



## *Uplands College*

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Dear Parents and Guardians

The year has come and gone and it has been a very successful one for Uplands College.

At one stage we were quite concerned about our pupil numbers, but I am delighted to report that for 2012 we have filled four Grade 8 classes with 100 pupils and our boarding houses are filled to capacity with 225 boarders.

The College Board spent a great deal of time considering our strategic future and identifying the things that set us apart from other schools. The outcome of this process is an adjusted fee structure which is less reliant on debentures and a strategy to grow our boarding in order to stabilize the growth of our school.

The end of this year saw us sadly bid farewell to several staff members:

- Dave Bennett – our Head of Academics and Science teacher – after spending the last 10 years with us, Dave will head for distant shores once his boat is complete.
- Derek Putter – Business studies teacher, rugby coach, MTB coach and scuba diving coordinator – who has accepted a position at another school in the area after being with us for five years.
- Elena Vorster – Afrikaans teacher, Matric Dance coordinator and Afrikaans Idols champion – has accepted a position in Nelspruit to be closer to her family after spending the last two years at Uplands.
- Leigh du Plessis – Maths, Life Science and Natural Science teacher who leaves us after five years to teach at St Anne's in Pietermaritzburg.
- Nickey Elphick – who has been with us since 2000 teaching French and English and offering extra lessons. Nickey and her husband will retire in the Cape.

Their cumulative number of years in teaching at this school is 34 years and we thank them for the wonderful contributions they made to Uplands College during this time.

Change is inevitable and brings with it a certain amount of excitement. In this regard we are delighted to welcome the following staff who will take on their roles and responsibilities in January 2012:

- Charles Keegan – young teacher, ex University of Cape Town, who comes highly recommended and who will take teach Dramatic Arts, Arts & Culture, and English.
- Herman Kruger – an experienced teacher, with 18 years of teaching and rugby coaching under his belt, joins us from Wonderboom High School in Pretoria.
- Katy Nottingham - young teacher, ex Rhodes University, whose forte is chemistry and who was also recognized in the Rhodes Top 100 Students in Sport. Katy will, understandably, teach Physical Science as well as Life Science.

- Neil Rautenbach – has seven years of local and international experience, joins us from Northcliff High School to take on Natural Science, Life Science and Technology.
- Pieter van Zyl – also joins us with both local and international experience. His last post was at Royal Docks Community School in the United Kingdom. He will teach English and Afrikaans
- Silvie Rautenbach – will be our IT and Lab Technician. Silvie has a wealth of international experience in the IT field.
- Viktor Kurz – Former Housemaster at Michaelhouse who will take on the role of Deputy, Academics and teach Maths.
- Yulandi van Zyl – Leaves Regent’s Vocational College in the UK to join us to teach CAT, Computer Literacy and Afrikaans.

As we move towards next year, I would like to highlight some important changes in our thinking and execution of grade camps. Grade camps remain compulsory but, in future, not all the pupils will attend grade camps in August. Instead, the timing and focus of grade camps has been adjusted to:

Grade	Duration	Month	Purpose
8	Three nights away	March	Embrace the culture and ethos of the Uplands way of life. Environmental education
9	No camp	---	To save costs
10	10 day endurance hike	November	Self development – Dealing with adversity and challenges
11	Three nights away	August	Future leaders – Specific leadership training as well as looking at their roles as leaders in Grade 12
12	One night away	TBA	Fun – One night “fun” camp at the end of the exams

The biggest change is with the Grade 10s’ grade camp. This compulsory hike will take place at the end of the year and will form part of the Grade 10 curriculum. We have consulted widely with other schools who offer a similar programme and they speak of significant benefits to the pupils and to the school. Details will become available early in the new year. The cost of grade camps will be published well in advance and may be paid over a couple of months, in keeping with our financial policies.

When you see the timetable for 2012, you will notice we have “fine tuned” many aspects for the year. We will now run an eight day cycle and have most of our sport in the afternoons. Only Grades 8 and 11 will continue to have sport in the morning.

To those fortunate to travel over this holiday period, we wish you much fun and travelling mercies. To those who will stay at home, we wish you many delights and a wonderful restful time. To all, enjoy the break. May the joy and peace of Christmas be with you now and through the new year.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely



**A J I CLARKE**  
Headmaster