

Feedback to all Alumnae

Demand

Comprehensive Response

A review of the code of conduct with input from current and past students working with management. Clear consequences and transparent reporting on resulting actions need to be communicated.

This was done in 2016 in collaboration with learners and staff and with a particular focus on transformation. We will be revisiting this again, together with an external consultant.

Consequences are listed in the code of conduct and out of respect for each individual we cannot report on disciplinary actions taken. Each learner/staff member, however, is free to divulge actions taken against them should they wish to do so.

The acceptance policy of the school needs to be reviewed.

The Admissions Policy is reviewed every year by the SGB. Since 2019 we have added an equity score to our processing of Grade 8 applications in an attempt to improve the diversity of our learners going forward and, in particular, to increase the number of BIPOC.

The Governing Body Foundation, the WCED and an external company have given us guidance and advice on this policy in previous years. Last year we got some independent advice about amending our Admissions Policy and, specifically, with regards to ways of shifting the demographics of our school.

Last year we asked that the selection process be audited and this was done by two parents on the SGB who are POC. They made various recommendations to us and we incorporated their suggestions into our process this year.

While we can ensure that we offer a significant number of places in Grade 8 to POC in order to change the diversity of the students at our school, unfortunately we cannot control who accepts the places that we have offered.

	<p>This means that, even though we may offer a significant number of places to POC, they may choose to accept a place at another school, which then means that we may end up with fewer POC and BIPOC than we had hoped for in any given year.</p> <p>It is our intention to set and publish targets in this respect on our school website as a way of monitoring our progress and so that, ultimately, we can be held accountable for reaching these goals.</p>
<p>An increase in Black student intake and structural support for Black, Indigenous People Of Colour (BIPOC) students: Provide scholarships for black students, on the basis of financial need in addition to those granted on the basis of excellence in academics, culture or sport.</p> <p>Admit more black learners every year in Grade 8 (specific target needed here).</p>	<p>Academic and Sport scholarships were purposefully scrapped two years ago and this money was redirected to make it possible to assist more BIPOC to attend our school.</p> <p>This year we introduced an academic bursary specifically reserved for BIPOC, which is means based - the amounts awarded are on a sliding scale, according to financial need. (Based on the process used by tertiary institutions i.e. NFSAS, where parents have to submit specific documentation such as proof of income, etc.)</p> <p>We would like to challenge each year group of RGHS alumnae to contribute financially to this initiative in order to enable more BIPOC to attend RGHS. Each bursary awarded could then carry the name of the year group that has made this possible e.g. the 2019 RGHS Academic Bursary.</p> <p>We also have accepted more learners from scholarship foundations and NGOs such as Alan Gray and Students for a Better Future.</p> <p>We will be publishing targets for both learner enrollment and staff employment to increase our accountability in this area.</p>
<p>Remove institutional measures that unfairly disadvantage students because of factors beyond students' control e.g.: late duty - in this case,</p>	<p>There is no punishment for arriving late. This was scrapped some years ago.</p>

<p>recording late coming is essential for monitoring who is present during the school day but the punitive element is unnecessary and should be done away with.</p>	<p>The only reason a learner has to register in the late book is so that we know that they have arrived safely at school and so that the emergency evacuation register is kept up to date.</p>
<p>Inclusivity not merely accommodation e.g.: standardised halaal/kosher catering at school events, tuckshop and at Erinville hostel.</p>	<p>The Tuckshop serves no pork products and sources its meat products from Halaal suppliers, but is not Halaal certified. As above, if there is a demand for Halaal-certified meals, we will investigate this option.</p> <p>Halaal, vegetarian and vegan options are now standard at all catered school events. The Hostel kitchen has served food suitable for a Halaal diet for a number of years. In February this year we consulted with a devout Muslim member of the SGB who confirmed that the measures we have in place makes this acceptable. Hostel staff are in contact with an independent advisor and in communication with the Muslim boarders and their families. We are investigating ways of offering Halaal-certified meals to boarders.</p>
<p>Further consideration for Muslim, Indian, and any other religious groups during times of fasting or other religious practices which may have an effect on their ability to properly function at school.</p>	<p>For the past few years we have indicated on the school calendar that no assessments should be done on significant religious occasions such as Eid and agree that students should not be disadvantaged in any way.</p> <p>Going forward we will be mindful to ensure that the day before and after Eid are also taken into consideration.</p>
<p>RGHS and RGJS need to offer an unequivocal public apology that acknowledges the events that have happened and the trauma that has been caused.</p>	<p>It is clear that there are learners at RGHS, both past and present, who have been hurt by racism as well as other forms of discrimination, both systemic and interpersonal, and we sincerely apologise. As staff and governing body, we are committed to anti-racism and we take our responsibility to create an inclusive campus with the utmost seriousness. We are more determined than ever to foster an inclusive and safe learning environment that is in line with our society's values and free of discrimination, and we expect the same from our student body.</p>

	<p>NB: We are unable to comment on behalf of RGJS as they are a separate school. We have requested that the RA set up two different subcommittees, so that issues relating to the two schools can be dealt with separately.</p>
<p>A public apology from the school and an internal apology by the main aggressor, [REDACTED] as identified by countless students. This will be required to be sent to all past and present pupils.</p> <p>The removal of [REDACTED] as a member of staff.</p>	<p>See above.</p> <p>With regards to teachers accused of racism, we need to explain that there are two employers of staff at RGHS, the School Governing Body and Western Cape Education Department (WCED), which respectively handle disciplinary matters for those in their employ.</p> <p>As [REDACTED] is employed by the WCED, the school is not able to terminate her employment. Labour law requires proper processes to be followed that include restorative and positive discipline.</p> <p>Proper disciplinary procedures have been followed for accusations that were brought to the Principal's attention between January 2017 and May 2020.</p> <p>With permission, we can say that past incidents involving [REDACTED] who is a WCED employee, were dealt with by a WCED disciplinary process at the end of 2018. The details of this are confidential due to labour laws and to protect the identity and privacy of the complainants. [REDACTED] has issued a public apology to all staff, parents and learners which is attached.</p>

<p>Disciplinary action against any staff member or student who is guilty of discrimination of any kind. Repeatedly problematic teachers must be held accountable, whether they are alum or not.</p>	<p>The staff code of conduct lists discrimination as a disciplinary offence:</p> <p>“xi. unfairly discriminates against other persons on the basis of race, gender, disability, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic and social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, birth, family responsibility, HIV status, political opinion or other grounds prohibited by the Constitution;”</p> <p>Proper disciplinary procedures have been followed with any such accusations that were brought to the Principal’s attention between January 2017 and May 2020. The details remain confidential to protect the privacy of all those involved and to comply with labour law.</p>
<p>The integration of the grounds staff into these discussions and the Rustenburg community as a whole.</p>	<p>Grounds and cleaning staff have been included in all staff events, including discussions around transformation matters, over the past four years.</p>
<p>The children of the ground staff should be provided with the same opportunities for bursaries.</p>	<p>The admissions process is open to all without restriction.</p> <p>It is illegal to pay the school fees of an employee, but we can do more to help them with the application process, both for the school and the financial aid that is available, such as bursaries and fee exemptions.</p>
<p>There is a need for clear accountability that is action-centered, not shrouded in PR language, and broadly communicated (social media announcements, sent via Alumnet emails and mentioned during assemblies). The school must state what has been done thus far (school song and hijab uniform), not to dispel current attention or act as if what has</p>	<p>We will create a Transformation section on the school website, which will contain both a record of the journey we have already been on, and also giving clear targets for the journey ahead of us.</p> <p>See the ‘Did Your Daughter Tell You’ portion of our newsletter (on our website at https://www.rghs.org.za/did-your-daughter-tell-you/) and the recent newsletter sent to alumnae from the RA.</p>

<p>been done will suffice, but for transparency.</p>	
<p>The PR and statements come across as unfeeling and as if management is not really listening or committed to action. Constantly referencing the school's values without practical examples of where they are being honoured and upheld only worsens this impression.</p>	<p>We are listening and committed to action. We hope that the responses in this document have helped understand our intent.</p>
<p>Deadlines for report-back need to be established if an issue is highlighted (date to be discussed with management).</p>	<p>This is part of any process as it depends on which form the action takes.</p> <p>Factors such as education and procurement - governing legislation, stakeholder timetables, and the impact of unforeseen circumstances should not be ignored in such processes. These can force timelines to become protracted.</p>
<p>Representation of BIPOC must be meaningfully implemented in leadership structures (management and student leadership) and not limited to tokenised leaders on student leadership bodies.</p>	<p>All student leadership roles are elected democratically.</p> <p>The management of the school has been restructured recently and now contains more POC and BIPOC than in the past.</p> <p>An average of 57% of staff appointments in 2018 and 2019 were people of colour.</p> <p>Both student and staff leadership structures are currently under review, and the issue of diversity in leadership will form part of this review.</p>
<p>Support, encourage and capacitate the learning of Xhosa as a language.</p>	<p>This is a process we embarked on last year, for implementation in 2020. It was decided that, in addition to isiXhosa FAL, we would offer conversational isiXhosa for two years until we have enough teaching time allocated to make it financially feasible for a teacher to accept a SAL post.</p>

	<p>It is difficult to recruit someone to fill a position that is only one or two lessons a week. Most teachers don't consider the remuneration sufficient for the time and travel costs to come in for such a small, part-time post, so we need to grow the subject in our school first.</p> <p>Conversational isiXhosa is a way of building up towards our goal of offering the subject as a SAL. This year we have seven Grade 8 pupils who chose Conversational isiXhosa as an option. We hope that more learners will be enthusiastic about choosing this subject option in the future, so that it can flourish.</p>
<p>More black teachers should be appointed at RGHS, and not be limited to language teachers.</p>	<p>Employment Equity considerations form part of every employment process and the black teachers we employ are not only in the language department.</p> <p>Subject departments that display diversity are: BIPOC = isiXhosa, French, Mathematics, Music POC = Information Technology, Afrikaans, Consumer Studies/Technology, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Life Orientation, History, French, Accounting/EMS, Mathematical Literacy, Music.</p>
<p>Invite alumnae to discussions and do not dismiss the deeply emotive nature of what alum might raise at such discussions. Alumnae to facilitate various discussions amongst themselves and include learners who are currently at Rustenburg junior and high school.</p>	<p>A great idea - we are already working through the Rustenburg Alumnae to arrange this.</p> <p>Two years ago we had open meetings for Alumnae which were fully booked, but then unfortunately poorly attended. Those who attended seemed to have found these meetings very useful.</p>

<p>Continuous compulsory workshops for both staff and students about white privilege and systematic racism.</p>	<p>All staff have been involved in a variety of transformation workshops since January 2016.</p> <p>The most notable were full day workshops on “Implicit Bias” run by Roy Hellenberg and Dylan Wray during 2017 (for all staff) and 2018 (for the whole school i.e. pupils and all staff).</p> <p>We regularly have staff inset training around such topics.</p> <p>Dialogue Days have been held for all learners and facilitated by teaching staff over the past 3 years - topics have included white privilege, systemic racism and racism in schools.</p> <p>Students from UCT’s Social Justice Project have been involved in running workshops on racism and white privilege with our Grade 8s since 2018. These workshops take place during Life Orientation classes. This is in addition to the LO curriculum.</p>
<p>Educate students AND staff on anti-racism which focuses on the experiences of BIPOC (lead by a qualified alum, Rustenburg Alumnae will assist with finding the best person).</p>	<p>We have held various workshops and training sessions on this previously. We are pleased that Alumnae want to be part of our continued efforts and hope to draw on their experiences and expertise.</p>
<p>Dialogue days must be re-evaluated, have more meaningful engagement and need to be led and facilitated by representatives who have experienced racism - alumnae or staff or current school leaders e.g. compulsory panel discussions held by BIPOC and POC staff and students.</p>	<p>We constantly evaluate our Dialogue Days and ask for feedback from pupils after each Dialogue Day. Our Dialogue Day assembly in Term 1 this year was run by three Matric students (one BIPOC, one POC and one white student). They spoke from their own personal experience of what it has been like attending ex-Model C schools.</p> <p>We will continue to evaluate these Dialogue Days based on feedback received. We have not been able to hold any further this year due to the lockdown but welcome involvement from Alumnae in future.</p>

	<p>The current transformation team are all members of staff who have volunteered to be part of this team. They spend many extra hours planning and implementing the Dialogue Days (mostly over weekends and holidays).</p>
<p>Rustenburg Alumnae need to be more involved in discussion and decision making regarding the school. The culture surrounding representative bodies needs to shift in order to make people feel as though their input will be valued and fruitful; a pathway to authentic representation & relieve the burden off of tokenised individuals. A representative of the Rustenburg Alumnae committee should be on the SGB.</p>	<p>The decision-making bodies of the school, as stipulated by the South African Schools Act, are the School Governing Body (governance) and the school management.</p> <p>We would welcome having past pupils involved in the life of the school and have actively engaged with the Rustenburg Old Girls' Union previously and the Rustenburg Alumnae more recently in this regard. We hope that initiatives such as the alumnae mentoring programme are supported by past and present pupils and prove fruitful.</p> <p>For more than two decades Rustenburg Girls' High School has provided nearly 90% of the financial input into the RA, by paying the lifetime membership for the matric class each year. Unfortunately RA has not had a high profile in the school in the past and we look forward to a greater contribution by alumnae going forward..</p> <p>Alumnae representatives have been invited to SGB meetings in the past and we hope to continue to do so in the future.</p>
<p>Opportunities for learners to partake in conferences and competitions even if they cannot afford it. There should be clear and communicated options to address situations where a learner wants to join an extracurricular activity but her family cannot afford to financially support her.</p>	<p>Financial need is not an obstacle to a learner attending a tournament or competition where they have been selected to represent the school.</p> <p>For optional tours, we have occasionally been able to support learners in need through sponsorships. We would welcome financial contributions from alumnae to enable this to happen more frequently.</p>

<p>A class/orientation project to be implemented in Grade 8 to be considered where learners are required to give a presentation to their class about themselves and their culture. This allows them, possibly for the first time, to enter school and become confident in their identities and cultural contexts. It reduces a chance for assimilation based on peer pressure and allows learners to get to know each other.</p>	<p>This has been done in Grade 8 English for the past two years. Each pupil does an oral where they talk about themselves and their culture. It has also previously been done in Afrikaans but was not done this year it was removed from the amended CAPS syllabus. Life Orientation is looking to do something similar next year.</p> <p>ICT has been doing something similar and uses this as an opportunity to expand their knowledge of presentation software like Keynote.</p> <p>In addition to this, the Grade 8 Orientation programme now includes a workshop on Belonging, Inclusion and Exclusion. It also involves breaking down what the students perceive to be the RGHS mould, they are also introduced to concepts like white privilege. This has been part of the Orientation programme since 2019.</p>
<p>The school must make a concerted effort to ensure that minorities, including but not limited to BIPOC and queer minorities, are represented in its psychosocial support staff. School counselors should be separate from the teaching staff.</p> <p>Re-evaluation of the counselling staff with regard to confidentiality.</p>	<p>The decision to appoint a person of colour as a counsellor was approved by the SGB at the start of 2020 but was halted by lockdown and the necessity of space.</p> <p>We have advertised for a Social Worker/Clinical Psychologist to be permanently employed/retained at RGHS and this will be an Equity appointment.</p> <p>In the meantime we have appointed a woman of colour for the following four weeks, for counselling for learners and staff. This will be extended if necessary.</p>

<p>Free and professional counselling made available to staff and students whose mental health has suffered as a result of the discrimination at the school, or for any other reason. This will remain confidential per standard requirements, and staff and students will not be required to disclose that they are attending these sessions.</p>	<p>Three private psychologists are currently employed, on an ad-hoc basis, to provide support to staff and Matric learners.</p> <p>See above for more information.</p>
<p>Mental health needs to be addressed and acknowledged in the same manner as physical health.</p>	<p>We have had one Dialogue Day dealing with mental health issues. The appointment of a third, non-teaching counsellor (see above) will greatly add to our capacity to support learners and staff in this area.</p>
<p>A complaints body needs to be established. A way for current learners to openly express their grievances to management, anonymously or not, so that the body can raise it with the principal on a weekly/bi-monthly basis.</p>	<p>We are in discussions with Ms Lovelyn Nwadeyi around this matter.</p>
<p>Further education on the LGBTQI+ community.</p>	<p>This does form part of our initiatives of removing institutionalised discrimination and is addressed as part of the LO curriculum.</p> <p>We have a PRIDE Society that has been active in the school for a number of years now.</p>

<p>Staff members should not be able to interfere in the social media lives of present students. Posts which do not concern the school should not be the school's business.</p>	<p>We respectfully disagree. The actions of a few can taint the reputation of many - the school reserves the right to discipline learners who bring the school into disrepute. This forms part of the School Rules and the Acceptable Use Policy:</p> <p>“Understand that you are an ambassador for the school in all online activities. Material published on social networking websites should not reflect negatively on fellow learners, educators or the school. You will be held responsible for how you represent yourself and your school on the internet.”</p> <p>Matters not connected to the school are not interfered in. We do however encourage learners to always act responsibly on social media as their actions can lead to other people online taking legal and other forms of retaliation against them in their personal capacity.</p>
<p>A genuine open-door policy when parents and students raise issues of discrimination and bullying. This will be required to be met with further investigation.</p>	<p>There is an open-door policy and concerns that are brought to our attention are always taken seriously and investigated. We are always willing to enter into dialogue with our parents and learners, but such matters need to follow the correct channels to ensure that they reach the correct people and can be addressed promptly and effectively.</p>
<p>Bullying is to be properly investigated and handled in the correct manner which is in line with the no bullying policy of the school.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>Collaboration with surrounding Southern Suburbs schools in the education process with regard to Gender Based Violence.</p>	<p>We have already started this process and have met with representatives of other schools, however, our priorities lie with educating those in our school first.</p>

<p>Sporting teams need to be re-evaluated for racial ratio, according to Western Province regulations.</p>	<p>We will re-evaluate our sporting codes at RGHS, including the trophies that are awarded, to ensure that all sports are acknowledged and treated fairly.</p>
<p>All sports teams are to be acknowledged at the same level; the touch rugby team in particular.</p>	<p>We will investigate sport teams and their racial demographics at school level, as well as those we send to WP trials.</p>
<p>Sports coaches need to be re-evaluated as to not include staff members as this creates bias in the classroom.</p>	<p>A real effort has been made via the RGHSSport Instagram platform to acknowledge all sports teams on a similar level. We will continue to ensure that Touch Rugby gets the acknowledgment it rightly deserves.</p>
<p>The head of sport will be required to properly address these changes and approach potential coaches.</p>	<p>We respectfully disagree with staff members not being sports coaches. Staff members who are sports coaches understand the balance between the academic demands vs the need to play sport. Staff members who have a passion for coaching will continue to (be allowed to) coach their chosen sport.</p>
<p>An equal number of BIPOC and POC in ratio to white students are required to be sent to Western Province trials for all large sports teams.</p>	<p>RGHS currently employs POC in five of the 11 sports codes offered. We will endeavour to employ more BIPOC in the future.</p>