

HOPE committee terms of reference as approved by the Board of St Mary's School on 1 October 2019

OVERVIEW AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In all things, St Mary's School is guided by -

- the Statement on the Christian Identity and Ethos of St Mary's School;
- the Statement on the Educational Philosophy of St Mary's School;
- the Statement on Gender adopted by the Board in March 2019;
- the Anti-Racism Policy adopted by the Board in November 2017; and
- the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

These are a few of the principles that govern our school.

BACKGROUND

The diversity of a community will influence and affect it in various ways. The school has, and continues to, develop various structures, means, and initiatives to achieve a fully inclusive and welcoming environment. Thus far these initiatives did not specifically include the parent sections of the school community.

The school Board, supported by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), agreed that a parent diversity committee was to be established as a sub-committee of the PTA to specifically engage parents around being active participants in creating amongst themselves an embracing and diverse, school parent environment. These are the terms of reference for this committee, its name, scope and focus of its work.

NAME

The name of the St Mary's School parent diversity committee shall be:

HOPE - Hearing Other People's Experiences

and it is hereinafter referred to as HOPE in this document.

DEFINING DIVERSITY FOR HOPE

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

(Kevin Whitelaw, "Defining Diversity: Beyond Race And Gender.")

(Diversity Initiatives, U of Oregon (1999). <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~asuomca/diversityinit/definition.html>)

GOAL

To support the St Mary's School diversity vision as a body of parents who are committed to enabling amongst themselves a culture that welcomes and embraces differences and diversity.

The St Mary's vision for diversity is best summed up in the Statement on the Educational Philosophy of St Mary's School as follows:

We affirm our desire to be a South African school that seeks to reflect the diversity of our country, that seeks to provide an education that is enhanced through a curriculum and institutional culture which reflects our country, and that demonstrates our belief in non-racism, non-sexism and diversity. We will not tolerate racism or bigotry.

OBJECTIVES

In short, this goal can be achieved by effective and timeous communication between the parents via the HOPE committee, and the school, with both remaining committed to the vision for transformation. To this end, these are HOPE's objectives, at all times subject to consultation with, and the approval of, the head of school:

1. To create a safe space for parents to share experiences, insights and thoughts on topics relating to diversity. To identify and communicate common themes and relevant issues amongst the parent community and with the school.
2. To drive initiatives that work towards creating a sense of inclusivity, safety and belonging amongst the parent community.
3. To collaborate with external parties (schools, diversity experts etc.) as the HOPE committee to remain abreast of best practice and to share learnings.
4. To support the school's transformation agenda by staying informed of diversity-related information, efforts and initiatives, and supporting and amplifying communication with parents of these issues.


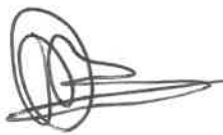
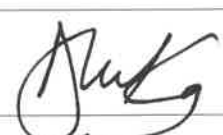

PORTFOLIOS

Membership to the HOPE committee is voluntary, based on requests sent out by the St Mary's Parent Teacher Association (PTA).



Individuals can hold portfolios for a maximum period of two years. And as for the PTA, in preparation for the beginning of the new school year, a request for volunteers will be made. This is to allow for the re-constitution of the HOPE committee and the election of specific members to the portfolios, if necessary.

APPROVAL

This document is approved as the Terms of Reference of the HOPE committee by the committee members and by:

Person's Name and Position or Role	Signature	Date
Thandi Chaane on behalf of the Board of Directors of St Mary's School Duly authorised		13/11/2019
Dale Vice PTA Chairperson Duly authorised by the SMSPTA Committee HOPE PTA Representative		13/11/2019
Deanne King Head of School		13/11/2019
Sarah Warner Headmistress of the Junior School		13/11/2019

HOPE Committee Members

Person's Name and Position or Role	Signature	Date
Refiloe Zephyrine HOPE Chairperson		7/11/2019
Sarah Cairns HOPE Deputy Chairperson		7/11/2019
Malwande Dumeko		
Fredelene Elie		
Melody Giwa-Nyahoda		
Clare Kerchhoff		
Chola Makgamethe		
Buhle Masithela		
Bruce Patience		
Sarah Quiding		

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