

PRINCIPAL'S ASSEMBLY MESSAGE: 4TH OCTOBER 2019

World Teachers' Day, also known as International Teachers Day, is held every year on October 5 to honour teachers and recognize their contributions to education and development. It is held to emphasize the importance of teachers and to raise the profile and increase the awareness and understanding of the teaching profession and its importance.

Teachers around the world are finding their jobs increasingly difficult in the face of a general breakdown in discipline and accountability.

In 2015, the International Coalition of Boys Schools of which Bishops is a member, produced a research document entitled "Mastery Practice in Teaching Boys". Its aim was to try and establish what constituted a "Master Teacher" and how they were able to get the best out of their students.

It is not surprising that the single biggest factor which lead to a positive teacher/pupil outcome was a good relationship between teacher and pupil.

The following extracts from the research document are pertinent:

Above all, we noticed that master teachers emphatically identified the importance of educational relationships with their students and often related how they skillfully forged these connections with positive and often transformational results. We know from other research, that students – perhaps boys in particular – name their working relationship with their teachers as one of the strongest factors in motivation and engagement. In this relational work, we concluded that there is no one type of person who demonstrates mastery; our participants were as varied in personality and ways of engaging in the world as individuals in any group of professionals. What they agreed upon is that the quality of relationships underpins all teaching and learning; it is the very medium in which learning happens.

The master teachers also told us that the forging of such productive relationships extends to all areas of the school community. They understood and stressed the importance of one's being a supporting presence and good school citizen at games, events, and ceremonies. Such larger, predictable, and affirming interaction gives teacher and students alike valuable information and strengthens the network of relationships. The participants agreed that building good working relationships with parents, in which they establish a trusting, collaborative bridge, improves the child's learning and cushions more difficult discussions when these arise. Rooted in the business of the classroom, these webs of relationships are woven by master teachers throughout the school.

It has been my experience at Bishops that by and large there is a positive relationship between pupils and teachers which ultimately leads to positive learning outcomes. The fact that our teachers are involved with you boys across such a wide range of activities enhances this relationship. This includes involvement in the House system, sport, the cultural programme, the epic, hikes and camps and so much more.

I would also like to suggest that a positive teacher/pupil relationship is a two-way process, it is not only up to the teacher to develop this relationship but the responsibility of each of you as well. A positive relationship needs effort from both sides.

So today we celebrate and acknowledge our teachers for all they do for us, often way and beyond the call of duty.

