

Dear Parents,

You will know, by now, that my insights are usually inspired by something I've seen, or read, or a song that I've been listening to. This week is no exception.

A beautiful friend gave me a book—the kind of literary treasure that envelops you, and pulls you back in as soon as the day's demands have subsided. It's the sort of book that stirs within you a gamut of emotions, igniting moments of anger, sadness, and spontaneous bursts of laughter. The title? *You Could Make This Place Beautiful* by Maggie Smith. The actress? No. The Poet!

This is not a commentary on the content of the book, you can explore this on your own. Rather, it's the title itself that resonated with me, as I observe the numerous ways in which our girls, our teachers and you, our parents, collectively contribute to making THIS place beautiful! And if you could walk a day in my shoes, you would understand.

It is the older girls who have taken to hovering at the door at drop off time, their presence uninvited, yet welcome, to take the hands of the littlest girls and lead them toward the playground. It is the new girl who gives me a high five every time we cross paths, while others prefer a morning handshake. Still others offer warm hugs, creating a tapestry of heartwarming interactions.

It is the girls who have found their voice and are taking risks, presenting their ideas in the hope of becoming class captains or ambassadors or members of the school council. It is the girls at break time who huddle in friendship clusters chatting about their weekend and telling bad jokes:

'Where do you find a cow with no legs?'

'Exactly where you left it!'

(Resisting the insertion of an eye roll emoji!)

It is the Year 6 girls creating a mud kitchen in the Wilderness Garden and others practising their netball skills - shot after shot after shot, and graciously inviting me to join in. Then there's the uplifting moment of a Year 1 girl serenading the entire Lower School with her unaccompanied rendition of 'Take Me Home, Country Roads', and the touching gesture from another girl who generously gifted her

teacher a cherished possession on her birthday, only to extend the sentiment as a class gift to ensure her classmates' inclusion (resisting multiple heart emojis).

It is the teacher who shed tears of overwhelming joy because ninety-four girls, yes, ninety-four girls turned up for middle school choir! And the teacher who goes the extra mile to set up and encourage girls' football practice during his lunchtimes and break times. It is the devoted teacher who spends her own break times in the Wilderness Garden, fostering creativity as the girls create mud kitchens, tend to the garden's produce, create posters, or nurture the plants.

It is the teacher who helps the girls map out a fascinating journey from the science lab to my office, using ingenious methods like toilet rolls and footsteps to represent ten million kilometres, showing, almost literally, the distance between the planets. It is the teachers who deliver Learning Power assemblies, this time with footage captured during the holidays of the various school mascots using their powers, and their unwavering commitment to the girls' growth and development.

It is you, dear parents, who send your girls off with hugs and kisses and confidence. You, who support them and us. You, who take the time to write generous emails of affirmation, give up your time to attend events and contribute generously to school fundraising drives. You, who offer smiles at the gate and nurture our teaching in your daughters.

You Could Make This Place Beautiful. And all of You do.

Have a beautiful weekend.

Sian