

Precious Times - Term Three 2026

Mentoring Weekend - Precious Blood School Riruta – August 22nd and 23rd 2026

Stop hating yourself for everything you aren't. Start loving yourself for everything that you *are*...

Dear Precious Girls,

It is always a joy to write a copy of the Precious Times following a successful mentoring event like the one we had at the beginning of the final school term of the year. The event was special, as we welcomed our pioneer Competency Based Education (CBE) girls who are in Grade 10.

Introduction

The theme of the mentoring event was **Self-Belief** which is the 'B' in our ABC theme. For the girls in Grade 10, the mentoring events revolve around the theme we refer to as the **ABC** – **A** for ambition, **B** for Self-Belief and **C** for Commitment. Our final mentoring event for the year also includes prize giving where we recognise and award girls that have excelled in different areas during the year.

Self-Belief

Ruth, an alumna from Starehe, introduced our theme for the day by narrating a story: **THE BLOOD OF A LION** by



Muthoni Muchemi. This is a story about a little duck called Kwekwe that is afraid and very shy who cannot stand for himself when he is bullied by other ducks. Kwekwe meets other friends including a snake who gives him a calabash with the blood of a lion to drink to give him courage. But to really find his courage or self-belief, will drinking the blood of a lion give Kwekwe courage?

After the story, you sat in four

groups with each group discussing one of these questions arising from the different situations in the story:

- ✓ What do you believe about yourself?
- ✓ Have you ever believed in something that had not yet happened? Did it later happen as per your expectation?
- ✓ Who are the people who have discovered something that is in you?
- ✓ Have you ever compared yourself to another person?

Building Self Belief

Ruth explained that Self-belief is defined as **'trusting that you have the ability or potential to face challenges, learn, grow and take action'**.

Every individual has a huge role to play when it comes to self-belief, as much other factors may play out. The most important voice you should carry is the voice you speak to yourself. Building self-belief requires self-discovery, preparation and practice, positive self-talk, acting rather than fearing, learning from failure. Self-belief is killed by: a negative mindset, comparison, fear of failure, dependency on external validation.

Pillars of Self belief

- ✚ Self-awareness



- ✚ Self-worth
- ✚ Self-trust
- ✚ Growth mindset
- ✚ Support

Group Sessions with the Mentors

In the group session with your mentors, you explored more on the theme of **Self-Belief**, taking time to discuss how you can align self-belief with goal achievement. You discussed barriers to Self-Belief which include:

- Societal Influences and Expectations
- Negative Experiences
- Internal Criticism and Self-Doubt

To deal with these barriers, you discussed practices to enhance Self-Belief with some of them being:

- Mindfulness Meditation Techniques
- Visualization Exercises
- Journaling for Self-Discovery
- Seeking External Support



One-on-one Session with a Mentor

This was the session that gave you an opportunity to have a mentor all to yourself. Whatever you may have feared discussing in the group, you were free to share with your mentor who encouraged you and gave you tips on how to navigate the season of life you are in. Most of you have mentioned that this is often your favourite part of the mentoring event.

Public Speaking Session - Social Media & Self-Belief

Form 3 and Grade 10

The public speaking session was done in three groups with each year group having their own facilitator/s who were all drawn from our alumni. The topic this time was an interesting one and very relevant in our world today. The session focused on helping you reflect on the relationship between social media, self-image, comparison and self-belief, while encouraging you to think critically about the messages you consume online.

Key Areas Discussed in the Grade 10 and Form 3 groups

1. The Pros & Cons of Social Media

- ✚ Positive aspects included:
 - Connecting with friends, communities and people with similar interests.
 - Access to information, educational content and new perspectives.
 - Opportunities for creativity and self-expression.
 - Discovering opportunities, talents and career possibilities.
 - Using social media to inspire and motivate others.
- ✚ Negative aspects included:
 - Comparison with other people's lives, appearances and achievements.



- Pressure to look or live a certain way.
- Exposure to unrealistic standards of beauty, success and lifestyle.
- Seeking validation through likes, comments and followers.
- Cyberbullying and negative comments.
- Feeling inadequate when our real lives do not look like what we see online.

2. How social media Shapes the Way, We See Ourselves

You reflected on how repeated exposure to certain images and messages can influence the way we think about ourselves. You discussed how social media can create ideas about what success, beauty, popularity and an "ideal" life are supposed to look like. For example, young people may constantly see particular body types, lifestyles, fashion trends, academic achievements or material possessions and begin to believe that these are measures of their own worth. Your mentors emphasised that social media is a curated version of people's lives. What we see online is often only a small part of someone's reality and should not be used as a complete measure of your own lives.



3. Comparison & Self-Belief – You explored questions such as:

- ❖ Why do you compare yourselves to people online?
- ❖ How does comparison affect your confidence?
- ❖ What happens when you constantly feel that someone else is doing better than you?
- ❖ Can someone else's success take away from your own potential?
- ❖ How can you appreciate someone else's achievements without seeing them as evidence that you are not good enough?

You were encouraged to recognise that someone else's success does not diminish your own potential and that everyone's journey develops at a different pace.

4. Followers, Popularity & Social Status

Are people with more followers treated differently from people with fewer followers? You discussed how follower counts, likes and online popularity can sometimes become associated with status, influence or attractiveness, but how those numbers do not actually tell us anything about a person's value. This led into a broader discussion about external validation versus internal self-worth — understanding that numbers on a screen should not determine how valuable, talented or worthy someone feels.

5. Questioning the Messages We Consume

You were encouraged to become more intentional and critical consumers of social media. Rather than simply accepting everything you see online, you need to ask:

- Who created this content?
- What message is being communicated?
- Is this realistic?
- What might I be feeling because of what I am seeing?
- Is this content helping or hurting the way I see myself?
- Who benefits from me believing that I am not enough?

The session was highly interactive and allowed you to express your opinions rather than simply listening to a presentation. The session allowed you to be involved in:

- ✚ Group Discussions – working together in groups to discuss different questions surrounding social media, self-image and confidence.



- ✚ Debate - different viewpoints around social media and its influence, encouraging you to build arguments, listen to opposing perspectives and communicate thoughts confidently.
- ✚ Take a Stand Activity - statements were presented and you physically moved to different sides of the room depending on whether you agreed, disagreed or were neutral. Then you had to explain and defend your position which encouraged critical thinking, confidence, communication and respectful disagreement.
- ✚ Fun/Interactive Activities - the session incorporated lighter activities to keep the conversation engaging and create an environment where you felt comfortable participating and sharing your perspectives.

Key Takeaways

The overall message of the session was that social media can influence how we see ourselves, but it does not have to define how we value ourselves.

- ❖ Be conscious of what you consume online.
- ❖ Avoid using other people's curated lives as a benchmark for your own.
- ❖ Understand that beauty, success and achievement do not have one fixed definition.
- ❖ Recognise the difference between online popularity and personal worth.
- ❖ Build confidence from within rather than relying entirely on external validation.
- ❖ Celebrate other people's achievements without seeing them as a reflection of your own inadequacy.
- ❖ Question unrealistic standards presented on social media.
- ❖ Remember your worth is not measured by followers, likes, appearance or online recognition.

Form 4 Session

In this session, that was for all the Form 4 girls that are completing high school and looking forward to joining the universities with much of the excitement leaning towards the fact that their next stage of life grants freedom. Having been used to a controlled and managed way of life in high schools, in the university there will be access to phones, tablets, laptops among others which allow access to social media freely. It is important for you to engage with social platforms knowing who you are and where you stand. You were given assignments to discuss in groups as follows:

Situation: A girl joins campus and is not from a well-off family. She lacks the fancy clothes, has a very outdated phone and sees her classmates posting themselves on vacation with fancy outfits, expensive phones and perfumes, gifts etc. What is that girl likely to think about herself?

Where do you stand? - From the first session of self-belief, you collated statements you had drafted that you were to answer: Agree/ Don't Agree/ Not sure. You then shared why you agree, don't agree, or not sure of each statement. You discussed how you can use social media positively to build your self-belief, and things to avoid as you navigate the technological world.

- ✚ Each of you then drafted a letter to your future self on how, going forward, you are going to believe in yourself and how you are going to navigate the social platforms as you preserve your self-worth and belief.

In Conclusion: Remember that **THE MOST IMPORTANT VOICE YOU SHOULD CARRY IS THE VOICE YOU SPEAK TO YOURSELF, THE VOICE THAT TRUSTS YOU, THE VOICE THAT BELIEVES IN YOU, THE VOICE THAT WANTS TO LEARN AFTER EVERY FAILURE, THE VOICE THAT MAKES YOU SELF AWARE.**

Prize Giving

During every August/final mentoring event of the year, we take time to recognise and award those who have



excelled during the year in several key areas: Academic achievement, Academic improvement, Leadership, Community Service and the most impacted girl by the mentoring event in an award named after Norma, one of the original trustees who developed much of the programme we follow during the mentoring events. This time we invited one of our alum, Grace from Kilungu, to speak on:

Overcoming Adversity Through Resilience.

You can have anything you want if you are willing to give up the belief that you can't have it.

Robert Anthony



Congratulations to our Awardees		
Class	Name	Award
Grade 10	Esther Mueni - Kilungu	Top student in the class
Form 3	Faith Mutheu - Kilungu	
	Melisa Kaveke - Kilungu	
	Theresia Mutio - Kilungu	
	Felistus Mutheu - Starehe	
	Veronica Muringe - Maryhill	
Form 4	Emelda Laura - Starehe	Most Improved in academics
	Nicholete Akoth - Starehe	
	Mitchel Sarah - Kilungu	
Form 3	Euvel Gloria	Leadership
Form 4	Mercy Jepngetich	
Form 3	Melisa Kaveke - Kilungu	Community Service
	Moreen Atieno - Starehe	
Form 4	Sophia Mukai - Kilungu	
	None	The Norma Impact Award

Overcoming Adversity Through Resilience

I return here as an alumna and beneficiary of a scholarship and mentorship programme that once told her not to worry about my high school fees and to focus on my dreams. The support that the PS gave me carried me through emotionally and financially, and I have come back to pass the same hope on to the current students, many of whom are your family's main hope and carry heavy expectations despite limited resources. My core message to you is that your background is a chapter in your story, not your final destination, and that hardship is a stepping stone rather than a permanent wall.

Success can be framed in three areas:

- Self-belief (*owning your strengths and never shrinking your ambition*),
- Focus (*keeping sight of long-term goals over short-term comfort*), and
- Resilience (*the ability to bounce back from setbacks, self-doubts, drop in grades*).

PS support continues into the job market; CV writing, interview prep, mentor connections, but despite the support PS showed me, life required me to show up with own focus and resilience that had to carry me through every open door. PS only gives platform and support, but it's your individual responsibility to push through. Congratulations to the day's award winners. For everyone not receiving a prize, today doesn't define your worth or potential. Keep your focus sharp, believe in your gifts, stay resilient, and one day stand where I stand, telling the next generation of girls, I made it, and so can you.

Sunday Morning Skits

The assignment given on Saturday was: in groups, to identify one problem in your community and invent a product or service to fix it. Then on Sunday morning, each group was to do a 5-minute pitch to a panel of "investors". The presentations showed creativity amongst the groups, teamwork and thinking outside the box to come with solutions. The winning invention was the group that came up with a solar food box/storage as a solution to food wastage.

Career Talks

On Sunday morning, we had an opportunity to hear from our alumni who spoke about their education journey and their careers. This was done in groups with two groups getting the opportunity to listen to two of the alumni.



From left: Marion, Mitchelle, Joyce and Elizabeth

Engineering by Michelle – Gatimu Class of 2020 (Dedan Kimathi University)

An alum of Gatimu who studied BSc. Electrical & Electronic Engineering at Dedan Kimathi University. The emphasis for a course in engineering is on mathematics and science, but it is important to research specific university and programme requirements early. Engineering disciplines available in Kenya include:

- Electrical and Electronic
- Civil
- Mechanical
- Mechatronics
- Chemical

- Telecommunications
- Biomedical
- Agricultural
- Environmental
- Computer
- Other emerging engineering fields such as renewable energy and energy systems engineering

Engineering is a broad field with diverse career possibilities. When choosing a university, it is important to consider factors such as the availability and accreditation of programmes, practical learning facilities, industry exposure, research opportunities, internships, and extracurricular activities.

There was emphasis on the importance of extracurricular activities. You were encouraged to participate in STEM clubs, competitions/Hackathons (*an event where people collaborate on engineering projects in a short period of time*), leadership, debate, sports, community service, innovation activities, and other programmes that help develop skills beyond academics.

Soft skills required to succeed in engineering, include:

- Communication
- teamwork
- critical thinking
- problem-solving
- time management
- adaptability
- resilience
- leadership
- networking

Career pathways available to engineers include opportunities in: energy and power, telecommunications, manufacturing, construction, technology, healthcare, agriculture, oil and gas, environmental sectors, government, consulting, entrepreneurship, and research. An engineering degree can lead to technical, managerial, research, innovation, and entrepreneurial careers. **Engineering is not only a career but an opportunity to solve real-world problems, innovate, and contribute to society.**

Nursing by Elizabeth – Starehe Class of 2020

An alumna from Starehe, who proceeded to Meru University for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, currently awaiting graduation and currently a BScN pre-intern at Kenyan Nurse Consultants LTD. Nursing is academically demanding and requires effort to get through it. A good grade from high school, preferably a B+ and above, to comfortably get into a public university. It is a profession that opens global opportunities, such as working abroad, as it is a globally recognised career.

Specialties include: critical care, paediatric, psychiatric, peri-operative, oncology, nurse educator, informatics, travel. As part of the discussion, other medical professions were discussed: medical lab, medicine and surgery, and clinical medicine. All these professions are equally important in the care of patients. To excel in a career in health care, you were told you had to develop discipline, hard work and confidence

Software Engineering by Marion – Starehe Class of 2021 (African Leadership University – ALU Rwanda)

Software engineering involves using technology and programming to build and improve software, websites, applications and other digital solutions. Roles and tasks one can pursue within software engineering include: software development, web and mobile development, testing, data and AI, and cybersecurity.

To pursue software engineering at university, the entry grades vary depending on the university, but doing well academically is important, especially in subjects such as mathematics, computer studies/ICT and sciences. It is important to not only focus on grades but to develop problem-solving skills and interest in technology.

In Kenya and Africa, the technology industry is growing and is being used in areas such as finance, healthcare, agriculture and education. This creates different opportunities for young people, including careers in software development, data and AI, cybersecurity and fintech, as well as opportunities to work remotely or build own technology solutions.

Marion also included a discussion on applying to universities abroad and looking for scholarship opportunities. She highlighted The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, which provides opportunities for talented young Africans, particularly those facing financial and other barriers, to access higher education and leadership development support. Each university that partners with The Mastercard Foundation has different requirements for a successful application but what is common across all the universities are transcripts, letters of recommendation and well written essays that tell your personal story. The current partner universities on the African continent are: African Leadership University (ALU) in Rwanda and Mauritius; Ashesi University in Ghana; United States International University-Africa (USIU) in Kenya; Kwame Nkrumah University in Ghana; and University of Cape Town in South Africa.

Film Production/Journalism by Joyce – Riruta Class of 2020

Joyce graduated with a degree in Broadcast Production (Film) from the University of Nairobi. She shared her career journey to demonstrate that choosing a career is not always a straightforward process. In primary school, she wanted to be a teacher, while in high school, she aspired to be a lawyer. When she joined university, she initially intended to pursue journalism. However, while studying within the Department of Journalism, she discovered and chose Film Production as her area of specialization.

She encouraged you not to feel pressured if you are currently unsure about the career you would like to pursue. Career paths change as you grow, gain new experiences, and discover different interests. It is important to remain

focused on your studies and prioritise performing well academically; a good academic performance will provide you with more opportunities when choosing your next steps.

Understanding Film Production - It is a broad field that involves several different areas of specialisation and requires knowledge and skills in various aspects of filmmaking which include:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ✚ Scriptwriting and storytelling | ✚ Sound |
| ✚ Directing | ✚ Production management |
| ✚ Camera operation and cinematography | ✚ Editing and post-production |
| ✚ Lighting | |

If you are interested in a creative career, you should take time to understand the different roles within your chosen industry rather than viewing a career as one single job. Understanding what professionals actually do on a day-to-day basis will help you make more informed decisions about whether a particular career suits your interests and strengths.

Key Takeaways from the Career Session

- ❖ Preparation for any career begins long before university. You should build strong academic foundations while also developing practical experiences, soft skills, curiosity, and resilience.
- ❖ It is important to choose careers based on your interests, strengths, and aspirations rather than stereotypes or external pressure.
- ❖ Laziness now, will cost you in future and it is important to learn to grab opportunities as they come.
- ❖ Remember, purpose can shift over time: while in high school, it is common to be interested in a particular course but as time progresses, one may shift to a completely different one and that is okay, because it takes time to know whether one actually loves it.
- ❖ Take up extracurricular activities as they make one a wholesome person not just academically.
- ❖ The Importance of Practical Experience – Be proactive in gaining practical experience while still studying by seeking opportunities to volunteer in different roles. Through these roles, you are able to gain practical knowledge that could not always be fully taught in the classroom and helps you understand how an industry operates, build practical skills, and gain exposure to the realities of working in the industry.
- ❖ Researching Career and Education Options – You were encouraged to research not only the entry requirements for a course, but also what the course actually entails, the different career paths it can lead to, and what professionals in that field do. Do research also on tertiary institutions and compare the quality of education, facilities, practical opportunities, and overall learning experience offered by different institutions before making decisions about where to study.
- ❖ Career Flexibility and Being Open-Minded – Career paths do not always follow the plans people make while



in school. Not everyone ends up pursuing the exact career they studied for in school. You should remain open-minded about future careers and understand that education can provide you with skills that may be useful in different industries.

I AM KIND
I AM LOVED
I AM SMART
I AM BRAVE
I AM HONEST
I AM STRONG
I AM HELPFUL
I CAN DO HARD THINGS
I AM BEAUTIFUL
I NEVER GIVE UP
I AM ENOUGH



**ONE DAY
YOU WILL TELL
THE STORY OF HOW
YOU OVERCAME
WHAT YOU
WENT THROUGH
AND IT WILL BE
SOMEONE ELSE'S
SURVIVAL GUIDE**

As always, our gratitude goes to administration at Precious Blood Secondary, Riruta for allowing us to use their facilities for the mentoring event and for the exemplary work by the catering department.

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