



GREG DANE - CHAIRMAN'S VISION FOR UPLANDS

It is truly a great privilege to have been elected as the Chairman of Uplands. As a family, we came to the Lowveld in 2017 principally because of Uplands. My wife Tracy and I agreed that this was a place that we could see our daughters flourishing in. We were looking for a relaxed schooling environment, but one that didn't compromise on standards. This epitomises the executive team's focus of creating One School, that offers a balanced education within a happy atmosphere, with high expectations and deliverables.

Our Uplands Founders established the school over 90 years ago, thus affording this special place a sense of tradition and history that grounds this establishment that we are all privileged to be a part of. These past two years have been a time of consolidation, as we have built up an executive team that we as a Board believe has the capability to truly take Uplands to the next level. We have also continued with the reinforcement and implementation of the "One School" strategy which continues to gain traction.

This leading education platform is well positioned with its dynamic leadership team that encompasses an impressive fusion of education, business and legal skill and expertise. The Uplands Board believes firmly in its ability to provide strategic direction to the extremely capable Executive team, in order to navigate through the challenging spaces we may find ourselves in due to current world conditions and it is our deepest hope not only to navigate through the times but also to excel and do things differently.

As a business owner myself, the most important thing in a business is to have the "right people in the right places" and that has been the Board's focus over the past 24 months. We are very excited that this team will be working towards our 2028 vision. I have been fortunate in having spent some time at Harvard Business School and, when engaging with their professors and lecturers, it was evident that a very common theme is the fear of not remaining relevant. If one of the leading educational institutions in the world is questioning their educational offering, it is imperative in this fast-changing world to ensure that education remains dynamic, cutting edge and innovative. Uplands needs to retain relevancy and, while traditional education will continue to be the cornerstone, we will endeavour to do more in the areas of innovation, entrepreneurship, self-sustainability and diversity to equip our children to be independent all-rounders, in order to succeed in a world that is changing at an unbelievable pace.



To all Uplands pupils, you certainly have the structure to excel, but what is the meaning of excel? Firstly, over the five years that we have lived here, I have met many young past pupils of Uplands and the overall perception I have is that they are confident and intelligent but not arrogant and, most importantly, it is always evident to me that there is an ability to appreciate and relate to all members of society. In this country and all over the world, this for me is the greatest tool for success, because an understanding and appreciation of each other is what success on the global stage is all about.

In our businesses, I interview and ultimately employ a fair number of people. People often ask how I conduct interviews and my response is, "I purposely don't read a CV beforehand, because I don't want to build up any preconceptions and I interview for "character." The next question I am asked is, "Well then, do I not need the best marks from a top educational institution?" and my answer is that I would not have been interviewing the person unless senior employees of mine had already screened the CVs to ensure that the person had the ability to do the job.

A good education is a foot in the door/an invitation to the party, but it is character that gets you the position. And by character, I am also referring to manners and how you conduct yourself around others. As I say to my two daughters, you never want to regret not having worked hard enough that you cannot get "through the door", whether that is to study for a certain degree or get a job at a company of your choice or work for an NGO making a difference in the world.

Study hard from as early as possible (don't forget to have fun while doing so), but remember that manners, understanding cultural diversity, grit, kindness and perseverance is what builds that character. Some of the most talented people I know found their school education challenging. Many were dyslexic, which meant they always looked at the world differently and that is probably why they succeeded because they saw things that the traditional education system doesn't teach. We need you to become adults to change the world, not to just be part of what it is. Some of you may remember an Apple advertising campaign some years ago that paid tribute to the people who think "out of the box" and I quote: "Here's to the crazy ones, the ones who see things differently, they push the human race forward. The people who are crazy enough to change the world are the ones that do." So, to all you teachers, acknowledge the children that look at things differently.

Your school is in a good place, and it is up to all of us to take it to the next level. I am excited to be a part of this journey.