



BISHOPS
DIOCESAN COLLEGE

OESISA
Quality Assurance Report
Prep School

Summary of Recommendations



OISESA

Office of Independent
Schools Evaluations
Southern Africa

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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

- I observed that the MITRE values (Manners, Integrity, Togetherness, Respect, Empathy) held so dear by the school are lived out in the daily experience of the boys at Bishops Prep and this is most admirable.
- It is evident that the school is true to the fundamental aim of its mission which is to offer an excellent all-round education to the students. Under the umbrella of this aim fall all the other elements of the mission - values, Christian faith, developing the full potential and embracing the individuality of each student, transformation, diversity and addressing global issues. The successful implementation of the mission is seen throughout the school.

Recommendations

- I endorse the recommendations as identified by the school, namely, ensuring that new staff become more familiar with the mission, ensuring that all teaching pedagogies speak to the realisation of the aims of the mission, and addressing environmental sustainability.
- In addition, I would suggest that the mission be reviewed every five years, to ensure that any new societal trends which could impact on it, are discussed robustly.

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 clearly specifies 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 is needed as it is important that parents and staff know the members of Councils.
- An annual report back session to stakeholders would offer the opportunity for Council members make themselves known to their constituents and indicate their roles, responsibilities and accomplishments.

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

Commendations

- During the onsite visit, it was evident that there is a strong, hands-on leadership team and a positive relationship between the team and the rest of the staff. This is praiseworthy.
- Succession plans provide a sense of stability and structure, and this bodes well for the future.

Recommendations

- I again endorse the areas for improvement identified by the school (maintaining connection between the leadership and the larger school; even greater transparency; more focus on environmental sustainability; focus on staff wellness; mentoring programme for young staff members who aspire to be future leaders).

4. Sustainability

Commendations

- The excellent all-round financial management has enabled the school to not only meet all their current needs but has ensured that there are sufficient reserves to meet future needs as well.
- It is praiseworthy that the school, in recognising the global trend towards environmental sustainability, is already seriously tackling this issue with clear plans, deliberate action, enthusiasm, and practical implementation.

Recommendations

- While I endorse the school's recommendations (enhancing the recycling and sustainability education for the students; monitoring expenditure in general; mitigation measures to counteract the impact of loadshedding), I also encourage it to continue to strengthen the measures already in place, both financially and environmentally

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 school displays a strong awareness of, and sensitivity to, the issues of diversity and transformation and this is noteworthy.
- The school is working hard to put numerous measures in place to translate theory into practice.
- The solid culture of respect across the campus is commendable.

Recommendations

- I encourage the school to continue the work it is doing to foster a culture of inclusion on the campus.
- I endorse the finding that even greater transparency in the hiring process should be pursued.

6. The Education Programme - Curriculum Delivery

Commendations

- I encourage the school to continue the work it is doing to foster a culture of inclusion on the campus.
- I endorse the finding that even greater transparency in the hiring process should be pursued.

Recommendations

- The school has identified some areas on which they want to focus, and I endorse these, namely, to improve their interaction with the College; peer reviews of teaching; review of facilities for some subjects; further research into global issues in education and assisting parents to access even more online information.
- I would also encourage the leadership to expand and strengthen their schedule for observation of teaching.
- The implementation of a Performance-Based Appraisal programme is advisable

7. Teaching & Learning

Commendations

- The subject knowledge and enthusiasm of the imparting of that knowledge by the teachers is noteworthy.
- The differentiation of lessons and activities ensures that all students feel comfortable in the classroom.
- The strong emphasis on 21st century thinking and the growing emphasis on environmental sustainability is applauded.

Recommendations

- The school is looking to increase collaboration between teachers, to strive for consistency in qualitative moderation across departments, and to rotate the teaching of different sets (ability groups) and these aims are endorsed.

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 BSU is an absolute asset to the school and the students and is most praiseworthy.

Recommendations

- It is important that the Code of Conduct for Students is accessible and familiar to all stakeholders and that its implementation is understood clearly and followed by all
- In addition, the school is encouraged to explore an intentional, rigorous, and relevant training programme for the Heads of Houses as these staff members fulfil a vitally important role in the pastoral support structures for the students.

9. Safeguarding

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

Commendations

- The emphasis placed on the care and protection of the students at all times is admirable.
- The comprehensiveness of policies and measures already in place for safeguarding is commendable.

Recommendations

- The school has identified the need to review security and they are encouraged to do this on an ongoing basis.

10. Staffing

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

Commendations

- It is clear to see that the staff at Bishops Prep are suitably qualified, enthusiastic, energetic, and dedicated, and they definitely teach from the heart.
- The commitment to transformation of the staff is to be applauded.

Recommendations

- The school has identified areas on which to focus (such as better orientation of new staff; more proactive crisis management; more and better-quality sport coaching staff; expansion of the intern programme) and these are endorsed.

11. Facilities & Infrastructure

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

Commendations

- All facilities are of an excellent standard but the Music Department, Art Department, Library and the Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) facility stand out.
- The lift in the Music block provides access for differently abled persons.

Recommendations

- The developmental areas identified by the school are endorsed (better utilisation of outdoor play areas; improvement of some aspects of the facilities; more effective blocking of internet use by the students; streamlining of all information platforms).

12. Health & Safety

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

Commendations

- The high level of health and safety monitoring is noteworthy.

Recommendations

- The school has identified many areas which it feels needs development. The focus could be on the tightening up of all emergency plans (such as fire drills), clearer procedures in the case of student injury, reviewing the food service in all ways and checking for vulnerable spots on the campus (for example, slippery stairs at the Art room, and hedges on the perimeter fence that can be climbed through). I endorse these identified areas.

13. Communication

The school communicates regularly and effectively with its community.

Commendations

- The frequency and high standard of communication, and the variety of platforms available to parents from the school are to be applauded.
- It is pleasing to observe that the Parents' Association (PA) is active and engages regularly with, and on behalf of parents, as do the Class Representatives.

Recommendations

- Based on the survey responses, the school has some recommendations it wishes to pursue, such as checking the amount of information included in the weekly news updates; posting more non-sport special achievements and moments; guidelines for parents for helping their children catch up on work after absence and teachers making use of a telephone call rather than emailing.
- The school is encouraged to pay particular attention to the amount and method of making information available to parents whose children move from Pre-Preparatory to the Preparatory School and those who move from Grade 3 to Grade 4, in terms of clarity and guidance for these new phases.
- Accuracy and detail in the information around the sports logistics could also be an area of focus, especially for the students coming from the Pre-Preparatory School.