

Official Opening of the Mathematics Centre

Speech given by Dr Mellony Graven

It is a great honour to be the director of the Mathematics Centre and to work with the fantastic team of Mathematics teachers at St Andrew's and DSG. All of the Mathematics teachers contribute to the work of the Mathematics Centre and it is thanks to them that the centre has been the success that it has been. The best way to describe the Mathematics Centre is as a hub of mathematical activity – for both teachers and learners. The work rests on four pillars. The first involves a co-ordinated support and extension program for learners. This involves an afternoon program (two teachers are available during centre times to support and extend learners), special evening sessions (e.g. exam and Olympiad preparation sessions), inter house and inter school mathematics competitions, Maths Club, ICT support and enrichment learning, and finally subject and career support discussions. The second pillar involves our Outreach programs. Here the Mathematics Centre is actively involved in the St Mathews Mathematics camp and the LEAP and Loseby programs which work with students from various Grahamstown township schools. The third pillar involves the stimulation of a Mathematics Teaching Community of Practice. Here the centre organises teacher conferences where leaders in the field of Mathematics Education are invited as guest speakers. Professor Anne Watson (Oxford University), Professor John Mason (Open University) and Aarnout Brombacher (Brombacher and Associates) have been the guest speakers at the two conferences that have been organised so far. Teachers from all over Grahamstown as well as from Port Elizabeth, Coffee Bay, East London, Umtata and so forth have attended these conferences. Such conferences are a great opportunity for building a strong and supportive professional community of practice. The fourth pillar involves citizenship and leadership in the profession of Mathematics teaching. Thus we work towards active participation in the activities and work of the IEB, local and international conferences, local and international publications and public commentary on curriculum development. The establishment of the Mathematics Centre with the generous funding of the Epoch and Optima Trust have made St Andrew's and DSG well placed to be leaders in the field of innovative Mathematics teaching and learning. We look forward to continuing to energise Mathematics Education and strengthening the foundations that have been laid in this first year.

Mellony Graven

Director of the Mathematics Centre

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