



OESISA
Quality Assurance Report
College

Summary of Recommendations



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Introduction

ISASA requires all member schools to undergo a quality assurance process every six years. This is undertaken by an independent organisation. Beginning in 2022, this organisation is The Office of Independent Schools Evaluations, Southern Africa (OISESA).

Three OISESA mentors conducted the onsite quality assurance visit at Bishops from Monday 24 April to Wednesday 26 April 2023. Prior to the onsite visit, surveys were completed by a range of stakeholder groups across the school community.

This document is a summary of the final OISESA quality assurance report. Each section will list the quality assurance standard followed by the commendations and recommendations of the OISESA evaluators.

1. Mission and Values

The school has a clear and accessible mission which guides the school's admissions, educational programme, planning, and decision making.

Commendations

- The recent updating of its Vision and Mission statements, including the values emphasised for students to embrace. Parents and staff were engaged in this significant process where every word has meaning for the community.
- The school's Admissions Policy is transparent and followed.
- The practical implementation of the school's diversity and transformation agenda in its Admissions Policy to ensure that students from former disadvantaged and marginalised communities have access to the excellent educational offer at Bishops.

Recommendations

- Continual campaigning is needed to find scholarships and bursaries to support the current and future generations to gain access to excellent education and opportunities.
- The resources of the *alumni* through The Old Diocesan Union must be vigorously pursued.

2. Governance & Leadership - The Board

The school has an effective leadership structure and an appropriate form of governance that ensures the school remains true to its mission and that it has the necessary resources to ensure its long-term sustainability.

Commendations

- The Governance of the College is sound with emphasis on its strategic, fiduciary, and generative functions.
- Any inroads into educational and operational functions from the Council are eliminated immediately.

- The Council Mandate specifies clearly the roles and responsibilities of Council members and the subcommittees.
- Diversity is on the agenda when Executive positions become vacant.

Recommendations

- Greater visibility of Council members to its stakeholders as it is important that parents and staff know the members of Councils.
- An annual report back session to stakeholders will offer the opportunity for Council members to be known to their constituents and indicate their roles, responsibilities, and accomplishments.

3. Leadership (The Head and the Senior Leadership Team)

Commendations

- The Executive Committee of the school and the College Executive Committee meet frequently and collaborate well together.
- The division of the roles and responsibilities ensure that all members of the Executive teams are focused and share their insights and challenges in order to ensure sound decisions.

Recommendations

- The diversity of the Executive Teams has been prioritised when vacancies arise.
- The separation of Discipline and Sport has also been prioritised as both areas are very demanding.

4. Sustainability

Commendations

- The financial management and risk assessment is excellent and ensures sustainability of the school in the future.
- The school is conscious of ensuring that its staff are well-remunerated, and all staff are provided with a daily lunch (if they so wish).
- The bursary and scholarship programmes are utilised effectively, and it is hoped that these funds will grow.

Recommendations

- Continued vigilance in this area is essential.
- The *alumni* should be encouraged to “give back” to their school by offering bursaries and scholarships to many boys previously disadvantaged in our country.

5. Culture & Climate

The school fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion of students, families, and staff, and recognises their fundamental human rights and dignity, which is consistent with the Bill of Rights, and aligns with the school's mission.

Commendations

- The DEB committees are key to the process of transformation of the Bishops community, including the *alumni*.
- The Diocesan Scholarship (DS) assists students from disadvantaged backgrounds in a meaningful way.
- Policies and procedures are in place and followed.

Recommendations

- The climate and culture of the educational institution is in flux and the school must ensure it is not responding to, but ahead of the issues emerging within society at large.
- The appointment of educators from formerly disadvantaged groups to be on the agenda.
- The exchange programme must be accessible to all students, especially those with limited means.
- The 'hidden' culture to be probed.

6. The Education Programme - Curriculum Delivery

Commendations

- The positive response from parents in the survey on the academic vision and offer is commendable.
- The resources available to all teachers and students enable 21st century skills, blended learning, and excellence in all spheres to be achieved.
- The introduction of the Cambridge International Assessment Curriculum offered parallel to the National Senior Certificate Curriculum is a value-add and exciting option for the students.

Recommendations

- Constant review of teaching and learning practices is essential.
- Class visits by the HODs and even the Executive Team are always useful to ensure productivity and support.
- The value of blended learning to continue to enhance academic programmes.
- All students should engage in a form of outreach.

7. Teaching & Learning

Commendations

- Well-qualified educators.
- Staff development.

Recommendations

- The need for extra time, spelling concessions and scribes is growing and although a huge challenge requires manageable solutions.
- The continued emphasis on the teaching and learning of global citizenship, 21st century skills and environmental sustainability.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) should be a key introduction to the school's curriculum planning.
- Educators must strive to grow and develop in their own learning areas/subjects.

8. Student Well-Being

The school supports the well-being of all students, including their academic needs and pastoral care, to ensure a positive school experience.

Commendations

- The House system for both day and boarding students is commendable and offers invaluable support.
- The Principal emphasises the values of the school whenever an opportunity arises. Recently his talk on Integrity was interrogated and explained, encouraging the boys to reflect on what each boy believes is important and what they stand for as a person. These messages reinforce the values that Bishops aspires to grow and develop in their students.
- Pastoral care is available for all students.
- The BSU offers invaluable support.

Recommendations

- Despite all the measures and support available, complacency must never set in.
- All staff must discuss and/or workshop current issues affecting the well-being of young people today so that whoever approaches them for advice or reports a problem to them, they are equipped to know how to deal with it or to whom to refer the student.

9. Safeguarding

The school is committed to maintaining a safe environment to protect students from harm.

Commendations

- The BSU and Sanatorium facilities are assets to the school.

- The boarders are in good care and the House Directors and staff are available to see to their needs.
- All tutors entering the Boarding Houses must have a police clearance.

Recommendations

- It is imperative that all safety guidelines are checked before any tour or camp.
- The correct teacher to student ratio must be followed.
- Provision for the safety of students is essential, especially when undertaking adventurous activities.

10. Staffing

The school is appropriately staffed to meet the requirements of the school's educational programme, operational requirements, and co-curricular programme.

Commendations

- The school emphasises the importance of staff knowing and following its Code of Conduct.
- Staff Development is encouraged.
- The Sanatorium and medical team available to all staff is very beneficial.
- The general working conditions, daily lunch and benefits are encouraging and entice staff to stay at the school.

Recommendations

- All educators must be SACE registered.
- Staff must have a specific job profile or performance indicators on which they can be appraised annually. At a focus group, staff wanted to know what they do well and where they can improve. Appraisals need not be linked to remuneration, but rather to growth and development.
- Students are sometimes the best indicators of an educator's performance, but this must be carefully driven and assessed.
- Performance appraisals must not be a burden to staff and appraisers.
- While all staff cannot be involved in all decision-making, they should be informed about the process of decision-making especially if decisions affect them directly.

11. Facilities & Infrastructure

The school's buildings, facilities and infrastructure effectively support the needs of the school's education and co-curricular programmes.

Commendations

- The emphasis on upgrading facilities, including access for people with disabilities, is noted.
- The IT available and training for staff and students ensures high levels of competencies.

- The College maintains its old, traditional buildings, whilst simultaneously building for future needs.

Recommendations

- The replacement of all asbestos roofs as stated in the 5-year roofing plan.
- The improvement of facilities for the support staff as planned.
- Integration of iSAMS into the financial functions and systems must be a priority.

12. Health & Safety

The school's Health & Safety policies and procedures ensure that it is a safe place for staff and students.

Commendations

- The sanatorium, its staff, and facilities, offer invaluable services to the school community.
- The Risk Manager ensures that all possible scenarios are covered.
- Health and safety procedures are in place and regularly checked.
- There are policies in place and students know the reporting procedures.

Recommendations

- Complacency must never set in as safety and security are priorities, especially with so many staff and students living on the campus.
- The adventurous activities undertaken are crucial in the life of a young person and time and effort must continue to cover all possible loopholes.

13. Communication

The school communicates regularly and effectively with its community.

Commendations

- The school website is very comprehensive and upgraded continuously.
- The intranet assists with all forms of internal communication.
- House Directors communicate directly to their parents.
- "My Bishops Life" offers regular news and updates.

Recommendations

- Although social media platforms are useful communication tools, one-on-one meetings with parents are always beneficial.
- Major societal issues impact directly on the lives of a school community and forums to address these issues/concerns are always useful.

14. The Boarding Programme

The school's boarding programme provides a positive, balanced, and enriching experience for students, and aligns effectively with the school's mission.

Commendations

- Safety and security policies and measures are followed.
- Pastoral care is available to the boarders.
- The staff to student ratio of 1:10 is more than adequate.
- The Sanatorium and fulltime Sister on campus with access to a doctor and hospital is most beneficial.
- The Boarding facilities are adequate with plenty of space available for leisure and a variety of activities.
- Investments have been made in upgrading the ablution facilities.
- House Directors and staff know their students and communicate with parents as often as necessary.

Recommendations

- The students must take care of their facilities and ensure that their rooms/cubicles and ablution facilities are clean.
- Although there are complaints about food, the menu is varied, adequate and nutritious.