



CIRCULAR TO PARENTS OF BOYS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING MARITZBURG COLLEGE IN 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians

“A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.” These words, often attributed to Franklin Roosevelt, remind us that it is not in moments of ease but in times of challenge that character is truly formed. This year at Maritzburg College has been a sea that has tested us, stretched us, and ultimately strengthened us.

It has been an incredibly busy year on all fronts. Not always easy. College has found itself in the unusual position of having had four different Headmasters in a single year, a situation that, in many schools, could have caused real instability. Yet we have endured, and more than that, we have prevailed. That is a testament to the deep organisational resilience of this school and to the powerful legacy of 162 years of tradition, values, and pride.

I would like to acknowledge and pay my respects to Dr Luman, Mr Marwick, and Mrs Finnie for their leadership and the steady hands with which they guided the school through their respective tenures. Each contributed to keeping College on a firm footing during a time of transition, and we are grateful for their service.

This has been a year of highs and lows, academically, sportingly, and emotionally. We have celebrated moments of extraordinary achievement, but we have also walked through the valley together.

Amid the challenges, there has been much to celebrate. In the academic sphere we have witnessed excellence hard work and resilience, in the sporting arena we have seen individual and team excellence across the board. We are proud to have among us a world silver medallist marathon canoeist. Our squash team is ranked number two in the country. We have SA Schools rugby and hockey representatives, along with many others who have worn our colours not only with pride, but with distinction. Our boys have travelled the globe, representing themselves, the school, and South Africa with honour.

Beyond the fields and classrooms, we have chased and attained cultural excellence with the brilliance of the school production *Oliver*, the choir being place 2nd nationally in the ATVK choir competition and our Economists were placed 5th nationally in the South African Reserve Bank challenge. Our outreach efforts have been remarkable. The contributions of our Hindu and Muslim societies, and indeed all our service groups, have reflected the heart of this community, one that extends beyond itself and strives to make the world around it a little better.

At this point I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to every member of staff academic, sporting, administrative and support. The work they do, both seen and unseen, is the backbone of this school.

They have guided, mentored, encouraged and challenged our boys throughout the year to achieve at these high levels, often going far beyond what is required or expected. Whether in the classroom, on the sports field, behind the scenes, or in the daily operations that keep this institution moving, their commitment has ensured that our pupils continued to grow, learn, and thrive despite the many pressures of the year. College is stronger because of them, and we are deeply grateful.

But we must also be honest. Not everything has gone well. We have faced too many disciplinary issues this year, particularly the concerning rise in vaping. Behaviour, discipline, and dress standards remain areas that need our renewed focus and commitment as we move into 2026. College men are held to a higher standard, for good reason and it is time for us to rise to it.

Yet, when all is said and done, the impression that remains is this: Maritzburg College is an excellent school. A school that provides a space for boys to grow into young men. A school built on values integrity, courage, respect, accountability and one that consistently strives to uphold them.

As we look toward next year, our aim is not simply to match what we achieved this year. The challenge is to be better, in every classroom, on every field, in every interaction, in every uniform, in every choice. That will take hard work. It will take focus. It will take the unmistakable grit that defines a College boy, but I have no doubt: we are capable of it.

Let us step forward into 2026 with purpose, with unity, and with the determination not just to do well, but to excel.

OFFICIAL TERM DATES:

The following dates apply for the 2026 academic school year:

- First Term: Wednesday 14 January to Thursday 26 March
- Second Term: Wednesday 8 April to Friday 26 June
- Third Term: Tuesday 21 July to Wednesday 23 September
- Fourth Term: Tuesday 6 October to Wednesday 9 December

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE START OF THE FIRST TERM:

Below are important dates for the first term – further details will be provided in the Term Calendar.

January

- Thursday 8 January: College Shoppe opens
- Thursday 8 January: Finance Department opens
- Saturday 10 January: 2nd Form Borver Orientation Week Starts
- Monday 12 January: Reception opens
- Monday 12 January: Teaching staff return
- Tuesday 13 January: NSC Results released
- Tuesday 13 January: 3rd to 6th Form boarders arrive and 6th Form Information Evening
- Wednesday 14 January: Term 1 starts
- Saturday 17 January: Summer sport fixtures start
- Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 January: Closed weekend for boarders
- Monday 19 January: NSC results assembly
- Thursday 22 January: Prize-giving Ceremony
- Friday 23 January: Special routine – Inter-house Athletics Championships
- Monday 26 January: Governing Body Parents By-Election via Election Runner
- Friday 30 January: New Parents' Information Evening

February

- Monday 16 February to Friday 20 February: 5th Form Leadership Camp
- Friday 20 February to Sunday 22 February: Free Weekend [School closes for the Free Weekend at 14:00 on Thursday 19 February]

March

- Saturday 14 March: Winter sport season starts
- Tuesday 20 to Friday 13 March: School Production – Spotlight [Gala evening Thursday 12 March]
- Thursday 26 March: Term 1 Ends

BOARDERS:

Boarders are required to report as follows:

- First Term:
 - 2nd Form: Saturday 10 January at 07:30 [Registration on Forder Oval]
 - 3rd and 6th Forms: Tuesday 13 January by 15:00 [Tea in Clark House quad]
 - All other Boarders: Tuesday 13 January by 19:00
- Second Term - All Boarders: Tuesday 7 April by 19:00
- Third Term - All Boarders: Monday 20 July by 19:00
- Fourth Term - All Boarders: Monday 5 October by 19:00

ADDITIONAL WEEKEND LEAVE FOR BOARDERS:

In addition to the dates listed above, parents of boarders may exercise the option of having their sons out for one or two Optional Weekends each term. The optional weekend is particularly designed to assist you to plan for special family occasions and must be recognised by the boys as a privilege not to be abused. Permission for such "optional" weekends may be obtained directly from the Housemaster by using the weekend leave form or sending an email. Please ensure timeous communication with regards to weekend leave.

Parents are requested to adhere to the BE and School rules as far as requests and collection of their sons are concerned. All boarders must vacate the boarding establishment during a Free Weekend.

FREE WEEKENDS:

- First Term: Thursday 19 February to Sunday 22 February
[School closes at 14:00 on Thursday 19 February].
- Second Term: Thursday 23 April to Sunday 27 April

EXAMINATIONS:

Please take careful note of the proposed dates for the examinations. A reminder that a medical certificate must be provided within 48 hours of absence from any formal assessment task, and that examinations cannot be re-scheduled under any circumstances. Please note that some language examinations may be written ahead of the proposed dates.

Mid-Year	Monday 1 June to Wednesday 24 June
Trials	Monday 24 August to Friday 18 September
Year-End	Monday 26 October to Wednesday 18 November
National Senior Certificate	Dates to be published by the Department of Education

PARENTS' EVENINGS:

It is important that parents attend these evenings. Boys should attend with their parents. The evenings run from 17:30 to 19:30.

2 nd Form	Monday 20 April
3 rd Form	Monday 13 April
4 th Form	Tuesday 11 August
5 th Form	Monday 3 August
6 th Form	Monday 27 July

INFORMATION EVENINGS:

6 th Form	Tuesday 13 January It is essential that all 6 th Form boys and their parents attend this evening, as important information regarding the 6th Form year and NSC examinations will be discussed.
3 rd Form	Thursday 20 July The 3 rd Form information evening is to assist third form boys with their subject choices for the senior phase, and all 3 rd Form boys and their parents should attend.
Career Focus	Wednesday 20 May Representatives from a wide variety of careers will be available to chat informally to boys about their chosen careers. This is particularly relevant to 3 rd Form and 5 th Form boys and will be compulsory for these grades.

ANNUAL PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY:

The Annual Prize-Giving Ceremony will take place on Thursday 22 January at 17:00 in the Alan Paton Memorial Hall. It will conclude at approximately 19:00 and attendance for all boys is compulsory.

LEADERSHIP CAMPS:

Parents are informed that the following Leadership Camps are being planned.

5th Form – Umkomaas Valley Monday 16 February to Friday 20 February

All other leadership camps take place Sunday 20 September to Thursday 24 September

- 2nd Form – Spirit of Adventure [Shongweni Dam]
- 3rd Form – Roselands/Nyala Pans
- 4th Form – Cobham Berg Hike

SCHOOL PRODUCTIONS:

After enjoying hugely successful performances of Lionel Bart's much-loved musical, Oliver! and the revue show Rewind Revolution (Maritzburg College and Epworth Collaboration), the Performance Arts team is enthusiastic about pushing the boundaries of theatrical staging and performances, again in 2026.

Oliver! was endorsed by local theatre practitioner, actor, and director – Menzie Mbuli, as a production of which earned the accolade of having a 'professional stage quality'. 'This endorsement highlights Maritzburg College's all-round support and fostering of the Performance Arts not only for its boys but the broader theatre community too.

The theatre calendar for 2026 looks promising and all the shows on the cards will be a must-see for all theatregoers. The first term kicks off with the production Spotlight. This show is being staged in collaboration with Pietermaritzburg Girls' High. Spotlight has been curated to include performers who are talented in all three spheres of performance, that is, acting, singing and choreography. The show runs from 9-13 March in the Olivier Cultural Centre.

The Music Department under the directorship of David Solomon, will be staging the 50s Style Big Band Show in collaboration with the music department of St. Johns. This musical extravaganza will run at St. Johns from 14-16 May.

Tennessee William's, The Glass Menagerie, will be staged towards the latter half of May 2026. This Expressionist styled production will run from 19-23 May, in the Olivier Cultural Centre. The Glass Menagerie will explore an immersive, theatrical setting, with its four-member cast, certainly not a show to be missed.

Bookings for all three shows will be available in the new term. We place on record our thanks and appreciation to the College Community for their ongoing support of the Performance Arts and we look forward to sell-out performances again in 2026.

SPORTS EXCHANGES:


To assist with your planning for 2026 I need to inform parents that we have the following sports exchanges planned:

- 18 April PBHS [Home]
- 25 July AFFIES [Home]
- 1 August PBHS [Away]

Please note, hosting requests and special arrangements will be conveyed to you next year.

In closing I wish you all a very happy and restful festive season.

Pro Aris et Focis

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'A Redfern', written over a horizontal line.

MR AM REDFERN
Headmaster

3 December 2025