

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

Her Majesty's Ambassador Mr Ian Duddy,
Parents, staff, ladies and gentlemen, dear students

Good morning and a very warm welcome to all of you on this very special end to the School's 110th Anniversary year.

This has been a very good year.

In these 110 years the School has changed considerably. We have grown 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 field to the gardens and pitches you can see now. 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, and many more changes, modifications and restructures, that we could keep on naming, were changes which needed to be done.

The School's life has been marked with milestones and innovations since its foundation. We could say that it has been changing over these 110 years, and each transformation had its complexities but, nevertheless, proved to be to the benefit of everyone involved.

Introducing another group in Kinder in 1958 was revolutionary. How will we be able to handle so many students! were the words repeated over and over.

The School grew and changed in capacity and academically, but always keeping in mind, 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 too, and that we change as well. If our predecessors were afraid of change, most probably, we would not have this School today. Introducing IB and PYP, technology, modernising infrastructure, the School has always been ahead of the times and at the vanguard of education.

Last month I had the opportunity of visiting a country in the Middle East, a zone of constant conflict and war. A small country which is the first in many medical and other achievements. This is thanks to continuous changes and advances, and for developing and raising the bar.

Continuously searching for excellence and above all being efficient ensure achievements and goals are reached with hard work.

Changes do not mean forgetting tradition nor turning everything upside down. All changes are, and always have been, a matter of thorough thought and study.

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, recognizing their individual differences and instilling the importance of all human values, fair play and teamwork

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 a sense of School spirit.

Last week I addressed myself to the 6YL students and my comment was on what I felt and what all our generation felt after leaving the School. It was then when we realised the values the School imparted, how the School had formed us and, over the years, how all generations had felt the same.

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 above all our students.

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. A Headmistress of hundreds of students, some of whom are now parents. 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.

Congratulations to all students for another successful year, to those prize winners and those who did the most to the best of their ability.

There are **two** things in life: what you **must** do and what you **want** to do. To understand to do what you **want**, you have to do what you **must** before.

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

Happy Christmas and Happy Holidays to everyone.

Thank you.