



Founded 1922

HERSCHEL GIRLS SCHOOL

HERSCHEL GIRLS SCHOOL SPIRITUALITY POLICY

Introduction

The English Church Schools Association acquired the Herschel property on 14 July 1921 with a loan from JW Jagger. Herschel Girls School was founded as an Anglican School in the High Church tradition and, from the outset, successive Archbishops of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa took active roles in the school's governance. The Archbishop of Cape Town is the Visitor to Herschel Girls School and nominates a representative on the Herschel Council.

For much of the century of Herschel's existence, the Rector of St Saviour's Parish, Claremont, served also as Chaplain of Herschel, conducting services not only in St Saviour's Parish Church, but also in the Crypt Chapel and the current Chapel. In 1994 Herschel appointed its first fulltime Chaplain.

In 1945 the Headmistress, Miss Barbara Elcome, pressed home the idea of having a Chapel on the School property. The first Eucharist was held on Herschel premises on 30th of May 1946 and, on the 13th of August 1946, Archbishop John Darbyshire consecrated and dedicated the Crypt Chapel. The school soon outgrew the Crypt Chapel and, under the leadership of Mrs Pamela Duff, the Duncan Baxter Library became the Chapel and was consecrated by Bishop Merwyn Castle on the 1st of December 1994.

Since the school opened its doors in 1922 preparation of candidates for confirmation in the Anglican tradition has been a part of Herschel school life, with successive Chaplains also baptising, marrying and conducting funerals and memorial services of Old Herschelians, current pupils, staff, and their families.

Based on our historical Christian roots and Anglican ethos, the spiritual foundation on which Herschel Girls School is established asserts that we are a school where,

- a. we affirm God's love and grace for all, irrespective of race, sexuality, beliefs, gender identity or economic status;
- b. we provide instruction and formation in the Christian faith through well run religious education programs, weekly worship services, and community service programs;

- c. we do not entertain disrespect, prejudice and discrimination against other faiths, and therefore encourage interfaith dialogues;
- d. we assist pupils to realise their full potential through a well-rounded education, replete with faith-based values;
- e. we recognise the Chapel and Christian worship as central to the life of the school;
- f. we strive to be obedient to Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord.

Spiritual aims of Herschel Girls School

In light of our Christian heritage and Anglican ethos, Herschel Girls School aims to:

- a. create meaningful opportunities for our school community to appreciate and develop their own faith, and to pursue a meaningful relationship with God;
- b. promote study, reflection and appreciation of the Bible, the message of the Gospel and Christian doctrine, particularly as expressed through the Anglican Church of Southern Africa;
- c. apply the Christian faith in a relevant manner in today's world;
- d. inspire lives of Christian witness, reflecting gratitude, healthy relationships, servant leadership and active citizenship in our School, and in our broader South African society;
- e. develop a spirituality that is prayerful, expressed in regular worship, guides choices and behaviour, and involves enquiry and engagement;
- f. ensure that the life of the School and its activities reflect and respect our Christian heritage and Anglican ethos.

The Chapel

The Chapel is the spiritual heart of the School and is to be treated with respect and appreciation by all who enter its doors. The Chapel is available for all, irrespective of faith or beliefs.

Staff and Pupils

The Head of the School is licensed by the Archbishop of Cape Town and is required to support the ethos and teachings of the Anglican Church. The Head will seek to live as a Christian role model, advance the spiritual aims of the School, and participate regularly in Church and Chapel worship.

All staff are required to respect the Christian heritage and Anglican ethos of the School. It is expected that staff will attend Church and Chapel services, together with the pupils.

Pupils are required to respect the Christian heritage and Anglican ethos of the School. All pupils are required to attend Church and Chapel services and to participate in Divinity classes.

The Chaplain and assistant Chaplain

The Chaplain is required to be an ordained Anglican Priest and their appointment needs the endorsement of the Archbishop of Cape Town. The Chaplain is required to be licensed by the Bishop of Table Bay to serve as Chaplain to Herschel Girls School and in the Diocese of Cape Town.

The Assistant Chaplain may be lay, ordained or an intern, and also requires the Archbishop of Cape Town's endorsement and the Bishop of Table Bay's licence.

Recognition of other faiths

In acknowledgement and appreciation of our social and cultural diversity as a South African educational institution, we welcome and respect staff and pupils of other faiths. Alongside our expectation that staff and pupils participate in the Christian life of the School, we recognise that staff

and pupils of other faiths should have appropriate opportunity for religious cultural expression on campus, and opportunity to attend specific religious events or festivals held off campus.

Conclusion

The overall purpose of our Christian spirituality at Herschel Girls School is to tell the good news of God's love for humanity and our world. The following verses of Holy Scripture reflect how we understand this love:

... the Lord has told you what goodness is. This is what he wants from you. Be fair to other people. Love kindness and loyalty, and humbly obey your God. (Micah 6:8; ERV)

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind". This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself". (Matthew 22: 37-39; NIV)

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them (1 John 4:16; NIV)

We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19; NIV)