



Newsletter - 19 Jan 2024

Matric Results 2023

What a way to end an incredible relationship and journey with the WCED! We are so proud of our pupils' performance in the 2023 WCED NSC examinations and so excited for the opportunities that lie ahead for them.

These fine results reflect the phenomenal work ethic at Herschel, the excellent relationship between pupils and teachers and the rich tradition of hard work, holistic participation in school life, impressive time-management skills, and focused engagement.

The Matrics of 2023 have done themselves, their families and Herschel proud!

Our thanks to all Herschel teachers for supporting academic success through their rigorous engagement with the curriculum, passion for their respective subjects, commitment to their pupils and varied approaches to learning. I am so grateful to this team, ably led by Kerri-Lyn East, for their professional and caring input and support in the midst of ongoing change and adaptation. Equally important in supporting this achievement is the layered pastoral support that our pupils receive. The focus on pupil wellbeing and an understanding of how hard it is as times to manage the busyness of school life, provides a realistic context within which to manage and prioritise.

Now, more than ever, as teachers, we have a passion and a purpose and I want to acknowledge and thank this team of teachers for working hard to ensure that we 'finished strong'; and finish strong we have!

Our grateful thanks to all staff cohorts at Herschel, beyond the Academic Staff. Thank you to the Grounds and Maintenance, Administrative, Catering, Cleaning and Security Staff, who oversee and uphold their

respective areas of operation to enable our core business – teaching and learning – to unfold in beautiful, well-kept spaces and in peace and safety. It takes a dedicated team to maintain our campus!

Parents and guardians, thank you for putting your faith in us, and for entrusting us with the education of your daughters. We are privileged to have had the opportunity to play a part in the education of your daughters and they are fortunate to have received your ongoing support, love, care and encouragement.

As a community we can indeed be proud of the Class of 2023! It is our hope that these young women will continue to advocate, develop, learn and grow as they determine the next chapters in their lives. We hope that they will hold the school tagline close to their hearts and that they will continue to *'learn to make a difference'* wherever they find themselves.

I would like to cite Confidence Dikgole (CEO of the IEB), who makes a very important point regarding the 'cost' of exam pressure: *"What, however, is not often talked about is the tremendous pressure brought to bear on learners by society. Schools' experience with young people points to the escalating mental health issues, which is perhaps one of the greatest challenges our youngsters face and does impact their ability to perform at their peak in a high stakes' examination..."*.

"Mental wellbeing is directly linked to the stress society is placing on our young people to perform, to get top results and secure spots in top tertiary institutions. The competition is huge, and this is a global issue, not just unique to the South African context. Research also points to a correlation between a learner's independence and their overall wellbeing," says Dikgole.

Further on in the press release statement shared with us by the IEB, she goes on to say, *"schools are faced with a challenge to grow and nurture confident, courageous, and independent young people – this is directly linked to wellbeing and ultimately their ability to achieve and succeed. This is a journey together with parents, who in the current times have become either not involved or far too protective of their children, sadly to the detriment of their own wellbeing and success. **Most of all, we need learners to know that the world of education does not end after Matric, on the contrary, it is the start of a myriad of doors and opportunities.**"*

In my opinion, Confidence Dikgole 'nails it' with regard to the pressure that young people are under to perform and achieve and we need to be intentional in mitigating this through being supportive, role-modelling healthy approaches to time-management and involvement levels, and normalising asking for help. If we can do this, we will be offering the pupils we teach the reassurance that they are not in this alone and that there is support.

And finally, to our Matrics of 2023, as you step out into your next space, remember the profound wisdom in the words of Matthew Haig (*The Comfort Book*):

"Aim to be you!

If you aim to be something you are not, you will always fail. Aim to be you. Aim to look and act and think like you. Embrace that you-ness. Endorse it. Cherish it. Love it."

If you are true to your North, you will develop and grow towards the fullness of who you can be. I have used the lines from *The Velveteen Rabbit* because Williams's words reinforce this notion:

"Once you are Real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always."

Remember this. It is your agency and your truth. It will stand you in good stead.

Below is the analysis of our matric results, distilled from the individual results supplied to us by the WCED this morning. On a personal note, I would like to thank Kerri-Lyn East (Deputy Academics) and Tracy Rousseau (Deputy Pastoral), both of whom worked hard to provide this analysis of the results for publication today.

We applaud each and every one of our Matrics for their efforts, individually and collectively and we wish them the happiness and success that they so richly deserve.

The 2023 results are awe-inspiring and excellent.

Highlights include:

- Of the Class of 2023, which wrote the NSC examinations, 100% passed and they achieved a 100% Bachelor Degree pass.
- The 95 candidates achieved 388 subject distinctions (including Further Studies Mathematics (Standard) and Further Studies English). This equates to an average of 4,1 subject distinctions per candidate.
- 15 pupils attained an aggregate over 90%. (16%) *
- 48 pupils attained an A aggregate (over 80%). (51%) *
- In total, 81 pupils attained an A or B aggregate (over 70%). (85%) *
- 34 pupils achieved 6 or more subject distinctions and 51 pupils achieved 4 or more subject distinctions.
- 10 subjects achieved a subject average of over 80%. These are English, Mathematical Literacy, Accounting, Business Studies, Dramatic Arts, French, Geography, History, Music and Visual Arts. Further Studies Mathematics Standard had an average of 84%.
- We must particularly congratulate the Dramatic Arts and Visual Arts departments for achieving a full house of distinctions; French department celebrating 94% distinctions and the Mathematical Literacy, Accounting, History and Geography departments are celebrating achieving 70% or more distinctions.

(* These averages are calculated according to the WCED calculations)

OUTSTANDING PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS:

9 subject distinctions (1 pupil) Esther Couves

8 subject distinctions (13 pupils): Kayleigh Campbell, Megan Harrison, Nina Kabalin, Kelsie Lawrenson, Emma Lewis, Jessica Miller, Sienna O'Shea, Leya Patel, Yumnaa Rawoot, Ella Sales, Keryn Van der Westhuizen, Jemma Van Stolk, Julia Wellington.

7 subject distinctions (16 pupils): Camilla Campbell, Peta Duckitt, Lucy Edelstein, Samantha Gutsche, Lily Hardie, Jessica Jensen, Montana Manas, Salma Moosa, Abbey Morrow, Claire Murphy, Jada Ozonuwe, Jordi Paine, Ella Parker-Forsyth, Jodie Sharp, Lilitha Siwisa, Suzannah Whall.

6 subject distinctions (4 pupils): Emily Floquet, Jemima Houwing, Romy Myers, Tyra Penney

5 subject distinctions (5 pupils): Gabby Botton, Mia-Dominique De Graaf, Rachel Howie, Sophia Searll, Amanda Tadokera

4 subject distinctions (12 pupils): Caroline Baynham, Chloe Bisschop, Holly Brickles, Kerry Buisinne, Emma Clarke, Danielle Gie, Anna Koenig, Ray Olmesdahl, Chelsea Park, Ava Rathner, Chelsea Thompson
**

Additionally, 15 pupils completed the Further Studies Mathematics Elective of which 5 achieved a distinction. Jodie Sharp obtained 90%. The Further Studies Mathematics Elective average was 72%.

According to how the WCED calculates the Aggregates... The Dux for 2023 is Emma Lewis (96%) followed by Megan Harrison and Salma Moosa tied in second position (94%).

** Some pupils did not consent to the publishing of their names and some were not present to give their consent to the publishing of their names. Herschel Girls School respects and upholds the regulations set out in POPIA and therefore these names are not reflected above.



Dux for 2023: Emma Lewis (96%), Megan Harrison and Salma Moosa tied in 2nd position (94%)

Some more special moments from this memorable day...









Staff News

Along with new pupils, we welcomed new teachers to Herschel and I know that you will join me in welcoming them warmly to Herschel. We wish them a happy, enriching chapter in their teaching careers and look forward to the skills, experiences and passions that they bring to our team.

For the sake of clarity of role I have included the teachers' names in a table but you will 'meet' them in an upcoming newsletter and in person soon!

Meghan Anderson	ICT Integrator
Emily Erasmus	Maths and Physical Science Teacher
Malindri Eastes	Subject Head – Maths
Victoria Campbell	Academic Support Teacher and Careers Counsellor
Jeanne Trickett	Subject Head – Physical Sciences
Jessica Nessel	English Teacher
Lauren-Grace Hoffman	Design and Visual Arts – Part-time Teacher
Claire Geber	Locum English Teacher
Danielle van Graan	Locum English Teacher
Geoff Kieswetter	Locum English Teacher
Merlin Julie	Locum Music Teacher



Introducing Cindy Guercio (well known to those whose daughters have joined us from the Preparatory School). I am persona non grata amongst the Preparatory School staff for having “stolen” Cindy and brought her across to the Senior School campus!

Cindy joined Herschel in 2015 as PA to the Head of the Preparatory School. She is at heart a fierce advocate for girls and women, highly relational, approachable and a team player. Her passion and energy has already had an impact. Cindy has an Honours Degree in Psychology. She and her husband, Trevor have two daughters, Morgan who has also just matriculated and her daughter, Hannah who is currently in matric.



Making waves!

Pamela Bowren, currently ranked 12th in the World on the IBC Women's Bodyboarding World Tour is aiming to take on the world bodyboarding circuit again this year. Her 1st year on tour saw her finishing in 3rd and 5th place in two out of three events and she hopes to improve on these results as well as the consistency across the multiple events in 2024.

Pam has a passion and love for the sport where she has put South African Women Bodyboarders on the map not only by competing, but also by hosting clinics and giving back to the sport she loves so much.

She is a fierce competitor, competing in multiple World Games event, representing South Africa, as well as being the only female rider invited to participate in a 16 rider heavy wave IBC speciality event up the West Coast of South Africa. She now heads into her 2nd year on the World Tour circuit with her first stop being in Morocco in February.

Through her passion, determination and self-discipline, Pam is a wonderful role model to the Herschel girls and we are hoping that she will procure sponsorship to assist towards the costs of the tour, especially since all but one competition, involve overseas travel costs. She has been actively looking for sponsorship and should anyone in our Herschel community be able to assist in this regard, we would welcome this.

Pam, we know that 2024 is going to be the year of rocking the waves! Thank you for inspiring the girls and for advocating for women in sport! We wish you well!

Our Students



Emily van Heerden, Head Student for 2024 addressed the school in our opening assembly, referencing an article that she had read about 24 things that would contribute to making this year a good one. She cited 6 of the events/concepts listed by the author and then added in Herschel events and experiences that unfold throughout the year and that make for excitement, create opportunity and provide enrichment.

We were reminded of just how much happens across the academic, sporting, spiritual, community engagement and cultural aspects of school life and I would encourage those parents who are new to Herschel to support involvement and participation because this is where character development, social awareness and responsibility, life skills development and a sense of belonging is cultivated. The essence of the school experience is the holistic growth and development of young adults, which includes an education that goes beyond subject knowledge and skills mastery, to include emotional intelligence, the adaptive quotient and the concept of learning as a life-long journey, especially in the rapidly changing world in which we live.



Abbey Morrow's Painting: R200

This painting by Abbey Morrow, Grade 12, 2023 is not pretty per se, but it is a complex, sophisticated and honest statement from an 18-year-old about the state of the nation and what we need to look out for. It serves as a daily visual reminder of how important the work we do is: to instil values, promote and grow leadership opportunities for our pupils, impart a working knowledge of ethics, nurture positivity, creativity, and a phenomenal work ethic and encourage a sense of social responsibility and justice that will support the growth of this country.

Matric Dance Invitation Ceremony

Today ended with so much joy and excitement where we surprised the 2024 Grade 12s with their Matric Dance invitation ceremony. The whole school met in the Theatre where they were serenaded by the phenomenal Craig Lucas and, keeping with tradition, Matrics received their invitations and their pearls.





Sports Wrap

Pro Series Indoor Hockey (PSI)

The Pro Series Indoor Hockey (PSI) took place from Thursday, 14 December to Friday, 22 December 2023. The U16 Seals team, which featured five Herschel players – Hayley Lewis, Sarah Ashbolt, Samantha Flint, Hannah Henderson, and Christina Caryer – secured the gold medal in the U16 section of the tournament. Hayley Lewis was announced as the Goalkeeper of the tournament. A big congratulations to the

following players for their inclusion in the U16 All Starts team: Hayley Lewis, Samantha Flint and Hannah Henderson.



Tennis

Congratulations to Jessica Schilz who over the festive season was ranked 1st in the U18 Western Province Girls Tennis category and was selected to the U17 SA Schools Tennis Team.

Squash

Exciting news! Siyoli Waters has joined the Herschel Coaching Team as the 1st and 2nd Squash team coach.

Siyoli boasts an impressive background as the former SA Women's National Champion, with a remarkable career spanning 8 years on the world tour, where she achieved a highest world ranking of No. 28. During her tenure, Siyoli clinched victory in 10 PSA International Titles. After retiring from the world tour in 2016, Siyoli remains an active and accomplished individual. Celebrating 12 years of marriage to Dave, she is also a proud mother to two lovely girls, Unathi and Milani. In 2022, Siyoli showcased her enduring passion for the sport, securing a 3rd place at the SA Nationals and winning a bronze medal at the World Masters Championships in Poland. Her wealth of experience and dedication to excellence make Siyoli Waters an invaluable asset to our coaching team.

Welcome to the Herschel Family.



Herschel Concussion Management Program

It is that time of the year again in which a concussion baseline test should be completed.

Concussion dates for performing the baseline test will be from **31 January until 16 February 2024**. To register your child for the concussion program, you will need to complete the below QR-code. Registration for the concussion program will close on **29 January 2024**.

Once registered and payment has been made, your child can come to Ms Klopper office to book a timeslot for doing the baseline assessment.

Please take note that if a concussion is suspected that you must report it to Ms Klopper so that assistance can be provided. If your child was sent to the hospital's emergency department, still report it for further assistance.



1 - [CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)¹

Ad dei Gloriam!

Heather Goedeke
(Head)

¹<https://forms.gle/NsFRswhaEmsK41vw6>