

No. 2 little Street
Ermelo
Mpumalanga
2350



+27 60 289 9979
+27 61 615 5991
blessedperfectacademy@gmail.com

Blessed Perfect Academy is committed absolutely to equality of opportunity for all learners and staff within the spirit of the School's Mission Statement. The School's Equality policy is designed to provide the framework and context to address the statutory duties introduced by The Equality Act of South Africa which is officially the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (PEPUDA), which prohibits unfair discrimination, harassment, and hate speech based on prohibited grounds such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

SCHOOL EQUALITY STATEMENT

- The School affirms that all individuals are entitled to the same equal rights and opportunities and have the same responsibilities regardless of their race, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or age.
- The School will seek to treat all those for whom it has responsibility, with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
- The school will respect and seek to fully utilise and develop the diverse skills, talents, and experiences of all its staff and learners.
- To this end, the school will actively engage with learners and staff in the development and implementation of this equality policy. It will also engage with the public and the community organisations as appropriate.
- The belief in equality and diversity underpins and impacts on all areas of activity and influences how the School works.
- The School has developed this Equality Policy to bring together Race, Disability, Age and Gender Equality Policy, including an equality action plan to ensure Equality and Diversity planning, implementation and review processes are understood.
- Our Equality Policy statement provides the framework to demonstrate the school's commitment to:
 - pro-actively promoting equality of opportunity for current and prospective learners and staff;
 - removing inappropriate barriers to access, achievement and progression;
 - eliminate any discrimination in relation to staff and learners, recruitment and promotion, the purchase of goods and services and in the content, delivery, and management of the curriculum;
 - value and celebrate the diversity and differences of everyone studying and working at the School;
 - ensure that all learners, staff, and visitors can go about their business in an atmosphere free from intimidation or abuse;



- widen participation to the full range of courses and other educational services for people from all social backgrounds and cultures;
 - provide support to enable individual learners of different abilities and needs to progress through the curriculum towards successful achievement, i.e. by meeting individual needs to enable fulfilment of potential;
 - provide a high-quality learning experience for learners and a supportive working environment for learners and staff;
 - recognise and reflect the positive contributions of all genders from different social backgrounds, cultures, religions, abilities, ages and sexual orientation.
- This statement applies to all stakeholders, including The Diocese of Clifton, Governors, staff, learners, parents/Guardians, visitors, and outside contractors actively engaged with the School.

AIMS OF THE EQUALITY POLICY

- The Equality Policy aims to incorporate all the School's existing equality and diversity policies into one document which will then be reviewed periodically. The process of equality implementation is included in the School quality assurance internal audit process.
- The School is committed to making changes in any area of School practice where there is evidence of failure to provide an appropriate and professional service. It is committed to addressing any areas of institutional failure in relation to issues of racism, sexism, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age or any other inequalities.
- The key aim of this Equality Policy is to ensure that all staff, learners and other School stakeholders are supported as follows:
 - to ensure that they are not denied opportunities for access, development and success within all reasonable circumstances;
 - to ensure that the School strives to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
 - to ensure fair and equitable opportunities for training and promotion are provided;
 - to promote good relations between people from different 'racial' groups;
 - to address the cause of any gender related pay gaps;
 - to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, encouraging their participation in public life and taking steps to meet disabled peoples' needs;
 - to monitor future legislation in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

OWNERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EQUALITY POLICY

- The School Management are legally responsible for overseeing the Equality Policy and for ensuring that it is effectively monitored and applied and to ensure and continuously improve the quality of equality and diversity throughout the School.
- The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the Equality and Diversity remain a high-profile agenda item in all business and activities of the School.



- The Equal Opportunities Committee is responsible for promoting, monitoring, and reviewing the Equality Policy and for evaluating its effectiveness.
- All employees and learners of the School have a responsibility for implementing the Equality Policy and promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of their work.
- Outside contractors working in the School have a responsibility for complying with the Equality Policy.

MANAGEMENT OF THE EQUALITY POLICY

- The minutes of the Equal Opportunities Committee will be circulated to SMT members, Departmental Heads and will be available on the School intranet.
- Together with the Principal, the Equal Opportunities Committee will create an action plan with timescales and measures of achievements to ensure that the School meets its requirements and commitments in terms of meeting the targets of the Equality Policy in relation to gender, race, age and disability.
- The Principal will make an annual report, together with an updated action plan, to the Governing body to review relevant performance indicators and make development proposals. This report will also be copied to the SMT.
- This Policy will be available for all staff to access on the School intranet.
- The School's register of identified risks will include controls to ensure the Equality Policy procedures are being effectively implemented.

MONITORING

- The School monitors its staff and learners in accordance with YPLA and OFSTED requirements, namely: race, gender, disability, and age.
- Key performance indicators will include:
 - ethnicity, gender, age, and disability profile of School staff;
 - types of jobs being undertaken by staff with disabilities (grade/salary level);
 - ethnicity, gender and disability of learners;
 - learner success rates – achievement and retention by gender, disability and race;
 - numbers of complaints or grievances of harassment and discrimination by gender, disability, age and race;
 - discipline, grievance and capability proceedings by gender, disability, age and race;
 - staff attendance at equality and diversity training events by gender, disability, age and race;
 - training and staff development application rates by gender, disability, age, and race.

Disability and Ethnicity Disclosure – it should be noted that this data is collected solely on the basis of self-declaration and whilst the School makes every effort to encourage such disclosure, we may not have an accurate disability and ethnicity profile.



ENSURING COMPLIANCE AND QUALITY OF PROVISION

- The School will ensure that:
 - Directors, staff, learners, and stakeholders (including work placement providers) are aware of our Equality Policy and any resultant action plans;
 - staff, learners, and stakeholders are aware of the value placed on equality of opportunity and diversity and that disciplinary action will be taken in the event of any breach of these policies;
 - governors and staff have access to all non-confidential information and progress reports, which will assist them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the policy;
 - the School publicity materials present accessible, appropriate, and positive images that support these provisions;
 - policy of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity. A programme of quality assurance for tutorial material valuing diversity will take place;
 - care will be taken to ensure that disabled learners and those from under-represented groups or from groups, who may have experienced unlawful or unfair discrimination, have access to appropriate support and facilities;
 - recruitment, selection and promotion procedures are designed to enable people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups to fully participate in the process;
 - staff development policy is designed to raise awareness and effectively meet the learning needs of all staff, including disadvantaged and under-represented groups;
 - action is taken to ensure that individuals will be treated equally and fairly and that decisions on pay, training, career management and selection for termination of employment are based solely on objective, non - discriminatory criteria;
 - lesson observation reports include criteria on racial, gender and disability issues where appropriate;
 - assessment and internal verification procedures include scrutiny of racial groups, gender and disability issues, where appropriate;
 - curriculum areas are required to assess performance in relation to racial, gender and disability issues and take action as appropriate;
 - positive action will be considered, where appropriate, on the recruitment and promotion of staff, based upon the analysis of racial, gender, age and disability monitoring information.

DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT/BULLYING

- **Discrimination** is the exertion of power or influence to the detriment of another individual or group because of their race, gender, disability (physical or mental impairment), age, sexual orientation, class or religion, family circumstances or political beliefs.
 - **Direct discrimination** is the treatment of a person of one group less favourably than others of another group in the same or similar circumstances.
 - **Indirect discrimination** is the application of a condition equal in an overt sense but covertly discriminatory in its effect on one particular group or individual.
- **Harassment** is any unwanted conduct that violates people's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment or any acts



which affect a person's safety or comfort which demean that person in any way.

Harassment may be:

- **Physical:** involving direct contact, assault or gestures; intimidation; aggressive behaviour.
 - **Verbal:** including unwelcome and thoughtless remarks, suggestions and propositions; malicious gossip; jokes and banter involving sexual, racial, religious, ageist and other discriminatory forms of innuendo.
 - **Non-verbal:** including offensive writing, literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery; deliberate exclusion from social activities.
- **Sexual harassment** is defined in law and includes:
 - Comments about the way a person looks which they find demeaning.
 - Indecent remarks.
 - Questions about another person's sex life.
 - Sexual demands by a member of own or the opposite sex.
 - Any conduct of a sexual nature which creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment for anyone; this includes displays of pornography and Internet downloading of offensive material at work or work placements.
 - **Bullying** is offensive, humiliating, undermining or intimidating behaviour towards an individual or groups of staff, usually amounting to an abuse of power but which is not defined as a type of discrimination under a range of equality laws. Bullying may take many forms, including:
 - Persistent criticism
 - Setting objectives with impossible deadlines or unachievable tasks
 - Ignoring or ostracising an individual
 - Removing areas of responsibility and substituting menial or trivial tasks
 - Constantly undervaluing effort
 - Spreading malicious rumours
 - Taking credit for other people's work or ideas
 - Overbearing or threatening behaviour which intimates future violence
 - Actual violence, pushing, using the body to prevent a person's movement or progress

These lists are not exhaustive.

- The Bullying & Harassment policy and procedure detail the steps which should be followed if an individual feels they have been harassed or bullied. Copies of this policy are available from the Policies area of the intranet or from the Human Resources Department.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAS)

- It is important to understand whether our services are meeting everyone's needs and that people who need our services have access to them. The School therefore readily accepts its duty to carry out impact assessments across a range of equality concepts and requirements.



- Assessments will be carried out on all new policies and services as they are developed and over time on all our existing policies and services.
- Training and support will be provided to staff with responsibility for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments.
- The impact assessments process and documentation can be found in our Equality Impact Assessment Policy and Procedure.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- The School is committed to delivering diversity awareness training to all members of staff with the aim of developing a culture which supports the principles of our Equality Policy and our specific obligations.
- This forms part of the School induction day which is mandatory for all new members of staff to attend.

POLICY PUBLICATION

- **Learners**
 - All learners will be able to access the policy from the School Intranet.
 - The induction programme for learners will highlight the School's commitment to equality and diversity. It will explain the action they can take if they believe they have encountered discrimination and how the School will support them.
 - School staff will reinforce this information during tutorials or work-based mentoring.
 - Publication to external partners, work placement providers, partners, contractors, associated employers and other stakeholders.
 - All work placement providers and partners will receive a summary of their responsibilities under the policy and will be required to signify their understanding and agreement to them with further briefings if required.
- **Staff**
 - All staff will have access to a full copy of this policy via the School intranet with an introduction in a special staff bulletin.
 - The induction programme for new staff will highlight the School's commitment to equality and diversity along with the action to be taken to support staff and learners who face discrimination and harassment.
 - A summary of the results of our monitoring will be included in future staff communication.

IMPLEMENTATION

- The School, consulting the recognised trade unions and staff representatives, will seek to ensure that all staffing policies and procedures (e.g. Recruitment and Selection Procedure) are non-discriminatory and that monitoring and any positive action processes are regularly reviewed and monitored.

COMPLAINTS

- The School will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment.



- Acts of racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, bullying, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.
- Staff who feel they are being harassed or bullied on these grounds by other members of staff should raise the matter under the School's Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- If, in the course of their work, School staff suffer discrimination from members of the public, the School will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.
- Any discriminatory behaviour related to race, gender or disability, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation directed against staff by learners will be dealt with under the learner disciplinary procedure.
- Learners/staff who wish to make a complaint about an issue or matter pertaining to equality should pursue this in accordance with the learner complaints procedure or the staff grievance procedure.
- The following sections support the overall aims of our Equality Policy and consider particular aspects of equality and diversity.

RACE AND ETHNICITY – POLICY STATEMENT

- The School celebrates and values the diversity brought by engaging staff from a variety of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. The School recognises the benefit that it brings in allowing it to meet the needs of our diverse learner population within a multi-cultural society.
- The School will treat all employees and learners with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from racial discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
- The terminology 'race' and 'racial group' reflects the law and refers to ethnicity, nationality, national origin, skin colour, or 'perceived race' in cases of discrimination.
- The School will seek not only to eliminate discrimination but also to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2006 by creating a working and learning environment based on positive relations between different racial groups.
- The School aims to create a positive inclusive ethos where issues of racism, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly, with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing racism and discrimination, respecting diversity and difference, and encouraging good relations between different racial groups.
- The School will work towards the elimination of racism whether overt, covert or by omission, and will ensure that individuals and communities have wherever possible equal access to our learning programmes and facilities.



- The School has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate any unlawful race discrimination.
 - Promote equality of opportunity.

- The School also has the following specific duties:
 - Prepare and maintain a written equality policy (incorporated in the School's Single Equality Policy) which meets the law and relevant codes of practice.
 - Assess the impact of its policies on learners and staff from different racial groups.
 - Monitor the admission and progress of learners and the recruitment and career progress of staff by racial groups.
 - Set out the School's arrangements for publishing the results for assessments and monitoring.
 - Where reasonably practicable publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring.
 - Be aware of the link between harassment and discrimination and in so doing provide conciliation.
 - Be aware of the link between race and religion.
 - Promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

- The School is committed to:
 - actively tackling any racial discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities and good race relations;
 - encouraging, supporting, and helping all learners and staff to reach their potential;
 - working with other institutions, local communities, and others to tackle racial discrimination and to encourage and promote good practice in achieving race equality;
 - making sure that the race equality policy and its procedures are followed and assessing the effects of the policy on staff and learners from different racial groups;
 - promoting, monitoring and quality assuring the processes to ensure the policy has impact.

GENDER - POLICY STATEMENT

- The School is committed to a policy of Gender Equality.

- The aim of the policy is to ensure that men, women, transgender and transsexual persons receive fair and equal treatment.

- The School aims to provide a service that, in its teaching, employment, administration and support actively strives to:
 - eliminate unlawful gender discrimination;
 - eliminate harassment based on gender differences;
 - promote positive attitudes towards individuals of all genders;
 - promote equality of opportunity between men, women, transgender and transsexuals;



- ensure that all employment and support requirements connected with pregnancy, care for children and family life are given close scrutiny to ensure fairness for all;
 - take steps to identify any shortfalls in our policies and practices which may inadvertently lead to gender inequalities.
- The School will:
 - work actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all that enables full participation and success in learning and employment and will positively challenge discrimination in every area of school life. The School will not allow sexual harassment or unfavourable treatment in any form;
 - recognise that people are sometimes treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of their gender. The School aims to eradicate gender discrimination;
 - take an organisational wide approach so that tangible outcomes and improvements for all can be achieved;
 - positively encourage learners into non-traditional areas of study and work to minimise gender stereotyping;
 - not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of gender re-assignment towards either trans-gendered or transsexual people;
 - strongly challenge, through the school disciplinary procedures, any incidents of sexual harassment in any area of school life;
 - ensure, where practicable, that working hours adjustments are in place to meet caring responsibilities;
 - ensure that staff who are pregnant and those with caring responsibilities are treated in accordance with the laws which cover their rights to time off;
 - consult with those who are expecting or have children or family responsibilities and other employees and service users to ensure that school policies and procedures are fair to all.

DISABILITY - POLICY STATEMENT

- The School affirms that disabled individuals are entitled to the same equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities as non-disabled individuals and will fulfil its requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The School is committed to making any reasonable adjustments that will promote equal access and opportunities for learners, staff and members of the public with disabilities/or learning disabilities using School facilities.
- The School will:
 - develop an organisational approach which promotes equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
 - eliminate discrimination which is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
 - eliminate harassment of disabled persons which is related to their disabilities;
 - promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons and encourage participation by disabled persons;



- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities and making considerations into whether this would involve treating disabled people more favourably than other persons;
 - ensure that all learners and employees have appropriate opportunities to disclose their disabilities/learning difficulties throughout their time at the School;
 - ensure that learners have access to flexible and inclusive learning opportunities and that information on support is available;
 - provide learners with individual learning programmes;
 - ensure that disabled staff and learners have access to specialist equipment and technology where appropriate to allow equality of opportunity;
 - provide information in a variety of formats to ensure equal access;
 - maintain links with external agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective support for staff and learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties;
 - ensure that where appropriate, its services and facilities are open to the public and that members of the public have equal treatment when accessing them.
- The School will adopt a joint approach through actively involving disabled people in the development of its disability policy and procedures. This will include involvement in:
 - Identifying barriers faced by disabled people within the School.
 - Helping to set priorities for action plans.
 - Assisting with planning activity.
 - Involvement will include key partner and referral agencies, disabled service users, existing and prospective staff and learners, relevant funding bodies and appropriate outside bodies.
 - The method and process of involvement will vary and opinions will be sought as to the most effective means of involvement.

AGE – POLICY STATEMENT

- The School and any agency it contracts with will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of age. Criteria will be based on possession of appropriate skills to undertake the course or employment.
- The School will encourage and support learners and staff to challenge prejudice, stereotyping and intolerance, and will manage the environment so that individuals' dignity and rights are maintained.

RELIGION – POLICY STATEMENT

- The School strives to welcome learners and staff regardless of their religion or belief preferences. Everyone is regarded as an individual, and the School encourages and celebrates the contributions that they bring to the School.
- Having said the above, the School is a Christian faith school.. ***To this end:***
 - Priority is given, within parameters defined within the School's admission policy, to applications from all children.

This policy was adopted by the School Management on _____



This policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents and learners on request.

This policy will be reviewed and updated every year.

Signed _____ Date: _____
School Management

Signed _____ Date: _____
Principal

Signed _____ Date: _____
Educator Representative

