

Speech by Mrs Karen Schandy, Chair of the Board of Governors

Parents, staff, students, ladies and gentlemen. Good Morning and welcome to this Prize Giving Ceremony, in this, the School's 110th Anniversary year.

Congratulations to all Form 6 students for passing the egreso exam. Congratulations to all students for another good year and for those prize winners and those of you who did your best.

This was a good year in all senses, with many events, including celebrating the School's 110th Anniversary.

In these 110 years, the School has changed considerably. From a house in Pocitos to a big school in the same neighbourhood. From separate education for girls and boys to co-education, from the School in Pocitos to our Junior and Senior School buildings in Carrasco. From a sandy 10 Hectare piece of land to the gardens and pitches you can see and take advantage of today. There was a local appeal for funds called the "War Memorial" for the purchase of the land and construction of the building, as well as a substantial loan from a local bank. It was a risky and a very modern way of understanding the education and schools of the future. A very big change.

All this, going from a Junior to a Senior School, introducing Liceo, going from two groups per year to three and four in the Junior School, were changes and modifications, which needed to be done. They were necessary to keep offering the best education possible to our students.

The School's life has been marked with milestones and innovations since its foundation. Each transformation had its complexities but, nevertheless, proved to be to the benefit of everyone involved. Above all academic and infrastructural changes, always maintaining the long-standing tradition of excellence, with understanding as tradition, the belief or way of acting which defines a student of The British Schools.

The School grew and changed in capacity and academically, but always keeping in mind the traditions, the vision and mission that our founders envisioned, always endeavouring for excellence.

The process of education, as we understand it, is an ever-changing process. The world changes more and more rapidly and from an educational point of view we need to make sure that we evolve as well. Information is transmitted at great speed and increased knowledge is no more than a tool. Education is, and I am sure all staff present today will agree with me, above all, very demanding.

If our predecessors were afraid of changes, most probably, we would not have this School today. Understanding how to thrive in such a demanding and fast-moving world, and the pressure upon educators to keep up excellence, is not an easy task, nor is continuously searching for excellence and above all being efficient. Achievements and goals are reached with hard work.

Changes do not mean forgetting tradition. All changes at School are, and have always been, a matter of thorough thought and study by the staff and particularly by the Board.

The School has always looked to provide the educational environment and infrastructure to help students achieve excellence in the academics, arts and sports, form self-confident, creative, inquiring, discerning, fully bilingual students who will strive to develop their talents to the best of their abilities. The School instils the importance of all human values, fair play and team work.

Since 1908 the same PERFICE, "do thoroughly", has formed our students, encouraging and promoting a sense of belonging, a pride and affection for the School, a pride in wearing the School uniform and the sense of School spirit.

We are, at the Board, always in the process of keeping the School at the forefront, maintaining the highest standards, setting the bar high with efficiency and effectiveness in the best interests of staff, parents and most of all, our students.

We cannot be afraid of change because changes and updates mean moving forward.

I do not want to finish without mentioning someone who was part of the School and most probably part of the lives of many students and parents here today. Ellen Apolant, Mrs Jacoby, was a student and a teacher of many grandparents here today. She was a Headmistress of hundreds of students, some of whom are now parents, and a professional role model for staff during her many years at the School. Ellen was a promoter of change, but in a traditional way as she had learnt here at School, as we are used to doing, sensitively in “the School way”. We will surely miss her.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the teamwork and hard work of my fellow Board members, past and present, for all the work done during these past years and particularly in 2018.

We wish to thank the Principal, Mr. Mark Rosevear, the SLT, teachers and administrative staff, for a wonderful year.

Happy Christmas and Happy Holidays to everyone. Thank you.