



## KING EDWARD VII PREPARATORY SCHOOL

cnr Louis Botha Avenue and Oak Street, Houghton, Johannesburg, 2198 Tel: +27 11 648 1000 Fax: +27 11 648 2905

E-Mail: [admin@keps.co.za](mailto:admin@keps.co.za) Web: [www.keps.co.za](http://www.keps.co.za)

### **KING EDWARD VII SCHOOLS**

### **SOCIAL COHESION POLICY**

#### **Social Cohesion Policy Introduction**

!ke e: /xarra //ke - “diverse people unite”.

A motto that “addresses each individual effort to harness the unity between thought and action. On a collective scale, it calls for the nation to unite in a common sense of belonging and national pride - unity in diversity.”

We live in a country founded upon the values of human dignity and the advancement of our rights and freedoms. It is imperative that, as South Africans, we embrace our diversity and not let it give rise to intolerance, racism, sexism or any other inegalitarian behaviour. This commitment is not confined to citizens alone, but is also the responsibility of institutions and organisations throughout South Africa.

King Edward VII Schools are first and foremost places of education, and what greater responsibility is there for educational institutions than to create environments that promote social cohesion, where natural observance of the right to dignity is a practiced reality?

In the wake of recent events around the country, it is fundamental that the Schools take on the responsibility not only to find ways to redress the errors of the past but to be progressive strongholds of change that are examples for learners, teachers, the King Edward community and South Africans at large.

As is the King Edward way, to actively strive. Strenue.

Wakule Tshabangu  
King Edward VII School  
2002



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## **1. PREAMBLE**

We, the community of King Edward Schools hereby commit to:

- The elimination of racism at every level of school governance;
- Engendering, through our policies, procedures, practices and structures, an anti-racist and rights-based culture, which includes respect for human dignity and diversity;
- Implementing measures to redress the disadvantages experienced by designated groups, to ensure their equitable representation and treatment in all spheres of school life;
- Ensuring that complainants do not feel that their grievances are ignored or trivialised, and that they will not suffer any retaliation or victimisation;
- Pursuing these commitments in ways that value all members of staff, learners and the broader community whom we serve and with whom we collaborate;
- Respect everyone's human rights and fundamental freedoms as entrenched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and its laws.

## **2. VALUES OF THIS POLICY**

The values of King Edward VII Schools are: service to the community, Justice, fair play, truth and honesty, friendliness, unselfishness, courtesy, consideration, appreciation, humour, reading, playing, sportsmanship and pride in work.

## **3. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY**

All employees, learners and third parties are subject to this policy and must comply with it. Subject to the exhaustion of available internal remedies, all parties retain their rights relating to or arising from a complaint in a court of law.



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### **4. STATUTORY MATRIX FOR THE SOCIAL COHESION POLICY**

The Social Cohesion Policy of King Edward VII Schools derives from the following applicable legislation and codes:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 28 of 1996), including the Bill of Rights
- The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) (as amended) (“SASA”)
- Education Laws Amendment Act (Act no. 31 of 2007)
- Gauteng Education Act (Act 6 of 1995)
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000,
- National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996
- Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998,
- SA Council for Educators Act 31 of 2000,
- Children’s Act 38 Of 2005.
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Act no 32 of 2007)
- Code of Conduct of King Edward Schools

### **5. INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS**

- **Board of Governors** means the elected members of the School Governing Body (SGB) and the co-opted members of the SGB.
- **Complainant** refers to the person alleging that conduct constituting racism or racial harassment has occurred. This person may or may not be the person directly affected by racism or racial harassment and is not necessarily a learner or employee of the School.
- **Complaint** means a complaint brought in terms of this policy concerning allegations of racism or racial harassment.
- **Employee** means an employee of the School.



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- **SOCOCO** means the Social Cohesion Committee of the School.
- **Hate speech** is defined as insulting and degrading expressions that encourages discrimination between groups or the individual's membership of a racial, ethnic, gender or religious group and has a destabilising and divisive effect on society. Hate speech attacks a person or group based on attributes such as race, colour, sexual orientation, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, disability national or ethnic origin, birth or social origin
- **Learner** means a learner enrolled at the Schools.
- **Old Edwardians** means all alumni of the school who are members of the Old Edwardian Society or the Old Boys Association.
- **Old Boys** means all alumni of the school who are members of the Old Boy's Association.
- **Racial harassment** means conduct or expression which is racist in nature and which is calculated to demean, humiliate, distress, or create a hostile or intimidating environment.
- **Racism** means the advocacy or expression in any manner of the belief or attitude that any person, by his or her skin colour or ethnicity is to be treated as inferior or superior to others.
- **Racist** means that which is characterised by racism.
- **Respondent** refers to the person against whom the complaint has been made.
- **School** is King Edward VII Schools; registered public schools: EMIS number:  
K.E.S. - 130765; K.E.P.S. - 130757
- **School Community** refers to teaching staff, learners, parents, Old Boys and Old Edwardians.
- **School Governing Body (SGB)** means the members elected to various positions according to relevant legislation and regulations.



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- **Third Party** refers:

- to an individual or company who is neither a learner nor an employee of the School but with whom the School has concluded a contractual arrangement in terms of which the binding nature of this Policy is accepted;
- to the employees of a third party who render services at the School.

### **6. OFFENCES AND SANCTIONS**

These offences should be read in conjunction with those listed in the school's Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct also lists appropriate sanctions and procedures which should be followed. The following categories of acts or expressions shall constitute racism at King Edward VII Schools.

The investigation of these acts or expressions should always consider the context upon which such acts or expressions are made or displayed:

- Mocking anyone, verbal abuse and threats while within the school premises or environment;
- Racist graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia;
- Racist comments during discussions;
- Ridicule of an individual's cultural differences, e.g. food, clothes, music, dress, race, colour, sexual orientation, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, disability, national or ethnic origin, birth or social origin, telling of racist jokes, etc.; bringing racist materials such as leaflets, apartheid flags, comics or magazines onto the school premises;
- Attempts to recruit other pupils and students into racist organisations/ groups;
- Physical assault which is racially motivated;
- Damage caused to a person's property which is racially motivated;
- Incitement of others to behave in a racist way;
- Refusal to co-operate with other pupils because of their race.



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- Any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference carried out by a person who occupies an authoritative position and who uses race, colour, sexual orientation, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, disability national or ethnic origin, birth or social origin to distinguish, exclude, limit or give preference to certain person(s) in deciding on selection for any of King Edward VII School's school sporting teams, education, position and or activity or benefits of any kind meant for any person within the school environment.

### **7. COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF SOCOCO**

The Social Cohesion Committee of the School (SOCOCO) shall consist of the following:

- Five members of the teaching staff appointed by the teaching staff.
- Five members of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) appointed by the RCL.
- The committee shall appoint a chairperson and secretary from amongst its members.
- A quorum shall be fifty percent (50%) of the committee plus one (1) member.
- The secretary shall keep minutes and a digital recording of each meeting.

SOCOCO shall report to the Board of Governors by presenting a written report which shall be tabled at scheduled meetings of the executive of the Board of Governors.

### **Social Cohesion Statement of Intent**

King Edward VII Schools recognizes the importance of the rights of each child, as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa. The schools are dedicated to the protection of these rights, while, at the same time, maintaining both the diversity and individuality of a multi-cultural society.

All students and teachers at the schools are constitutionally entitled to an educational environment which is free of discrimination based on race, ancestry, place of origin, gender, sex, sexual



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orientation, ethnic origin, creed, religion, colour, sexual orientation, conscience, belief, culture, family status, marital status, same sex partnership status, disability or language preference.

Students are, therefore, encouraged to develop a sense of identity, both with the commonality of South African society, as well as with one or other of the diverse cultural groupings, which make up our society.

All cultural and racial groupings, norms and beliefs are regarded as having equal validity and value.

All interpersonal interactions within the schools will take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance for each cultural and racial group's beliefs and values.

In order that the Constitutional Rights of those employed by, or enrolled at, King Edward VII Schools are respected, it is incumbent upon each individual at the Schools to make every effort to:

- Create educational environments free from discrimination.
- Create environments of mutual respect for, and tolerance of differences.
- Minimize the negative influences of prejudice and ill-feeling or hatred, as propagated by members of previous generations, on the youth of today.
- Create awareness among students and teachers of the unacceptability of the use of racial slurs, "hate speech" and derogatory or disparaging remarks by all who attend or visit the schools.
- Report behaviour patterns among individuals that are not responding to restorative measures.
- Initiate disciplinary procedures against all perpetrators in terms of the School's Codes of Conduct

To this end the schools have initiated a Social Cohesion Committee who will be drawing up a policy for all to follow.



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SOCOCO shall have the following functions (this list may be added to from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Governors in consultation with SOCOCO):

- To sensitise the school community about racism and its implications for the school community.
- To assist in mediation, conciliation or negotiation of racial disputes within the school community.
- Promote the use of the app provided by The Guardian (a registered South African company)
- Ridicule of an individual's cultural differences, e.g. food, clothes, music, dress, race, colour, sexual orientation, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, disability, national or ethnic origin, birth or s Upon receipt of a complaint of racism, SOCOCO may, depending on the seriousness of the complaint, seek an informal resolution of the dispute, and establish whether the complainant is fearful or intimidated by the alleged perpetrator.
- Upon receiving the complaint, SOCOCO shall first nominate one member to informally attempt to resolve the complaint by speaking with the complainant and the alleged perpetrator to assess if it is appropriate to seek informal resolution.
- If an informal resolution is not appropriate then the member must record the complaint as unresolved and the committee must appoint a three- member panel that will attempt to resolve the complaint through negotiations or investigation, if required.
- To check that sanctions are applied against racist and discriminatory behaviours.
- To ensure that the full contact details, names, and office address of SOCOCO members are known to the school community at the beginning of each year. These details shall further be displayed on notice boards in the school premises.

### **8. PROCEDURES**

SOCOCO is an advisory body and responsible for the educational management of incidents brought to its attention.



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As complaints of racial harassment and/or discrimination are brought to the attention of SOCOCO they must be investigated as confidentially, sensitively and as fairly as possible. The rights of both complainants and respondents must be protected.

Late reporting shall not necessarily have negative consequences for the process of decision-making relating to the merits of the complaint;

Complainants (or person acting on behalf of the complainant) may choose to use the anonymous reporting App provided by The Guardian.

SOCOCO must after investigation advise the SGB who must determine the steps to followed according to the severity of the incident and the School's Code of Conduct

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Headmaster K.E.S.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the SGB K.E.S.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Headmaster K.E.P.S.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the SGB K.E.P.S.