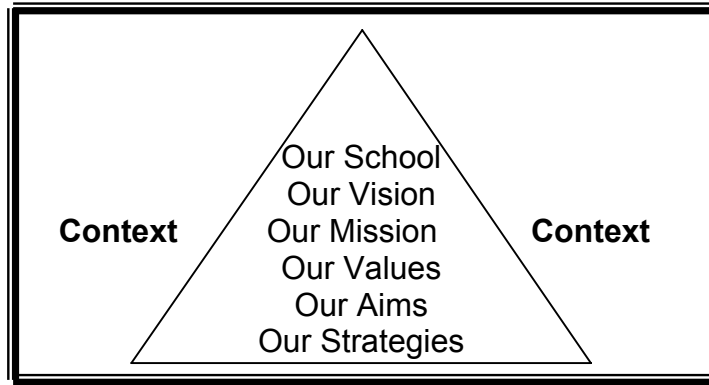


# *Uplands College*

## Strategic Plan 2012 and Beyond...

***Planning without action is futile, action without planning is fatal***



### **Our School**

Uplands College is a co-educational Independent high school located on a picturesque, 110 ha estate near White River, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa.

The need for a local high school offering a continuation of the Uplands Preparatory value-based education inspired parents to make the decision on 31 May 1997 to found Uplands College. Over the past ten years the College has grown, both in terms of profile (as a top independent school), in terms of infrastructure and in terms of pupil numbers. The College currently has 430 pupils and we will ultimately grow to a maximum of 500 pupils.

The College was established by future parents, in association with the Anglican Church and caters to the needs of day scholars and boarder pupils, in roughly equal numbers. The ethos at the College is that of a traditional boarding school, where all pupils take part in a wide range of activities on campus until school closes at 16:30.

The founders of Uplands College were future parents. They had many hours of meetings to determine strategic direction and this reflected itself in the design of the school, the composition of the board, the staff we employed, the curriculum we offered, the school uniform etc. The children of the founding parents have now all passed through the College and the College has pursued the anticipated size of 500 pupils sooner than expected. As we enter a period of consolidation it is an opportune time to take an in-depth look at our strategic plan. Who and what will Uplands College be in 2012?

## **Our Vision**

In preparing a child for life after school, Uplands College will provide an exceptional and complete education within a secure, learning environment.

This gives rise to our primary, fundamental objective which is to create a stimulating, relaxed but ordered educational environment, which encompasses as much flexibility and individual freedom as practically possible and which is regulated, principally, through self-discipline. Within this framework, a questioning and self-confident approach must be encouraged and nurtured in all pupils. Success in this regard will result in a culture of learning, a strong work ethic and a motivated and cohesive school community.

## **Our Mission**

***“Uplands College recognises and develops the unique potential of each pupil. We strive to equip them with the intellectual and moral capability to be happy, successful and confident in an ever-changing world”.***

This mission statement focuses on the *child* as opposed to the *institution*. In many independent schools, the focus is on becoming a “world class institution”, whereas at Uplands, the focus is on each individual in our care. This is a fundamental issue which runs through the fabric of what we do, strategically, tactically and operationally.

## **Our Values**

Our core values are best summed up in the Honour Code:

As a pupil of Uplands College I pledge:

- To behave **responsibly** at all times.
- To be **considerate** and **respectful** to others.
- To ensure that my **appearance** is consistently neat and tidy.
- To display good manners and always be **courteous**.
- To extend the hand of **friendship** and support to fellow pupils, teachers, parents and those I meet.
- To be **diligent** in my studies and **committed** to the mission and well-being of my College.

By implication, these values include the timeless values of **Care, Honesty and Integrity, Resilience**

These values are further enhanced by the Critical Outcomes expected from the National Curriculum which include: **Problem Solving, Teamwork, Personal Organization, Critical Thinking, Good Communication, Environmental Awareness and Systemic Thinking.**

### **Our Aims and Strategies:**

The fundamental aim over the next few years is to come to terms with the scale and operations of a College that provides an excellent, integrated education to 500 pupils, with a roughly, equal split between boys and girls, day pupils and boarders.

Our strategies must be sustainable and provide for excellence in every area of delivery.

As stakeholders have met to discuss the strategies, 10 key areas have emerged that, if given adequate attention, would ensure that the College will be true to its founding purpose, while at the same time, achieving its long term vision in the coming years.

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Academic Excellence                                     | DB        |
| 2. Personal Growth, Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management | GVR & HoH |
| 3. Marketing & Communication                               | BDP       |
| 4. Christian Identity                                      | TM        |
| 5. Boarding  | DW        |
| 6. Sports and Culture                                      | DE        |
| 7. Community Outreach                                      | BG        |
| 8. Financial Sustainability, Infrastructure and Facilities | PH        |
| 9. Environmental Impact                                    | LTA       |
| 10. Staff Selection, Development and Retention.            | AC        |
| 11. Governance, Parental Involvement and Commitment        | MM        |

# 1. Academic Excellence

*Dave Bennett*

## Statement of Strategic Intent:

At the end of a 12-year school career, parents expect a credible academic certificate, with the best possible results, that opens doors. However, our academic offering must go beyond this. We need to enhance the pupil's overall intellectual capacity to give them the best chance of success in the future. This is done by helping the learners to develop self-discipline, critical thinking and a strong work ethic.

## Action Plan:

We have been through a time of significant change; mostly this has been thrust upon us (such as the new NSC), but some of it has been our own doing, in response to internal pressures (such as increasing the size of the school).

Academically we need to enter a phase of consolidation. This is not a visionary strategy, but a pragmatic one. Staff need to gain confidence in what they are doing. We need to do what we do, well.

Apart from a general feeling among the staff of uncertainty, the changes have brought about a number of unexpected crises. Timetables that should have worked, did not. There is more pressure on venues than we had anticipated, there are greater time demands on the learners, etc.

- **Ongoing and effective staff training (on both a personal and professional level).**
  - We will have staff development by an external consultant on, at least, an annual basis.
  - Attendance of at least one member of staff per subject at IEB User Groups
- **There will be earlier identification of pressure points: timetabling, staffing, venues, etc.**
  - Decisions with respect to staffing, class allocation, venue allocation, etc will happen during the 4th term of the previous year. A timetable will be drawn up before the previous year ends.
  - Acceptance of learners with a subject combination that clashes with that of the College will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances and only on the understanding that the 'unusual' subject / combination will remain the responsibility of the parent and it will not be accepted by the College.
- **Coordinated plan for teaching and assessment.**
  - A dedicated team of Grade 9 teachers will look at the way the Grade 9 year is co-ordinated and structured so that the GET CTA is meaningfully integrated into the way we teach and assess.
  - A subject teacher will submit their teaching and assessment plans to the Head of Academics for co-ordination and the early identification of pressure points and over-loading of learners.

- **Annual review of the subjects and combinations we offer to ensure effective delivery**
  - We will never discard the possibility of adding new subjects or reviewing currently offered subjects that are losing popularity or relevance.
  - Planning in this regard needs to take place during the second term to ensure adequate preparation.
  
- **The general trend towards “inclusive education” is placing additional burdens on our staff. We need to update our policy with regard to learners with remedial or special needs education.**
  - English bridging needs to be offered to learners from non English-speaking backgrounds
  - Our policy stance on inclusive education needs to be formalised, including the position with respect to readers, scribes, computer and time concessions, etc.
  
- **The most effective teaching takes place in good academic space**
  - Despite having two well-equipped computer rooms, they are already fully subscribed by CAT, IT, Computer Lit and Engineering Graphics and Design. Additional computer space needs to be created to allow computer access for subjects that have not been timetabled in a computer centre
  - ‘Floating’ teachers need to be given a ‘home’ to allow for effective preparation of lessons.
  - The academic venues that have been planned in order for us to accommodate a school with a pupil footprint of 500, must be given priority.
  
- **Differential analysis**
  - Often the real challenge in teaching is not identifying the weak students and the strong students but the under-achievers. Those who are performing at an acceptable level but not to their full potential. We would like to develop a reporting system that compares performance to potential.

Distinctive Value Add:

- Highly qualified and well trained academic staff (2 Doctorate, 3 Masters, 27 Degrees, 7 Diplomas)
- Outstanding track record with regard to pass rates (2 failures in 10 years), and exemption rates (97%).
- Excellent entry rate to tertiary study with an outstanding throughput at these institutions (pupils who finish their studies in the minimum number of years).
- For the next 5 years we will be making massive efforts to do the ‘normal’ stuff very well indeed.
- Computers and internet
- Venues

Specific Tasks, Resources and Time Frame:

<b>Key deliverables</b>	<b>Action time frame</b>
90% of existing staff will attend an Assessor's Course	Arranged
Attendance at User Groups	Ongoing
Identification of pressure points	HOD's consulted, Headmaster, Deputy HOD Academics and Timetable committee to meet early in 4 <sup>th</sup> term. Timetable to be finalised by late 4 <sup>th</sup> term.
Annual Plan for teaching and assessment	Subject plans (including assessment strategy and time table) to be sent to Head of Academics by end October 2008 for collation and mediation.
Assessment plan also to address nature of reports at the end of term 1	September 2008
Grade 9 review	A team of volunteers to be appointed. Proposals for changes to be submitted by end of term 1 for review by HOD's
Subject review	By HOD's annually
Academic Time	Develop ways of getting back academic time.
Parent Education	Parents need to be educated on our approach in several areas. Assessment, time off school, subject selection, children's potential etc ONGOING
Academic Policy, including out attitude and implementation of academic assistance.	Develop an Academic Policy framework; December 2008
Prep Inclusion	Need to open communication with the prep with regards to academic expectations at high school.
Match pupil achievement with ability	Consider strategies to ensure pupils are reaching potential
Policy with regard to special needs education	This needs to be drawn up by the end of term 3 2008. HOD to coordinate. Input from school psychologist, HOD Maths and HOD Languages
Good Academic Space; Review of teaching space master plan.	HOD's (as closest to the 'chalk face') need to suggest improvements and priorities. Suggestions to be taken to ManCom and ExCo. From there proposals to be given to Board for consideration
IT as a tool for learning and teaching	Develop a strategy to ensure that all our staff members are using IT to its best capacity to enhance the process of learning and teaching. March 2009
School Library	We need to be clear about what we want the school library to be in the life of the school

## 2. Personal Growth, Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management

*George van Rensburg, Sharon van Reenen, Hilton Jarmen, Carl O'Connell*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Each child at Uplands College is an individual that needs to be nurtured. We do this by creating an ordered and caring environment, where each child's is appreciated as an **individual** but also contributes as part of a **group** in achieving the **objectives** of the College, expectations are made clear and discipline is consistently enforced according to our discipline code and the effective monitoring of the academic and social well-being of the children in our care.

### Action Plan:

The College operates on a house system. There are three houses (Bishop, College, Founders) with each house having both a day pupil and boarding component. A house is made up of approximately 9 tutor groups with 17 pupils in each tutor group.

Broadly speaking the critical outcomes of the house system can be divided into the following areas:

- **Pastoral Care:** Are the pupils' happy, involved, integrating well and achieving to their potential?
- **Academic Achievement:** Are the pupils performing academically? Are problems identified timeously, communicated and remediated?
- **Discipline:** Do pupils behave in accordance with the expectations laid out in the Code of Conduct? If not are sanctions consistently and timeously applied?
- **Inter-house activities** (sporting, cultural, spirit, socials etc)
- **Communication.** Issuing of notices, facilitating communication between the school and parents

The Head of House heads a team of tutors each responsible for 17 tutees in their care.

### Head of House (HoH)

It is the task of the Head of House to focus on the students and the teachers in their house. During the course of their schooling at Uplands College, the Head of House will get to know each child in their house.

#### ➤ **Discipline**

- Scans absentees on Upbeat for habitual absenteeism or lack of punctuality.
- Follows up on known 'duckers and divers' of the afternoon programme.
- Scans Upbeat for reports from teachers and, if necessary, in liaison with other HOHs, the relevant Head of Boarding and the Deputy headmaster decides on a disciplinary action which could be detention or HOH detention. HOH to report back to tutor, teacher or parents on the outcome of such action.
- Writes commendations, on Upbeat, for students as recommended by staff members and tutor.
- Keeps record of all disciplinary action in order to spot a pattern of misbehaviour and act upon it.

- Member of the disciplinary committee.
- Hosts Saturday detention.
- Ensures that their tutors fulfil the roles set out below.

➤ **Academic**

- Peruses the house's academic list for 'red flag' students and informs the relevant tutors to make first investigations and contact.
- Follows up on tutor, parents or Head of Boarding on any issues arising from red flagging
- Keeps in close liaison with Head of Boarding

➤ **Pupil Leadership**

- Appoints TWO Student Head of House
  1. Who is in charge of collating team lists for inter-house sports
  2. Communicates between HOH, staff and students.
  3. This student is also in charge of building house spirit and healthy competition between houses.
  4. Is to take minutes of formal meetings held between HOH and house members.

➤ **Pastoral Care**

- Facilitates the early resolution of problems by offering assistance to the tutors and meeting with parents to deal with all major issues.
- Is him/herself a tutor
- Meets all grade 8s and 12s in the first term, and boarders and day scholars regularly.
- Encourages spirit, friendly competition, house identity and loyalty.
- Hosts formal Head of House assemblies.
- Attends all Inter-house competitions.
- Meets with house staff quarterly.
- Liaises with Head of Boarding regularly.

**The Tutor**

It is the tutor's responsibility provide for the overall and holistic care of his or her tutees. This will involve performing some of the following tasks.

- Communicates with the parents/tutees in the following cases :
  1. Introduce self as tutor to G 8 or new student's parents at the beginning of the 1st term.
  2. Write a tutor Comment on each report on academic, social, cultural, spiritual and social performance
  3. Any other necessary communication when the tutee has been red flagged by themselves, subject teacher or HOH (for poor academics, failure to participate in afternoon programme, minor disciplinary infringements etc).
  4. All communication with parents and students is to be recorded in the tutee's Upbeat file and BCC'd to the HOH
- Records absentees.
- Delivers announcements and messages to the tutees.
- Captures afternoon programme for each student and follow up on attendance.

- Keeps an eye on tutee's academic progress by perusing the end of term report or upon notice of HOH.
- Engages with the teachers who teach the tutee so that the tutor may put an academic support programme in place for the tutee
- Keeps up with progress of the tutee's attendance at extra lessons
- Checks uniform, neatness and punctuality at tutor sessions.
- Attends House Assemblies
- Attends and assists with Inter-house competitions

Distinctive Value Add:

- Splitting the school into more manageable parts.
- Developing intimate knowledge of each child
- Able to give expedient feedback to the parents.
- Timely red-flagging of "failing" children in any regard (pastoral; social; discipline; academic) in order to avoid last minute surprises.

Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

The role of the Head of House is to keep the caring, small school feel of the school.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
HoH need to have stronger profile in school.	House assemblies, deputising for Head, parent interviews instead of head. New parent brunch talk etc
Roles of HoH must be understood and by all staff. Staff must be required to accept and support the HoH in these roles.	Workshop roles of HoH and Tutors. Staff meeting term 4, 2008
HoH to form closer relationships with parents in house.	Interviews etc
HoH to form closer relationships with staff in house.	House functions; Braai etc. Get budget for 2009
HoH to hold regular meetings with each other	Ongoing
HoH to become more involved in pupil discipline and academic follow-up.	Check upbeat and deal with all required follow-up
HoH time tables to be lightened to accommodate time required to exercise responsibilities	2009 timetable
Interview every parent who's child is failing. Letter to parent whose child is on the margin	End of each cycle
HoH to shed other leadership responsibilities such as HOD.	End term 4, 2008
Tutors and HoH to issue separate narrative report at least once per year.	February 2009
HoH need space. (office)	Part of revised master plan
HoH to be given more leadership	Term 1 2009

training to assist them with their roles. In this regard, Interpersonal skills are critical when in a pastoral leadership position.	
Consequence of disciplinary infringement must be felt. Detention must be unpleasant. Parents must be notified of detention for planning and information purposes.	Ongoing. Include in Code of Conduct
New code of Conduct must be completed and ratified.	September 2008
Date must be found for Drug Dogz to come on to campus	End of term 3 2008
Effective pupil leadership and representation	Refine the system of Mentor appointment to ensure no gaps in leadership.
Pupil discipline and control by mentors	Clearly define expectations with regard to areas that mentors can control and sanctions that they can implement.
Behavioural and Counselling support	We need to embrace a campus wide strategy to pupils with remedial problems. December 2008

### 3. Marketing

*Bev du Preez*

#### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Uplands College positions itself as one of Southern Africa's top Co-educational, Independent High Schools. We aim to attract top quality students who identify with the ethos of the College. From a marketing perspective, we do this by understanding our competitors, our future customers and potential market trends.

We will market ourselves throughout South Africa, our neighbouring countries and abroad, as a caring, customer-focused, service orientated institution of excellence in the academic, sporting and cultural spheres.

The image the College portrays and the commitments we make will accurately reflect that which we are able to deliver.

#### Action Plan:

##### ➤ **Communications:**

- Ensure that we market the school with integrity.
- Promote our website as an interactive and important communication and marketing tool.
  - ✓ Parental Portal.
  - ✓ Current & updated news weekly.
- Develop an integrated Marketing Communications network. (Deputy's diary, sms, email, web).

##### ➤ **Past Pupils:**

- Regular Contact with Past Pupils and Parents.
- Past Pupil Functions.
- Amicae publication with the prep.

##### ➤ **Public Relations:**

- Strengthen the interaction & communication with the wider community:
  - ✓ Editorials in numerous newspapers.
  - ✓ Derby Days.
  - ✓ Host Grade 7 sports clinics on campus for surrounding schools.
  - ✓ Open Day.
  - ✓ Grade 7 Orientation days.
  - ✓ Presentations all local primary schools.
  - ✓ Visit all Headmasters of all local Primary Schools and invite them to join us on our open mornings.
- Maintain high standards as far as presentation is concerned:
  - ✓ Manicured Grounds, Sports Fields and Gardens.
  - ✓ Immaculate buildings and pathways.

- ✓ Maintain a high standard of Décor at functions.
- ✓ Ensure that there is a Staff member acting as the function co-ordinator and maitre d', to welcome parents and guests and oversee each function held on campus.
- Marketing of the College:
  - ✓ Involve all parents, pupils, staff and stakeholders. Concerned, happy and committed stakeholders will market the school without realising it.
- **Target Population:**
  - Admission Process
    - ✓ Enquiry made telephonically, email or web.
    - ✓ Application completed and received.
    - ✓ Entrance assessment completed.
    - ✓ Interview process: Not all pupils who apply to Uplands are admitted (2008, 67%, 112/165) Various factors determine the success of an application:
      - ❖ Academic potential
        - Entrance assessment results
        - Results from two most recent school reports
        - Referral to school Educational Psychologist when necessary.
      - ❖ Behaviour and attitude.
      - ❖ Age appropriateness (Generally we only admit pupils who turn 18 in Grade 12. Nineteen is maximum age, and 17 minimum).
      - ❖ Potential contribution to the school (participation).
      - ❖ Parental commitment.
      - ❖ Affordability.
      - ❖ Personal "fit" (extent to which the pupil will identify with the ethos and culture of the College).
      - ❖ Past and potential future relationships with the family.
      - ❖ The ability of the College to meet parental expectations.
  - Transformation
    - ✓ Ensure that we market to the up and coming black middle class.
    - ✓ Ensure that we reach prospective customers who are searching for a school that will both enhance and ensure their children's academic success and future in our country.
  - Traditional Market
    - ✓ Continue to market to the local community and primary schools in the Mpumalanga, Swaziland, Gauteng and surrounding countries.
    - ✓ Broaden our marketing to include Limpopo, the broader farming communities and possibly Zambia.

Distinctive Value Add:

Our pro-active approach in realising the changes to the demographics of our province and country has resulted in us reaching outside our traditional market place and changing to suit these current changes through:

- Expos outside Mpumalanga.
- Recognising potential markets in bordering countries.

- Reaching current and potential parents in their home towns.
- Recognising the need to maintain the important Boarder / Day scholar ratio.
- Use of our facilities and location as a massive marketing tool to attract potential parents and prospective pupils searching for our Distinctive country setting.

Has ensured that we have:

- Children who all share the College ethos.
- Our boarder numbers have continued to rise.
- Our day scholar number remains more than 50% of our pupil numbers.

#### Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

- Uplands College is much more than just educational excellence and, therefore, we must continue to market the broader experience such as moral, happy, successful and confident children that we produce.
- We must strive to position ourselves as the top co-educational independent high school option, not only in South Africa but in Africa as a whole.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Promote our website as an interactive and important communication and marketing tool – Parents Portal	Dave Curtiss to assist us with the implementation by the beginning of the first term 2009.
Keep website info current and attractive	Ongoing. Involve staff
Include FAQ's on the web	Nov 2008
Current and updated English and Maths entrance assessments	All entrance assessments to be revised by Dec 2008
Host Grade 7 sports clinics on campus for surrounding schools	George to oversee this process, Assisted by coaching staff
Grade 7 orientation day dates	Each year
Setup quality review committee that ensures that there is a correlation between what we say and what we do.	October 2008
Ensure that what we say and do takes care of our three children; Day Scholars, Weekly Boarders and Full Boarders	Address marketing info to these three interest groups. November 2008
Marketing the school to boarders, particularly boys	Set the 2009 strategy by end of 2008

## 4. Christian Identity

*Terry Mitchell*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Uplands College was established in association with the Anglican-church. It upholds Christian values and nurtures a Christian based education. The chapel and spiritual life of the school are seen to be central to the education Uplands seeks to provide and we believe it is our responsibility that each pupil should be challenged in this area of their lives, as they come to a deeper understanding of the Christian faith. It is our hope that each pupil will acquire the spiritual foundations to help guide them through life and to equip them to practice a life of Christian service.

### Action Plan:

We give expression to our Christian and Anglican identity, in an accepting and non-judgemental way, through the following activities:

- **Weekly Chapel Service**
  - All staff and pupils attend a weekly chapel service, which includes the monthly celebration of Holy Communion, as well as a variety of other services lead by outside speakers, members of staff and the pupils themselves. These services are compulsory for all staff and pupils and are seen as opportunities to encourage the community to lead and live a relationship with Jesus Christ in their daily lives.
  - A committee of committed Christians is being established to assist the chaplain to keep the service relevant and challenging.
- **Voluntary opportunities for Christian involvement**
  - This includes weekly Christian Fellowship. This is an opportunity for Christians to grow in their faith in an informal environment. There is usually a time for worship followed by a talk and discussions on some aspects of Christian living.
  - An annual Christian camp is held and is run by staff, pupils and volunteers from local Christian communities
- **Chaplain Teaching Divinity**
  - During their time at Uplands, each child will have an opportunity for formal instruction in the Christian faith. Appropriate themes and lesson plans need to be formulated for each grade year. These lessons are not seen as an opportunity to proselytize but to rather explore the Christian perspective on a wide variety of subjects and topics.
- **Courses for admission to Communion and Confirmation**
  - These are offered on an ongoing basis and the Confirmation Service itself is conducted by the Bishop of Mpumalanga. Pupils from denominations other than the Anglican Church are welcome to attend.
- **Christian Pastoral Care**
  - The Chaplain has a unique role to perform on campus. He needs to “loiter with Christian intent” around the campus, making himself available to the community to provide Christian council and support.

- He makes himself more accessible to the pupils by doing a limited amount of coaching and teaching.

➤ **College Governance**

- At its inception, the College formed voluntary association with the Anglican Church. Constitutionally, therefore, the Bishop is a Board member and has the right to appoint an additional board member.

Distinctive Value Add:

The College employs a full-time chaplain, shared with Uplands Prep, who together with the Headmaster, assumes responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the pupils.

Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

Uplands College was established in terms of a voluntary association with the Anglican Church. The Bishop of Mpumalanga is a Board member and he is invited to nominate another member to the Board. Whilst being a Christian foundation school, the necessity of religious tolerance is recognized and the pupils are taught to respect the beliefs of other major world religions. In giving expression to our Christian identity, we do not discriminate against pupils or staff on the basis of their religious beliefs.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Develop solid Christian (Anglican) foundation.	Ongoing
Establish Spirituality Committee, to help oversee and co-ordinate spiritual development in the College.	Done
Facilitate participation of staff and pupils in leading chapel services, including praise and worship team, the choir and College orchestra.	June 2008
Confirmation service	June 2008
Admission to Communion	November 2008
Develop Divinity Curriculum.	June 2008
Attend Chaplain's Conference	August 2008
Ensure that we are correctly implementing all the sacramental practices of the Anglican Church.	November 2008

## 5. Boarding

*David Walker.*

### Statement of Strategic Intent

Uplands College markets itself as one of the leading boarding establishments in Southern Africa. It is in this environment that our fundamental value of **care** is given its most tangible expression, as pupils are looked after in a safe and secure environment. The ethos of the school is, to a large extent, established in the boarding houses. The maintenance of a strong boarding ethos is seen as fundamental to the future of the College.

### Concerns and Action Plans

- **A national and international trend that points to declining numbers of boarders:**
  - Both nationally and internationally schools are repositioning themselves. Some are closing their boarding establishments, while those that are keeping boarding, have to market the boarding as exceptional. This was highlighted recently with the Prep closing its boarding.
- **The above gives rise to a key issue which is our identity as a termly vs. weekly boarding institution:**
  - Over time fewer and fewer boarders are remaining in over weekends. At present less than 10-20% of boarders remain. This is placing us at a competitive disadvantage through the eyes of prospective long term boarders.
  - Parents have organised regular bus trips to Mozambique and Swaziland which takes pupils away on weekends.
  - Pupils who could potentially stay in are spending more and more time with day-scholar friends over weekends. This is giving rise to control issues with regard to permissions and a concern about the behaviour of pupils off campus.
  - Our weekly schedule is designed to cater for weekly boarders i.e. no activities scheduled for Friday afternoons, very few compulsory weekend activities, prep resuming on Sunday evening, buses to Swaziland etc on Friday afternoon.
  - We are drifting in a direction that must be recognised and addressed, one way or another with all the implications carefully considered, including the impact on our finances and ethos.
- **With as many as 225 teenagers living on campus there are bound to be issues that arise with regard to behaviour. This includes challenges such as theft, incorrect sign-out procedures, fraternization between the genders, lack of co-operation with regard to boundaries.**
  - The minimum response to this is to ensure that there are written procedures and expectations which are commonly enforced in all boarding houses.
- **Increasing prevalence of alcohol, smoking and drug abuse in society in general is placing a heavy burden of supervision and care on boarding staff.**
  - An updated policy with regard to drug search and testing needs to be developed for the school as a whole.
- **Uplands boarding prides itself on being culturally diverse. We need to be very aware of issues that may “bubble over” and heighten racial or cultural tension.**

### Distinctive Value Adds:

- Secure and remote setting The College is bounded by a patrolled security perimeter with no easy access to alcohol, cigarettes etc.
- Low pupil-teacher ratio. There are at least 15 adults living on campus who are directly involved in the day to day care of the pupils.
- Mostly double rooms i.e. not dormitories
- Number of informal, on-campus activities over week-ends:
  - Horse-riding
  - Volleyball
  - Swimming
  - Paint Ball
  - Touch Rugby
  - Tennis etc
- Zero tolerance of SAD behaviour (sex, alcohol, drugs).
- Countryside environment which gives rise to opportunities for outdoor sports e.g. mountain biking, sailing etc.
- Co-ed environment. Siblings can board in the same school, where boys and girls get to know each other in a relaxed but controlled environment.

### Issues and objectives for 2008:

Key Performance Areas	Resources / Responsibility / Timeframe
1. Continue to enhance the homely feel of the houses.	Ongoing by H of B. Budget is needed for decorating, furnishing etc.
2. Develop boarding seniors' leadership role into a positive one, in which boundaries are clearly understood and adhered to.	Much progress made by working with mentors (mentors weekend camp and regular weekly meetings). Housemasters meet with boarding mentors. TIC mentors.
3. Ensure that no bullying takes place/ any bullying or initiation is strictly dealt with.	Seniors and juniors briefed on this issue and seniors have been given specific guidelines. (strong action already taken in 2007). Housemasters and H of B.
4. Ensure that the Grade 8's have a positive experience of boarding life.	Juniors have been given opportunity to voice concerns. Tutors and duty staff.
5. Draft a boarding code of conduct which takes its lead from the school code, but caters to the unique issues in boarding.	DW & HoH. 29 Feb 2008
6. Ensure that standards of supervision on the part of staff are clearly understood and uniformly applied.	DW & HoH. 29 Feb 2008
7. Continue to maintain vigilance with regard to treatment of boarding house property.	All duty staff.

8. Develop a common administration system between the four houses so that pupils whereabouts are accounted for at all times.	H of B to convene meeting with boarding housemasters to discuss.
9. Ensure that the system for weekend arrangements is rigorously implemented.	Housemasters
10. Provide the opportunity for pupils to attend church on Sundays.	H of B to implement with duty staff.
11. Provide greater opportunities for pupils to take part in activities over weekends.	H of B to implement with duty staff
12. Develop Bishop Boys' Boarding House into a viable boarding establishment.	DE and COC
13. Develop accommodation so that adult interns are not living with, sharing bathrooms, common rooms etc with school pupils.	H of B in conjunction with Headmaster
14. Ensure there is adequate access to IT facilities during the week and at weekends.	H of B to implement with duty staff
15. Improve the hot water supply, especially in College House.	H of B in conjunction with maintenance staff
16. Ensure that boarding duty staff provide adequate and caring supervision at all times.	H of B to implement with duty staff
17. Ensure that adequate health and safety procedures for the boarding houses are developed and implemented e.g. fire drills.	H of B
18. Ensure that there is timely and transparent communication to all boarding staff and boarders w.r.t arrangements affecting boarders.	H of B
19. Provide a detailed plan of boarding houses and pupils' rooms (e.g. on Intranet) to assist visits from school nurses and with the provision of meals to sick pupils, and to allow for planning for the entry of new boarders etc.	H of B
20. Ensure that boarding houses are balanced w.r.t ethnicity, grade, sporting talent etc.	H of B together with housemasters and BdP
21. Maintain and foster the positive and healthy sense of rivalry between houses.	All boarding staff
22. Improve the facilities for securing the possessions of boarders.	H of B
23. Ensure that prep times are productively used (with particular emphasis on vigilance w.r.t. abuse of cell phones,	Boarding housemasters and all duty staff

laptops etc.)	
24. Ensure that pupils who are underperforming academically are given an extra level of supervision at prep times.	Boarding housemasters and all duty staff
25. Strive for maximum participation in sports' teams (vital for providing activities for boarders over weekends).	Boarding housemasters
26. Weekly vs. Term boarding identity	ManCom, ExCo, Board 15 march 2008
27. Ensure that what we say and do takes care of our three stakeholder groups; Day Scholars, Weekly Boarders and Full Boarders	Address marketing info to these three interest groups. Consult with parents and pupils when developing program for 2009

## 6. Sports and Culture

*Dave Ernstzen*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Uplands College believes in the development of the whole child by exposing them to a selected programme of sports and cultural activities in an integrated day. The afternoon programme encompasses both sport and culture in a competitive and participative capacity. The programme changes per season which allows for local competition and variation. These activities often provide pupils with unique opportunities for success thereby building self-confidence that positively influences all other aspects of their lives.

### Action Plan:

- **What do we want to be really good at?**
  - No school can be all things to all people. We need to identify those activities that we really want to be good at and those where we participate but are not key to our success and identity.
- **Excellence vs. Participation**
  - A debate that frequently ensues is: “Do we play for best performers or do we give every one a chance?”
- **Management of the Integrated Day**
  - As the school approached the targeted number of 500, the management of the integrated day becomes more complex. Both facilities and staff are limited.
  - Is it key to our identity that all pupils remain on campus until 16:30 every day? This goes against international trends that point toward decreasing physical activity among teenagers.
- **Duties Roles and Responsibilities**
  - An issue closely linked to the integrated day is the various jobs done by people. We need to look and streamlining aspects of the management of our program to make sure we are working as effectively and efficiently as possible.
  - We need to give continued attention to the experience that parents and visitors have on our campus. If they have fun they will be proud of the College and give us their support. The ambiance at activities, the catering, the ground and our pupils dress and behaviour must be of the highest standard.

Distinctive Value Add:

- Quality and commitment of staff.
- Quality and growth of our facilities.
- Separate facilities from the Prep.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Management of integrated day	Appoint full time co-curricular coordinator by 1 Jan 2009
Develop model for the integration of academic and non academic activities in the school day.	October 2008, for trial run
Strategically envision all co-curricular activities. Swimming and Cricket are a priority.	Process to be lead by new co-ordinator.
Facilities Planning	Prioritize the facilities we will need in the next few years. February 2009
Finalize Tours and Trips Policy	July 2008
Expand on the policy questions in this section of the Strat Plan as well as the relative importance of sporting, cultural and outreach activities	March 2009
Investigate the employment of parents as assistant coaches	November 2008

## 7. Community Outreach

*Bridget Gibson, Liz Macintosh*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Uplands College has been established as an institution of educational excellence. However, it exists in a societal context where great inequalities prevail. The excellence that we provide will be enhanced as it filters into this broader context. Not only for the benefit of those in need, but also to help our own children to come to terms with the complexity of our society. We are educating our children with a belief in the future of Southern Africa

### Action Plan:

#### **Community Service; Aims and Objectives**

- To involve every student at Uplands College in at least 10 hours of Community Service.
- For each student to have the opportunity to experience the broader community and to undertake 'work' outside of their comfort zone.
- For each student to question their role in society and their contribution to the world around them.
- To be able to respond to requests from agencies needing Community Support.
- For Community Service to become an integral part of the school's ethos.
- Uplands College will offer each student the opportunity to become involved in Community Service. The minimum expected is 10 hours of Community Service during their Grade 10 year, however, if they would like to do more the following opportunities exist:
  - College based SMILE
  - Interact based SMILE
  - Interact Club
  - SPCA
  - Millennium Home
  - Enviro Club
  - Stable gardening
  - Other e.g. Hospice, Masoyi, Church etc
- Interact will have a Committee overseeing its activities. The primary activity of Interact will be assisting our adopted school, Inkanyeti. However other projects may spring out of this.
- To continually work through Rotary trying to get water and toilet facilities to Inkanyeti.
- We do not see Fund Raising as a Community Project, however we support fund raising if it is done as part of their community Service for a specific project e.g. blankets for the SPCA.

### **KLM Project**

This project enables disadvantaged pupils to attend Uplands College. The hope is to have 2 pupils per year, giving a total of 10.

### **Teacher Internship Project**

Teachers from disadvantaged communities are being given the opportunity to study through UNISA while working as interns at the College.

### **Science Project**

Pupils from some of our partnership schools attend practical workshops in Science at the College. They are able to complete the practical component of their Grade 12 portfolios during this time.

### **Maths and English and Career Guidance Project**

Investec and Uplands College have entered into a partnership to upgrade the level of teaching in these subjects in our 10 partnership schools. A full time coordinator runs the project which has met with significant success.

### Distinctive Value Add:

- This approach is distinctive because Community Service Involvement is documented and certified.
- Positively engaging our community and country.

### Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

The scale is now correct. We must become really productive within these five initiatives.

**Community Service**, made available to the school body and organized by the school, requires adequate manpower and transport. At present we are limited by transport and have to turn students away, and are sometimes in competition with sport who also need transport.

Grade 10 students have priority as it is compulsory for them to get 10 hours during their Grade 10 year. However, it is important not to lose the present core of Grade 9 students who are deeply committed to Interact.

All teachers at the school need to embrace the concept that Community Service is one of the school's 10 strategies and make use of any opportunity to encourage students and to suggest programs with which students could get involved.

Interact Club will run slightly differently. A committee will be convened each year, but various students will be involved in various activities depending on the need at the time.

We would like to avoid having to ask the parent body for assistance, particularly money. If it is for specific help egg a bakkie, food collection, we will consider this within reason.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Identify Key Community Service Projects	BG, LM – done
Make contact and suitable arrangements	BG, done
Design Certificate Course for Grade 10	BG – done
Design suitable register for students attendance	BG – done
Find staff to help	BG – ongoing
Organize transport	BG – ongoing problem!
Review participation and commitment to KLM	December 2008
Review participation of JC and DB in outreach projects	October 2008

## 8. Financial Sustainability, Infrastructure and Facilities

*Nadia Lambrechts*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Uplands College strives to recognize and develop the unique potential in each pupil. The long-term, sustainable financial viability of the College is paramount to obtaining this goal. Excellent, robust financial management and control systems are fundamental to the future financial viability. In addition, alternative sources of income other than school fees will ensure a speedier passage to the College meeting its goals.

### Action Plan:

#### ➤ **Financial Operations**

- Document internal processes used and compile a “Business Services Procedures Manual”.
- Post the procurement code on the Intranet.
- Provide annual staff development for administrators on financial policies, procedures and Pastel.
- Involve additional employees in the evaluation and selection of products and services used within the school system.
- Continue to develop departmental operating instructions/policies to ensure maximum effectiveness.
- Streamline budgeting processes and procedures while developing and implementing additional services.

#### ➤ **General Operations**

- Put the Catering contract out to tender
- Increase student participation and quality of nutritional services and products.
- Seek alternative ways to serve breakfast to increase the quantity, quality and variety of food within the existing financial constraint.

#### ➤ **Long Term Financial Viability and Debt Management**

- Development of a revised financial model, taking into account the effect of changing pupil and boarding numbers.
- Develop additional revenue sources.
- Redevelop the bursary award program to secure external funding from foundations, corporations, past pupils and parents.
- Study various methods of recouping costs associated with continued growth.

#### ➤ **Information Technology**

- Do the necessary planning that will provide for a campus with 500 computers.

#### ➤ **Infrastructure and Projects**

The wish list as far as facilities are concerned is as follows:

1. 3 New labs
2. 2 more classes
3. Gym & Change Rooms.

4. Offices and Interview spaces
5. Auditorium
6. Convert 1 x lab to Art Centre
7. Convert 1 x lab to Chapel
8. Convert art lab to Technology Centre
9. Alterations to Kitchen and dining room.
10. Courtyard and new entrance landscaping.
11. Squash Courts and climbing wall.
12. Rugby Pavilion.

Distinctive Value Add:

In an environment where each department has its unique needs and desires, it is important that a consultative and flexible approach is attained in the budgeting and disbursement of the financial resources. Each and every staff member is involved in the budgeting process and the disbursement of funds is managed by the heads of department and management structures.

The accessibility of the finance and administration staff ensures that a facilitative and caring environment is nurtured and that a “no” mentality is not entrenched. An explanation and understanding of the limited financial resources and the allocation thereof is paramount to the diverse staff understanding the unique needs of each specific department or area within the school.

Provision of systems and processes that ensure proper control to eliminate financial risk but, at the same time, adopting a flexible approach within a risk-reward framework.

The sympathetic and individualistic attitude to debtors and not adopting a “one size fits all” approach. This ensures a caring attitude to those parents who have genuine, temporary financial problems.

Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

Although Uplands College is not a business in the sense that it was not established to make a profit for the owners, it must be financially viable. The financial priority is to keep the college sustainable and facilitate the delivery of top quality education in the short, medium and long term.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Develop a financial procedures manual	April 2009
Rework the long term cash flow model taking into account as many variables as possible.	January 2009
Establish a remuneration committee to oversee the remuneration process both technically and practically	September 2008
Finish the current projects	October 2008
Rework the facilities master plan in conjunction with ManCom	December 2008
Provide financial feedback to ManCom	Ongoing

Improve staff involvement in the budgeting process	September 2008
Put the catering contract out to tender	October 2008
Form part of a team set up to investigate was of extinguishing LT debt through development on the TUI property	June 2009
Correctly register all land which is owned by MONDI	June 2009
Develop an IT infrastructure master plan	March 2009

## 9. Environmental Impact

*Mike Matthews and Llew Taylor*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

The ever-changing environment that Uplands College and its pupils find themselves in includes the natural environment, characterized in contemporary terms by uncertainty, irreversibly transformed renewable resources and depleted non-renewable resources. The intent is to establish and maintain the College as a leader in environmental education and education for sustainable development and to provide its pupils with the skills and confidence to face the environmental challenges of the present and the future.

### Action Plan:

Inadequacy of resource allocation to environmental issues at Uplands College represents a threat. The founding desire for the College to be a leading institution in the field of environmental education remains an opportunity, to be pursued with the following action plan:

- Strengthen, further develop and increase the effort towards achieving the WESSA/WWF **Eco-Schools Gold Certificate**, International Flag and Special Merit Awards.
- Concomitant to the above, establish a sustainable inorganic and organic **waste** collection, removal and recycling facility.
- In addition, also in concert with the former, complete the **Environmental Policy** and be fully compliant across all the strategic pillars, where appropriate.
- Further to this, the publication of a **Land-use Plan** congruent with the Uplands College Master Plan.
- Encourage and support **Learning Programmes integrated** across Grades and Learning Areas, encompassing Environmental Education, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).
- Encourage and support Learning Programme Focus Outcomes that employ activities relating to **environmental rehabilitation**, the conservation and efficacy of energy and its use and the reduction of the Uplands College carbon footprint.

### Distinctive Value Add:

The employment of the stated action plans will enhance the Uplands College educational environment by providing a restored, sustainable natural environment in a region world-renowned for its indigenous natural resources.

### Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

- The action plan needs to involve the entire campus (Uplands, Prep and College).
- Focus on saving electricity

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Waste Management Program	July 2008
Convene a committee to dray up a 10 point plan for the Uplands Campus	July 2008

## 10. Staff Selection, Development and Retention

Austin Clarke

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

*“People are not an organizations most important asset. The right people are.” (Top Peters; Good to Great).* Our most noble ideals will amount to nothing unless we are able to secure, develop and retain the best possible staff. The best staff members are not only technically excellent but they are passionate about what do and are loyal and committed to the vision and aspirations of Uplands College.

### Action Plan:

#### **Staff Selection**

- Posts are advertised widely and shortlists are drawn up by the immediate supervisor. A panel of not less than three relevant people conduct face-to-face interviews.
- Short-listed candidates must spend time being shown around the College and have an opportunity to ask questions in an informal context.
- We must be “emotionally intelligent” when making appointments.
- Remuneration is negotiated by the Headmaster in accordance with the Uplands College Remuneration Policy.
- As a matter of policy the best black candidate for a post must be interviewed.
- As we approach the threshold of 500 pupils we will need to employ an additional 2 academic staff members.

#### **Staff Retention**

Employees remain in a school that they are proud of and want to part of and where they feel they are part of a winning team. They need to feel appreciated for the job they do, they must be adequately remunerated, their contribution must be sustainable and they need to feel that their opinions are heard.

Staff members should, therefore, have at least one session per year for a Developmental appraisal which focuses on their personal growth and development. This should be done by their immediate manager. They should also have at least one formal session per year with the Headmaster which focuses on performance and which will inform part of the decision about a performance bonus.

#### **Development**

- The staff is encouraged to enhance their formal qualifications (academic, sporting, cultural). There is a financial assistance scheme to ensure that this takes place.
- Support staff passion and interests. The staff accept that at times, they will have to coach or perform roles where they feel inadequate. However, pupils benefit enormously when the staff is able to share with them the things that interest them. So we must give as much opportunity as possible to staff to share these activities. (Paint ball, diving, mountain biking, sailing, drama etc)
- Professional development courses. The staff is required to attend professional development courses on an annual basis. These include IEB user groups, assessors courses etc)

- Non-negotiable qualifications. There are minimum qualifications that all teachers should have. Obviously the first is a professional teaching qualification. In addition though, all College teachers must be qualified assessors and hold a PDP and an ICDL qualification.
- We acknowledge that there are not enough teachers being trained for our future needs, particularly black teachers of Maths and Science. We, therefore, have begun an internship project that will assist with the training of teachers. A maximum of 6 trainee teachers can be accommodated at the College.

Distinctive Value Add:

- We have a holistic view of every staff member.
- We have been very fortunate to have a very low staff turnover.

Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

A critical teacher shortage is evolving and we cannot be caught short by not having top quality staff members. At the same time our staff profile needs become more diverse and we need to remain a competitive employer from a financial point of view.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
All staff to do an assessors course	July 2008
Management need more management training	July 2009
Promote the acquisition of an ICDL qualification for all staff members	Jan 2009 – All staff to be compliant by December 2010
Review and publish to staff the current policy on staff assistance when it comes to formal studies	October 2009
Performance and Developmental appraisals	Further refine the current system of performance evaluation; March 2009
Provide a budget for the training of staff in co-curricular activities	November 2008
Investigate the possibility of employing sports staff to release academic staff pressures	November 2008
Remuneration Committee: Ensuring or remuneration practices are competitive.	September 2008
Develop rules of engagement with parents for both admin and academic staff	January 2009
Allocate time each year for staff development	Planning meeting October 2008

## 11. Governance, Parental Involvement and Commitment

*Mike Matthews*

### Statement of Strategic Intent:

Typically it is a church, the state or a business that starts a school. Uplands is different. It was started by committed parents. In eleven years has become one of the most successful parent founded schools in the country. Its ongoing success as a truly esteemed school depends on the ongoing passion of the parent community. This passion will only be forthcoming if the parents understand and feel positively predisposed toward the College. The governance structures established by the founding parents need to be guarded and enhanced.

### Action Plan:

#### **Board Representation**

While at any given time, several board members may be parents, there is one board member specifically responsible for parental representation. The parent representative has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Give input into board decisions with the parent's views in mind.
- Assist the school by communicating school issues to the parents.
- Raising operational concerns with the head, or the appropriate member of the school management committee, when the established communication channels fail.
- Assist parents in understanding school policy, process and procedure when appropriate (such as in delicate disciplinary matters).

#### **Parents Teachers Association (PTA)**

The PTA is predominantly made up of parents and harnesses the goodwill of the parent community. It also serves to establish the Uplands brand among the parents and engenders a positive relationship between the parents and the College. Some of the PTA objectives are:

- The involvement of parents in the functions of the school in a service capacity e.g. catering for derby days, productions etc
- Fund raising activities that add special value to the school e.g. golf days to buy sound and lighting, classroom fans etc
- Arranging fun activities for parents and Uplands supporters. E.g. major Production gala evening.

### Distinctive Value Add:

Parental support:

1. assists the school in its educational delivery
2. actively promotes the school within the immediate and wider community
3. directly assists with delivery at the Festival, Major Production and other events where additional resources are required.

Funds raised by the PTA assist the school with projects with perceived value to both the parents and the school.

### Clarifying Comments and Suggestions

All parents pay for their children's' education at Uplands. As such, it is essential that Uplands delivers on its promises and is proactive in addressing poor delivery or performance. All parents support Uplands, many passively and a few actively. The school must be sensitive

to the extent of its reliance upon the generosity (financial or physical) of those active parents and to use this generosity where it is most needed.

Key Deliverables	Action Time Frame
Quarterly Parent Forum	Every term
PTA	Event based
Serious Disciplinary Incidents	Event based