during Pride Month. This year we will, once again, fly the flag for three days as a sign to recognize and support members of staff, parents, ODs and boys who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community. We see it as a symbol of inclusion that shows our desire to live out our Vision, more specifically to

- respect, nurture and value every individual in our community;
- inspire our boys to open their minds and hearts to strive for their dreams, and to support others in striving for theirs.

Our Diversity and Transformation Policy speaks specifically to issues of inclusion and states:

Bishops will create an environment that allows all boys, staff and members of the community to feel they belong, irrespective of race, ethnicity, language, gender, religious or political affiliation, social or economic status, physical or intellectual ability, age, nationality, sexual orientation or indeed any other factor that makes us different from each other.

We commit to a culture of inclusivity and community that promotes mutual and appropriate respect between and amongst all people in our community, particularly those who may seem different to us.

It is interesting to note that our fellow Anglican all-boys schools, St Andrew's and St John's will also be flying the Pride flag for a number of days this month.

We are aware that there are some members of our community who do not support the flying of the flag and see this as causing dissension amongst our community. We would prefer to think of it as a small but significant sign to members of an historically oppressed and marginalized community that we see them as fellow human beings on life's journey. We see them as fellow members of the Bishops' community.

We have erected a third flagpole on campus. The first will fly the South African flag. The second will fly the Bishops' flag and the third will fly flags and symbols associated with a cause or a moment that should cause us to pause and think. We also intend to use this third flagpole as a place we can fly the flag of visiting teams during our derby matches.

I close with a quote shared by St Andrew's Headmaster Tom Hamilton in his letter to the Andean community on this issue. The quote is from the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Visitor to Bishops:

"We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white, red, yellow, rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God's family."

Let us use this brief moment as one not to divide but to unite in our various differences through our common bond that is Bishops.

Yours sincerely

A D REELER

Principal