

UPLANDS PREPARATORY SCHOOL



INTERNAL SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT



INTRODUCTION – A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF UPLANDS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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Dates of IQAA Evaluation - 1st – 5th August 2011 (Comprehensive five day evaluation)

HEAD OF SCHOOL

MR BRETT FROST

CHAIRMAN OF SCHOOL BOARD

MR BRUCE JAMES

SCHOOL EVALUATION TEAM

1. Mr Dave Ernstzen (Deputy Head)
2. Mrs Alexandra Frost (Head of Foundation Phase, Grade 1 teacher)
3. Mrs Sue Kloeck (Grade 5 teacher, HOD of English, Report writer)
4. Mrs Jane van der Merwe (Grade 2 teacher, HOD of Maths)
5. Mrs Cheryl Calmeyer (Grade 6 teacher)
6. Mrs Pat McCreedy (Learning Support Unit Co-ordinator)
7. Mrs Lindsay Rogerson (Grade 4 teacher)
8. Mrs Kathleen Vincent (Grade 3 teacher)
9. Mrs Angie Harrison (Remedial therapist)
10. Mrs Carol Frankle (Grade 2 teacher)
11. Mrs Mandy de Villiers (Grade 000 teacher)
12. Mrs Maeve Sidey (School Bursar)
13. Mrs Debbie van Rooyen (Headmaster's PA)

IQAA MENTOR

Mrs Margaret Rudolph

PROFILE OF UPLANDS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Our *Vision...*

... is to build self-confidence

Our *Mission ...*

... is to provide top quality, broad-based education that nurtures the potential of each child in a caring Christian environment.

Our *Intention...*

... is to educate the whole child. We strive to develop the full potential of each pupil and emphasise all aspects of his/ her potential. There is a carefully-worked out balance between academic, sporting, cultural, social and spiritual activities.

Our *History...*

... Uplands has been in existence for 83 years. Miss Fuller's opened her 'Homestead School' with six pupils in 1928. This Homestead School flourished and grew, until, in 1946, it was relocated to the Uplands Estate, which had been purchased from the estate of the late Mr WA Webster, and its name was changed to "Uplands School". UPS now has 445 pupils and 82 staff members.

Our *Location ...*

... is just outside White River, Mpumalanga. The school borders White River Country Estate (Golf Estate) with easy access to school for pupils to cycle to school. There is also a bus service available for pupils travelling from Nelspruit. Pupils also travel from other neighbouring towns, Hazyview and Sabie. The School's Boarding Establishment closed down at the end of 2010 as the numbers had dropped. There are still a few boarders from Swaziland and Malalane who board, by special arrangement, at Uplands College.

Our *Uplands Values...*



FACILITIES and RESOURCES

As from 1997 there have been two classes in each grade from Grade 0 to Grade 7 and in 2001 Grade 00 and Grade 000 were established in an area fenced off from the rest of the school. The Grade 000 class was originally named the “Wooden School”. The Grade 000s and 00s have separate fenced-off playgrounds.

Uplands Preparatory School has the following facilities available:

1. Sixteen classrooms to accommodate Grade 7s to Grade 0s with overhead fans. The IP classrooms are wheel chair friendly.
2. Two Grade 000 classrooms with own fenced off area
3. Two Grade 00 classrooms with own playground area
4. Media Centre with air-conditioned IT centre with 28 computers, Library equipped with 3 computers for research, Science Laboratory, Technology Centre, Art room & AV room equipped with Smart Board and DVD player.
5. Music Centre with 5 practice/ teaching rooms, each furnished with pianos, a large class teaching room with 8 marimbas and a sound-proof drumming room.
6. Learning Support Centre has 5 Remedial Therapy rooms for OT, Counselling Psychologist, Speech Therapists and 4 Remedial Therapists.
7. 25m X 6 lane Swimming pool with change rooms at pool.
8. Four tennis courts (All doubling up as Netball Courts)
9. Four big sports fields (for Athletics, Cricket, Soccer, Rugby and Hockey)
10. Four cricket nets with cricket bowling machine
11. Sports Pavilion with cloakrooms
12. “Uplands Beat”/ 4km track around the perimeter of the school for outdoor exercise and pursuits e.g. cycling
13. Equestrian Centre and stabling for 20 horses on the campus
14. School Hall with stage and chapel
15. Staff Room
16. Staff Workroom with 10 computers and 4 laptop stations.
17. ‘Outdoor Classroom’ at the Sport Pavilion (benches made from recycled plastic)
18. Dining Room and Kitchen
19. ‘Monkey Apple’ school uniform shop
20. Second hand clothing shop and costume room
21. Bicycle stands for over 30 bicycles

The campus is well-maintained and well-protected by an electric fence with full-time security guards on duty at the gate. The children’s safety is top priority.

COMPLIANCE

UPS has provisional accreditation from Umalusi. Provisional Accreditation Number: SCH00173PA (September 2005). The school is compliant with the ISASA requirements for membership.

AREAS OF OPERATION EVALUATED

A Comprehensive Evaluation was undertaken so as to include all areas of operation:

- Teaching, learning and attainments
- Functioning of the school
- Governance and management
- Societal involvement and values
- Distinctive features

MEANS AND METHODS USED FOR COMPILATION OF THE REPORT

The following means and methods supplied evidence for the report:

Opinion Surveys and Quality Targets

IQAA Opinion Surveys were completed by parents, pupils, teaching staff and support staff during June 2011.

Before the Evaluation staff completed the Quality target questionnaires and these ratings were used in conjunction with the opinion surveys.

Focus Group meetings

After receiving feedback from the opinion surveys, Team Members evaluated the results. Areas for further investigation were identified and focus group discussions were organised with different relevant groups in order to obtain a better understanding of the results. The Mentor facilitated all discussions with the exception of the junior pupils.

Classroom observations

During the course of the intensive evaluation week all teachers in both the primary and pre-school were visited by the Mentor and a team mentor.

Interviews

Representatives from all departments met with the Mentor for a general discussion.

OPINION SURVEYS

Focus groups were established and parents invited to attend. The recommendations from these focus groups have been noted and will receive due attention.

Focus group discussion where parents were invited to attend included: The role and importance of sport at Uplands Prep; Staff focus group; Discipline; Communication and Aftercare. Pupil focus group topics were on peer relationships.

The internal evaluation team examined the different phases viz the pre-primary phase, the intermediate phase and the senior phase. Recommendations from this include:

Foundation Phase

- Examine the needs and roles of teacher assistants.
- Outdoor playing equipment needs updating.
- More ball skills included and better sport options for the Foundation Phase.
- Policies and procedures reviewed.

Intermediate / Senior Phase

- The roles of managerial structures need to be re-examined.
- Classroom renovations would be helpful.
- Greater formalisation of all our school policies and procedures and an ongoing review strategy that promotes best practice and consistency.
- Consistency, consequence and constructive criticism needs to be paramount in all planning with regards to the learning programme, school policies and all academic matters.
- The use of technology to be assessed and upgraded.
- The removal of pupils from classrooms during the school day for music, sport and learning support was identified as a concern.
- The implementation of an appraisal system for all staff and the board.
- Review the CAPS (new curriculum assessment policy statement) for implementation and review.

Governance

- Update the structures; revisit the strategy and mission statement.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

The evaluation team identified many areas to celebrate and be proud of. Listed below is a selection:

- Christian ethos – we are an Anglican Diocese School and have a Communion Service every Friday.
- The integrated school day which includes lunch, a balanced approach and aftercare.
- The Learning Support Unit.
- Uplands Outreach which has been in existence since 1994.
- Eco-environmental focus and our Green Flag status as an institution.
- Our sport results, our cultural pursuits and our music opportunities.
- Our societal involvement and values.
- Establishment of Uplands College fourteen years ago.
- Fantastic environment to grow and nurture children.

- Well maintained grounds and historical traditions.
- Our courageous challenges and Thrasscot – our very own Thrass mascot which enhances our numeracy and literacy programme.
- The achievements of our pupils in all facets of the integrated day.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible person</u>	<u>Time frame for implementation and ongoing</u>
Teaching and learning			
Academic Management	Appointments of - Academic Head - Heads of Department and subject advisors - Sport advisor Appointment of teacher aids in FP	Head and Board	Term 4, 2011 January 2012
Curriculum	Updating curriculum and learning programme according to CAPS	Academic Head facilitating heads of department	January 2012
Homework	Policy to be reviewed and implemented	Academic Head in consultation with relevant staff	Term 4, 2011
Classroom revamp	Renovations of IP classrooms	George Jones	Term 2, 2012
Functioning of the school			
General school Policies	To be reviewed and Implemented as well as computerised	Head and Deputy Head	Starting Term 4, 2011
Communication	Between - school and parents - staff - staff and pupils		Ongoing
Orderliness	Discipline Policy to be revised	Deputy Head	Term 1, 2012

Security	Emergency Procedures to be practised.	Deputy Head	Term 4, 2011
Aftercare	Structuring of the Aftercare facility	Foundation Phase Head & Mrs Prior	Term 1, 2012
Sport	The sport code of conduct to be revised and implemented.	Sport co-ordinators and sports teachers	Term 1 2012
Governance and management			
The UPS Board	Identifying the various roles and duties of the Board	ISASA representatives and the Board	Term 4, 2011
Appraisal system	To be formulated and introduced	Headmaster	Term 1, 2012
Parent Code of Conduct	Policy to be drafted	Board / Management	Term 1, 2012

CONCLUSION

The Evaluation team named the whole Evaluation process ‘Reaching Up.’

We, the Staff, Parents and Pupils, have found the IQAA Comprehensive Evaluation to be a valuable, soul-searching experience. Through discussion, team work and investigative methods, we have revisited our vision, ethos and values and found that our teaching and learning environment is meeting the required standards and will continue to grow and improve in the future.

This report will be used for further planning and development and the areas of concern will be approached as they are prioritised. Our plans for the future we are calling ‘Reaching Up For.’ We are purposefully ‘**Reaching Up For**’ ‘consistency, consequences and constructiveness.’ We, as a staff, are positive that we are committed to assuring quality as best we can. We are proud of our pupils and school and we also show national pride when the National Anthem and School Hymn are sung at assembly every week.

On behalf of the Evaluation Team I would like to thank our team leaders for their guidance and assistance.

We would like to thank our mentor, Mrs Margaret Rudolph, for enriching our experience and for adding great value to the whole evaluation process with her recommendations, advice and professional input. It was a pleasure to host her at our school.