



BISHOPS PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

IQAA REPORT

NOVEMBER 2014

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INTRODUCTION:

School's name:	Diocesan College, better known as Bishops – Bishops Pre-Preparatory
Physical address:	Sandown Road, Rondebosch, 7700
Postal address:	As above
Email address:	nvanzyl@bishops.org.za
Principal:	Mr Guy Pearson
Headmaster:	Mr Greg Brown
Head of Department:	Mrs Noell Andrews
Evaluation team:	Mrs Noell Andrews, Mrs Carmen van Zyl and Mrs Sharlene Groom
Mentor:	Mr Dave Shutte
Date of evaluation:	29 September 2014
Model used:	Core

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL:

Bishops Pre-Preparatory school is an Anglican school with a Christian ethos set in Rondebosch in Cape Town. It is a department of the Preparatory school but is situated on the College grounds two blocks away from the Preparatory school in Fir Road.

The school was established in 1962 when a small pre-school on the grounds was incorporated into Bishops with the enrolment of 24 boys. The school has since grown to have an enrolment of 216 boys with 9 classes (3 per grade) of 24 boys from grade R to grade 2; ranging in age from 5 years old to 8 years old. We only accept boys in the year they turn 6.

There is a Head of Department and 9 full time class teachers; 1 part-time full-time reading teacher who assists all the teachers in grades 1 and 2 with their reading groups on a daily basis; 1 full-time music teacher; 3 classroom assistants or teachers' aides; 3 learnerships who are studying towards their B Ed Foundation Phase degrees through UNISA; 1 school secretary and 6 therapists (all independent) who work daily within the school. The therapies provided are Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Learner Support perhaps better understood as Remedial Therapy. There are also two cleaners permanently attached to this department.

Areas of operation evaluated:

- Curriculum
- Learning
- Resources and Support
- Ethos
- Assessment
- Staff Development
- Policies – see the College report
- Finance – see the College report
- Facilities
- Conduct
- Security and Safety
- Health Care
- Communication
- Environment
- Aftercare

Means and Methods:

- Parent online opinion survey
- Staff online opinion survey
- Grade 1 and 2 pupil opinion survey
- Staff Focus groups
- Pupil Focus groups
- Class room visits
- Observations of formal and informal playtime
- Observations
- Interviews
- Research: records; reports; policies; appraisal; conferences

Opinion surveys:

The parents participated in an online opinion survey and there were 74 responses with 68 being completed.

Although there was a relatively small response it was felt that had parents felt more strongly they would have participated in the survey. The negative response to question 22 about being critical of the school was very possibly linked to the expectations of the parent body. It was felt that there was no need to have a parent focus group based on these results; however, the comments were considered and there were some which were directly related to our facilities or lack thereof such as a designated music room, a library and media centre and an adequate school hall. These were also picked up on the staff responses.

The staff completed an online survey and they had areas of concern such as the safety of possessions, the school's facilities, classes too big considering the number of boys with barriers to learning we support. The other areas of concern were related more directly to teachers' opinions of working within the school and its way of functioning. It was decided to hold a focus group where teachers were able to enlarge on their comments.

The grade 1 and 2 boys were surveyed using a document we created and three areas were flagged regarding the 'enjoyment of lessons', 'having fun while learning' and 'being happy to go to aftercare'.

Teams' findings:

Curriculum – The curriculum is child centered across the three grades and is flexible around changes. The programme ensures the development of fine motor movement and a gross motor programme forms part of the physical education programme.

A full time music teacher teaches the boys from grade R – 2. In grade 1 and 2 the boys audition early in the year for the choir. The music teacher plays a significant role in preparing the boys for the biannual production and individually for the Royal Schools of Music examinations.

Drama lessons are offered to the grade 1 and 2 boys during the 2nd and 3rd term by a fully qualified teacher. Biannually she is very involved in preparing the boys for productions. The idea of being able to offer this each term to the boys from grade R - 2 has been suggested.

The curriculum includes plenty of opportunity for developing an awareness of the environment through exploration, discovery and experimentation.

The classrooms are well equipped and include sets of sports equipment. Some wonderful outdoor building equipment has been purchased for grade 2 and this will be expanded to grade 1; providing an opportunity for more fantasy play.

Planning is of a high calibre with teachers meeting weekly to plan across the three learning areas. They are well prepared daily based on observations made while teaching, and ensure good record keeping and the meeting of outcomes.

Conclusion of findings: There is lots of flexibility within lessons for free and guided activities; there is a formal routine which allows for informal spontaneity; producing active and passive experiences for the boys. The holistic approach to education is obvious within this school. The whole boy is considered and his emotional, social and academic wellbeing within the school are constantly being monitored by teachers and, where necessary support is given.

Learning - The team's conclusions were drawn from observations during playtime, classroom visits and observed lessons, a staff focus group discussion, the grade 1 and 2 boys' opinion survey and parents' opinion survey and the visit by the mentor, Mr Dave Shutte.

The classroom visits were generally very positive with reports of relaxed and happy learning environments that are well equipped. The teachers allow for plenty of pupil contribution and involvement in the lessons, so allowing for creativity and individuality in a very positive way through clever questioning, engagement and discussion. Children are given opportunities to work independently as well as in group activities.

The level of communication is appropriate, stimulating and engaging with teachers being aware of the different learning styles and making constant use of strategies to support these. There is good interaction and relationship between the teachers, boys and parents and the team display an understanding of the importance and roles of what are called EQ and IQ when teaching and Teachers make use of positive reinforcement and encouragement as they develop the boys' confidence and enthusiasm for school and learning. The children are taught to reject all forms of racism and exclusion, and inappropriate sex and gender discrimination, as part of the Lifeskills programme – an area requiring ongoing attention in the moment.

Resources:

(Indoor) - The positioning of the classrooms with access to the outside and playgrounds allows for lots of opportunity for movement without disturbing others. The classrooms are large and airy. They are well equipped with apparatus for both teacher and boys to use. There is a variety of high quality toys and games; construction toys and sports equipment. There are excellent wall charts and the teachers are able to create their own when necessary. There are clearly defined areas for book corners and block corners that are well equipped and age appropriate but an area for fantasy play has had to be created outside due to lack of inside space.

(Outdoor) - Each grade has its own area in which to play. The ground under the climbing structures is covered with artificial grass and, although it looks nice does not necessarily provide full safety. These areas are enjoyed and utilised appropriately. Teachers are always on duty during break time or when boys are playing outside. The playground is not equipped for disabled persons and the number of toilets is very limited with no wheelchair access.

Support - Where boys might be experiencing some barriers to learning, behavioural difficulties or social difficulties, regular team meetings are held. The school has the services of an Educational Psychologist – the Learner Support Coordinator, and a School Counsellor who together with assistance from our Interns, offers both social groups and individual play therapy.

Where felt necessary, facilitators are allowed in the classroom. All new boys have their sight and hearing tested at the school. Referrals for therapies are recommended in meetings. Staff members share support from the Prep campus and increasingly boys and staff have to wait for long periods before support can be provided due to the demand, especially for the School Counsellor's services. It is felt that a Social Worker

attached specifically to the Pre-Prep could be very useful.

Ethos - All class visits revealed that there is a good working relationship in the classrooms between teachers and boys – the atmosphere is relaxed yet contained. Teachers display genuine interest in the boys and are happy working here. The school cares for and is interested in the whole child emotionally, physically, socially and academically. It is a school where boys are encouraged to respect each other and those that are less fortunate or different in any way. It is a happy school where staff work well together and the boys are also very happy to be here. The mentor, Dave Shutte, reported that teachers contributed to the Bishops ethos and were actively involved in the vision and mission of the school.

Staff Development - The teachers are appraised annually by either the HOD or peers; meet with the HOD to discuss their year; are given an opportunity to self-evaluate; set goals; reflect on the previous year's goals and whether they attained them; discuss difficulties and needs. Staff development needs come out of these appraisals. There is a large annual budget for staff development and study purposes. There is a Learnership programme and the school presently has three such students.

FUNCTIONING OF THE SCHOOL

Facilities - There is a shortage of venues within this school resulting in the over-usage of a number of areas with teachers sometimes having to work in an area with interruptions. There are few venues which can be used for assisting small groups of boys, and those requiring support from the Bishops Support Unit have to go across to the college. Rainy weather poses the biggest challenge as venues within the college are not always available. Although there is an extensive extra-mural programme, access to fields and venues isn't always available. The school is aware of the needs, and plans to build are being considered. Maintenance of the buildings is regular but can take time as the team works across the schools – the roll out is managed by the Estate Manager and generally the response time is good.

Conduct - The behaviour and manners of all staff and children towards each other are of an acceptably high standard.

Security and Safety - Glass doors have safety glass. Fire drills are practised annually. An intercom system has been installed to make communication easier across the whole school. An alarm sounds and each class teacher is informed of and has practised the evacuation procedure. Maintenance requests are reported immediately and safety aspects highlighted. There is supervision during break times and a First Aid box is available in the secretary's office. Teachers are being trained annually in First Aid. Security guards are at the gates when open.

Health Care - Support and provision is made for the emotional, physical, social and spiritual needs of pupils and staff. Both parent and boys' surveys reflected that they feel safe and cared for. We have a clear policy on bullying and the boys are given instruction as to what bullying is and how to manage it.

Communication - The school makes effective use of appropriate electronic means of communication. Email is used by both teachers and parents to communicate with each other. Two written reports and two report back interviews are given each year. Pre-Prep is represented by the Headmaster of the preparatory school on all the committees and at Council meetings – the teachers expressed concern as to whether all needs are being heard and considered. The teachers do not attend any meetings together with either the Headmaster or Principal.

Environment - The school joins with the greater school in recycling what is brought onto the campus daily. Teachers are aware of energy and water saving and boys are taught to be conscious of wastage.

Additional Findings: Aftercare

Aftercare was reflected as an area of concern on the boys' survey sheets. Focus groups revealed that the boys enjoy the freedom to choose their activities, they enjoy being at aftercare; however, they feel that there are not sufficient fun activities for inside play – this has since been rectified.

Some would like to be able to do their homework so that when they get home they can relax. There is a venue problem as the hall is shared with Judo three times per week and to find another quiet space where homework could be done is difficult. A separate aftercare would be able to provide so much more.

Major Strengths:

Music – there is a full time music teacher who teaches the boys from grade R – 2 an appreciation of music. She offers music lessons on the recorder and prepares boys for the Royal Schools of Music examinations. She auditions and trains the school choir. She plays a leading role in our biannual productions which are of an exceptionally high standard.

Drama – although the boys only enjoy these lessons for two terms of each year, the standard is high and boys are prepared for leading roles within the productions while also learning other skills.

Health Care – the BSU provides a school counsellor, interns and an educational psychologist to provide social, emotional and academic support. The youth pastor and school chaplain meet regularly with the children. Both the parents' and boys' responses indicated that they feel safe and cared for at school. Teachers keep parents informed of incidents or accidents. Staff visit hospitalised pupils where appropriate. The school has a clear policy for dealing with bullying and teaching the boys to understand what it actually is. Possible cases of abuse or neglect are also monitored and where necessary reported to the relevant authorities.

Indoor resources – all classrooms are exceptionally well equipped with the necessary posters and concrete apparatus necessary for teachers to teach well. Each child is able to have their own manipulatives when exploring concepts. The charts are relevant and appropriate. There are reference charts. Classrooms have interactive boards and every teacher has access to a computer. Teachers in grade 1 and 2 have iPads and are able to use these interactively.

Staff development within the school is regular and encouraged. There is a large budget that allows for attendance at conferences, workshops and in-house training. Teachers are well informed as to the latest developments in learning barriers, be they behavioural or otherwise. Teachers have annual appraisals and their needs are considered when planning development. The HOD attends termly meetings with heads of other schools. There is a Learnership programme to develop students studying towards their Foundation Phase degree through UNISA, which is very successful.

Areas of concern:

Overuse of venues - Art room is used for art, library, music teacher's work area, reading assistant's work area, Learnerships' work area, printing for the whole school including therapists, pottery, technology, meetings and small group teaching – often resulting in interruption of teaching.

Maths group room is also used for a range of extraneous activities resulting in the venue losing its effectiveness.

School hall is used for assemblies, teaching all the music before and after school, judo lessons, aftercare daily, small group teaching, meetings with parents and functions, indoor venue on rainy days for sports activities, drama lessons.

Staff room is small and inadequate for meetings and cannot cope as a multi-purpose venue. Venues in the College are not always available for sports or extra mural use on rainy days; resulting in cancellation or moving into small areas with a large group and the lesson being compromised – after school sport on rainy days moves into classrooms and the lesson plans changed to accommodate.

The school is not wheelchair friendly.

Emergency procedures are not practised regularly and the alarm is ineffective. Communication during an emergency could be difficult across 3 campuses.

Communication – Decision making and some of the committees seem far removed from the Pre- Prep, and staff are not sure that their needs are being heard or addressed. Teachers at Pre-prep are never included in meetings with either the Principal or the Headmaster of the Preparatory School.

Inclusion policy - More boys are entering the system with needs and an appropriate policy should be formulated to manage the change.

Reflection on recommendations from previous School Reports

Aftercare has significantly changed; there are different care givers and they understand the ethos of the school and have made changes to the toys and equipment available for the boys indoors. The management is caring and less rigid. The boys are well cared for and seem happy.

The school has successfully implemented a policy for bullying and the boys have a clear understanding of the difference between fighting and bullying. There is a no tolerance approach to bullying and boys have been given skills to manage the situation.

Recommendations for action on school improvement

School's Inclusion Policy	BSU together with Council	Medium term - during 2015
Wheelchair access and suitable ablution facilities	Council	Medium term - 2016
The following facilities are recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music room • Media room • Art room • Teachers' meeting and work room 	Council	Medium term - 2015/2016
An intercom system	Bishops security team	Currently being installed
Fire Drill and security drills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of practices • Upgrade alarm • Install cameras 	Bishops security team	Short term – 2015
Appoint a social worker specifically to the Pre-Prep	Council and Executive	Medium term - 2016

Concluding Words:

The process has been rigorous; however, the findings have been worthwhile. It is good to know that there is an excellent team of teachers within the school; that there is no bullying in the school at present and that boys understand the concept well. It has been an opportunity to highlight some of the areas we can celebrate but also an opportunity to highlight the desperate shortage of venues within the school. We have been reassured by management that plans for required buildings are being considered. The team wish to thank both IQAA and our mentor, Mr Dave Shutte, for his assistance and guidance during the process. His observations were very encouraging.

APPENDIX 1: RESULTS OF OPINION SURVEYS - PRE-PREP PARENTS

Questions	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1. My child is happy at school	65%	34%	1%	0%
	99%		1%	
2. My child is making good progress at school	66%	31%	3%	0%
	97%		3%	
3. My child is involved in school activities beyond the classroom	75%	25%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
4. My child's attitude towards the teachers is good	79%	21%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
5. My child's teachers treat my child fairly	72%	25%	3%	0%
	97%		3%	
6. My child is well cared for	66%	34%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
7. The school keeps me informed of my child's progress	58%	38%	4%	0%
	96%		4%	
8. I am able to approach the teachers about my child	72%	24%	4%	0%
	96%		4%	
9. Discipline at the school is fair	64%	35%	1%	0%
	99%		1%	
10. My child's possessions are safe at school	43%	51%	4%	2%
	94%		6%	
11. My child feels safe at school	66%	34%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
12. My child is bullied at school	0%	9%	50%	41%
	9%		91%	
13. My child is given worthwhile homework	40%	59%	1%	0%
	99%		1%	

14. The principal provides good leadership of the school	49%	44%	6%	1%
	93%		7%	
15. The school's management team performs well	43%	53%	3%	1%
	96%		4%	
16. The school's academic standards are good	59%	38%	1%	2%
	97%		3%	
17. The school has high standards culturally, eg in music, drama, art, dance, etc	59%	38%	2%	1%
	97%		3%	
18. The school satisfies my child's sporting needs	59%	38%	0%	3%
	97%		3%	
19. I feel welcome in the school	53%	46%	1%	0%
	99%		1%	
20. I understand the role of the school governing body	32%	59%	7%	2%
	91%		9%	
21. The school's facilities are good	71%	25%	4%	0%
	96%		4%	
22. I am critical of the school	6%	13%	47%	34%
	19%		81%	
23. The school does not discriminate unfairly	48%	49%	2%	1%
	97%		3%	
24. I support school events	53%	46%	1%	0%
	99%		1%	
25. The school's disciplinary processes are fair	50%	49%	1%	0%
	99%		1%	

APPENDIX 2: RESULTS OF OPINION SURVEY – PRE-PREP TEACHERS

Questions	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1. Learners are happy at this school	70%	30%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
2. Teachers are involved in school activities beyond the classroom	90%	10%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
3. Learners do not have respect for teachers	0%	10%	60%	30%
	10%		90%	
4. Teachers show respect for learners	60%	40%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
5. Learners talk to teachers about their problems	20%	80%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
6. Teachers are accessible to parents regarding the problems of children	80%	20%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
7. Discipline at the school is fair	60%	40%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
8. Possessions are safe at school	0%	30%	60%	10%
	30%		70%	
9. Learners are safe at school	10%	80%	10%	0%
	90%		10%	
10. Learners are bullied at school	0%	0%	90%	10%
	0%		100%	
11. Homework set is meaningful	60%	40%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
12. The principal provides excellent leadership to the school	30%	70%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
13. The school's management team performs well	30%	70%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	

14. The school's academic standards are good	80%	20%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
15. The school has high standards culturally e.g. in music, drama, art, dance, etc.	80%	20%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
16. The school satisfies learner's sporting needs	70%	30%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
17. Parents do not show enough support for the school	0%	10%	80%	10%
	10%		90%	
18. I understand the role of the school governing body	40%	60%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
19. The school's facilities are good	10%	10%	70%	10%
	20%		80%	
20. Classes are too big	10%	30%	50%	10%
	40%		60%	
21. The teachers are proud to be at this school	80%	20%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
22. The teachers do not always treat the learners fairly	0%	10%	60%	30%
	10%		90%	
23. The teachers have an appropriate say in the way the school is run	0%	40%	60%	0%
	40%		60%	
24. The teachers have opportunities for professional development	70%	30%	0%	0%
	100%		0%	
25. The teachers have opportunities for promotion in the school	10%	40%	50%	0%
	50%		50%	
26. The teacher appraisal system is effective	0%	70%	30%	0%
	70%		30%	
27. The teachers get on well with one another	40%	50%	10%	0%
	90%		10%	
28. There is no unfair discrimination at school	20%	40%	30%	10%
	60%		40%	

29. Transition between grades is managed well	30%	60%	10%	0%
	90%		10%	

APPENDIX 3: MENTOR'S REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

- **SCHOOL : Bishops Pre-Preparatory**
- **MODEL: Core**
- **DATE OF EVALUATION: 29th September 2014**
- **TEAM LEADER: Mrs Noell Andrews**
- **MENTOR: Mr Dave Shutte**

2. RECEPTION AND TONE

Throughout the evaluation process I was treated in a collegial and professional manner. The team under the leadership of Mrs Noell Andrews, the head of department for the Pre-preparatory school, was well prepared for the evaluation process. An information meeting was arranged with Mrs Noell Andrews and Mr Greg Brown before the intensive phase which was necessary as a result of the change of mentors.

The atmosphere throughout the school is warm and friendly and staff and boys generally reflect this ethos in their interaction with visitors. I was grateful to the staff for all the courtesies extended to me during the visit. In this regard a belated thanks to Nicky van Zyl in reception.

3. RIGOUR AND EFFICIENCY OF THE EVALUATION

- **Team**

Prior to the intensive period, it was decided that the evaluations would be separate and that the College, the Pre-preparatory and Preparatory schools would conduct independent evaluations and that the 3 reports would be melded by the lead mentor together with the College team into a composite final report. Tribute is paid to Mrs Noell Andrews who led the pre-preparatory school team and acted as report writer during a very busy school time. The timetable for the intensive day was carefully planned by the team in accordance with the decisions taken at the information meeting on 1st July 2014. The team and the teachers were enthusiastic for the internal evaluation and it was apparent that the evaluations done prior to the intensive visit had been viewed in a positive light. While the intensive day was not ideal in the school calendar, the internal process seemed to have progressed smoothly and accepted as a means of professional self-improvement.

- **Opinion Surveys**

The opinion surveys formed the point of departure for the evaluation process. The evaluation team was successful in ensuring that opinion surveys were completed and collated in preparation for the visit. Much valuable work was done by the team based on the opinion surveys and interested groups were consulted widely to elicit opinion before and during the intensive period. There was a keen understanding that the final report would provide a crucial resource for future development of the school and ultimately the strategic plan for Bishops School as a whole.

The response by parents and teachers to the opinion surveys was enthusiastic and a comprehensive list of comments formed part of the surveys as a resource for the evaluation.

4. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

At the information meeting with the team leaders on the 1st July, plans for the intensive evaluation were finalised.

- **Teaching.** I was able to visit a joint grade 1 themed lesson and had time with Mrs Ann van Breda's grade 1 class. I visited two grade 2 classes, Miss Laurelle Fry for an English Language lesson and Miss Heather Mills for a Mathematics lesson. Finally, I was privileged to spend time in Mrs Carmen van Zyl's grade R class. I was grateful for the insight gained from various members of staff, in particular Mrs Sharlene Groom, whose comments concerning the facilities and the circumstances prevailing in each learning area proved to be insightful.

The class sizes are optimal (on average 24 children per class) and without exception, a secure, friendly and nurturing atmosphere pervades the Pre-preparatory school classrooms. Despite inadequate library, media centre, music space and hall, in every case, teachers have managed to deliver the curriculum with passion. In the time that was available to me, a culture of outstanding teaching pervaded the school (that despite the highly inconvenient time in the term!).

The planning and preparation of lessons was detailed and effective and frequently interfaced with sophisticated electronic classroom media. It was evident in the daily planning that much attention was given to the correct balance of teaching time in each of the learning areas and in grade R the balance between formal and informal learning seems to have been achieved well.

The provision of classroom resources was abundant and every classroom exuded an exciting educational atmosphere. Boys are exposed to a range of books, educational toys, puzzles and various interest areas in the classrooms. The use of a range of duplicated workbooks was widespread.

It was impressive to see the ethos of Bishops being realised in every classroom – boys understand from an early age what it means to be a Bishops' boy.

- **Learning.** Learning takes place within well-resourced classrooms that without exception create an educational and invitational atmosphere. Children responded enthusiastically and it was evident that where individual learner support was needed, structures were in place within and beyond the classroom. I was impressed by the high order of responses by the boys during lessons and it was clear that they felt confident and secure within a formal classroom environment.

I was enchanted throughout my focus group with a range of grade 2 boys: they were courteous, enquiring and articulate.

- **Assessment.** Continual assessment of teaching and learning takes place in a well-planned manner and the personal work of the pupils is effectively controlled and marked. Comprehensive pupil profiles are compiled throughout the Pre-preparatory phase. The progress of pupils is communicated regularly with parents in formal reports and periodic interview opportunities.
- **Safety and security.** It is clear that the safety is an important matter and the campus is a safe environment for children. Where safety procedures needed to be tightened, they were identified by the team. The presence of security guards at the entrances and the planned extension of the CCTV coverage will ensure a secure environment. Without exception, children in the focus group expressed the fact that they felt completely safe and secure at their school.

5. ESTIMATION OF THE SUCCESS OF THE EVALUATION

Compliance

So as not to duplicate efforts, the Compliance Checklist is the responsibility of the co-ordinating mentor and the Head of the College.

Key Strengths

The evaluation team was successful in isolating the intrinsic strengths of the school. It was heartening that the IQAA process was a catalyst in bringing these to the fore. Without repeating all the strengths as they are listed in the report, it must be documented that the human resource at the Preparatory School is a most valuable asset. I regret that I did not have sufficient time to personally affirm teachers who were obviously doing excellent work in their classrooms and beyond.

The classroom planning and preparation is noteworthy and I gained the impression that sound structures were in place for the delivery of excellent education.

The Pre-preparatory school is the boys' first exposure to the Bishop's ethos and the teachers and assistants are dedicated in the task of inculcating the ethos of the school from an early age. This was without doubt a highlight for this mentor.

The intramural and extramural learning environments are conducive to the achievement of a quality education and it is apparent from discussions with staff and the boys, that they value their school greatly. A network of support structures which together with intramural and extramural opportunities provide a truly wide and indeed an excellent education. This being said, the Pre-preparatory school does not have an inclusion policy and this should enjoy attention in the near future.

Areas identified for attention

The overuse of available venues is a shortcoming and it is hoped that the concerns identified by the evaluation team will be addressed in the medium term strategic plans for the future. It is my understanding that the teachers have been reassured by management that building plans are being considered. At the same time, mention must be made of the innovative, albeit difficult, management of this problem that takes place on a daily basis.

Professional development opportunities for teachers, assistants and learnerships are generous. However, the advantages that accrue from professional development could remain classroom-bound if opportunities are not found to bring decision making closer to teachers at the chalk face.

6. GENERAL COMMENTS

It was a great privilege to have experienced Bishops' life during the internal evaluation process. The time spent with the boys and the staff left a lasting impression that here indeed is a quality school. Leadership has an honest attitude towards further school improvement and it was heartening to witness an enthusiasm towards ongoing assessment.

Special mention should be made of Mrs Noell Andrews and the team who accepted the last-minute change of mentor and ensured that my intensive day was very well planned and productive. Mrs Noell Andrews was additionally burdened with the onerous task of report writer and I pay tribute to her for the most comprehensive draft reports. It was indeed a major achievement to keep the report within the prescribed guidelines and her efforts in the finalisation of the report ensured a successful conclusion to the process.

7. ENDORSEMENT OF THE INTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

I am pleased to be able to endorse the findings and recommendations of the evaluation team as set out in the report of the self-evaluation process at Bishops Pre-preparatory School. The process was openly and efficiently carried out, with the appropriate rigour.

I believe that this report is a fair and honest reflection of the activities and administration of the school.

No report can do justice to the meaningful daily, interactions between teacher and boy. It is here that quality education is found, free of policy, free of procedure and straight from a caring professional heart. Bishops, you are a fine school!

Dave Shutte
November 2014