HIV & AIDS POLICY

1. PREAMBLE:

1.1. Infection with the Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) and the subsequent development of Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are health problems with broad social, cultural, economic, political, ethical, educational, and legal implications.

1.2. This school is part of the community, and therefore will be both directly and indirectly affected by this disease. The complexity of the disease makes it difficult to predict or anticipate all the possible policy implications related to decisions that may be necessary.

1.3. The School Governing Body therefore reserves the right to make appropriate changes to this policy in consultation with parents and other necessary bodies. This policy has been designed to protect both infected and non-infected people.

1.4. The following individuals could be infected or become infected, which will directly impact on the school: students, staff, family members, and members of the community

2. LEARNERS

- **Admission to the school. No prospective learner will be refused admission to the school on the basis of their HIV-status, but will be subject to the same selection procedures as non-infected learners.**
- **Reporting of HIV status. Parents and learners are not required to declare the HIV-status of a learner, but are encouraged to do so that support can be given to the learner.**
- **Confidentiality. The HIV-status of a learner is confidential, and no staff member, learner, parent or member of the School Governing Body may be informed without the permission of the learner. Any breach of this confidence will invoke disciplinary procedures.**

- **Status at school:**
  - **HIV-positive learners will be afforded the same privileges and will be required to adhere to the same rules and regulations as the other learners.**
  - **HIV-positive learners will be required to attend classes and other school activities as laid down by the rules and regulations of the school. Any non-attendance due to illness will be dealt**

with according to the school's normal procedures in terms of its absence through illness policy.

- **The school will try to make every effort to ensure HIV-positive learners are not prejudiced and/or victimised in any way.**
- **With regard to contact sport, any person with an open wound prior to, or sustained during, a game will be asked to leave the sports field, and will be treated by the first aid team in terms of the school's normal HIV-infection prevention protocol.**

3. <u>STAFF</u>

- **Staff status**
  - **Staff who are employed by the Department of Education will be subject to the policy as laid down by the department.**
  - **Staff employed by the governing body will be subject to this policy.**

- **Employment**
  - **No employee will be dismissed because of his/her HIV-status.**
  - **No employee eligible for promotion will forfeit promotion as a result of his/her HIV-status.**
  - **No employee will be removed from their normal place of work, or their normal duties or be isolated because of their HIV-status.**
  - **The school governing body will make every effort to ensure that no prejudice and/or victimisation will take place. If after all efforts have been made to avert this, prejudice and/or victimisation continues, the school governing body will act against those concerned where it has the legal authority to do so.**

- **Testing:**
  - **The school governing body will not require prospective or current employees to be tested for HIV, either prior to employment or while employed.**
  - **Any employee wishing to undergo tests to establish their his/her HIV-status will be assisted by ensuring the request and subsequent results remain confidential, and referring the**

    employee to an appropriate centre that will provide pre- and post-test counselling and ensure the confidential nature of the results.

- **Confidentiality:**
  - **If an employee discovers that he/she is HIV-positive, she/he will be under no obligation to inform the school governing body or the principal.**

- **An employee may wish to advise the principal of his/her HIV-status so that support can be given to that employee.**
- **Should an employee choose to inform the principal, the information will be treated as confidential and no other staff member and/or member of the school governing body, parents or community members will be informed without the employee's permission.**

- **Sick leave/incapacity:**
  - **An employee who is HIV-positive will be subject to the same sick leave benefits as an employee suffering from any other illness.**
  - **An employee with AIDS will be subject to the same sick leave benefits as those related to other chronic diseases.**
  - **Any employee who is no longer capable of performing his/her duties owing to prolonged absenteeism or physical incapacity, will be subject to the normal policy on incapacity.**
  - **A person with AIDS is requested [but not obliged] to inform the principal or a representative of the school governing body when he/she is unable to perform his/her duties adequately as a result of his/her incapacity.**

Family members and members of the community

- **The school recognises that the HIV-status of parents, other family members and related members of the community will have emotional and financial implications that may affect students and staff. While the school recognises the confidential nature of the disease, the effects this disease will have on students cannot be ignored and this policy was developed with this in mind.**

- **Should a family discover that a member other than the student is HIV-positive, it is under no obligation to inform the school. If a family chooses to inform the school, this information will remain confidential unless the infected person chooses to disclose their HIV-status publicly.**

- **The school will try through its support structures to provide counselling and support for any student whose has family members who are HI-positive, or who have AIDS, while ensuring that confidentiality is maintained.**

Education about HIV and Aids

- **The school recognises that HIV is a disease that is transmitted by having sex with an infected person, from an infected mother to an**

unborn child, by transfusion of infected blood, or by infected blood and other body fluids, through needles, syringes and other instruments as well as through open wounds and mucous membranes.

- **Teaching about HIV/ Aids, its manner of transmission and the consequences of infection will covered as part of the formal curriculum wherever appropriate and through the life orientation and co-curricular programme. Besides providing basic information on the disease, the school will also endeavour to assist students in developing the skills they need to make appropriate lifestyle choices, including decisions about sexual abstinence and the use of condoms.**

4. MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

- **Employees have unrestricted access to well stocked first aid kits.**
- **No one should have direct contact with another person's blood or bodily fluids. Rubber gloves should be worn whenever one is attending to a person who is bleeding or when coming into contact with another person's blood or bodily fluid.**
- **Ensure that every effort is made to stop the bleeding immediately, to clean wounds and keep them covered.**
- **Running water should be used to clean skin exposed to blood or if blood is splashed in the eyes, nose or mouth.**
- **Contaminated surfaces must be cleaned with a solution of bleach and water.**
- **Bandages and cloths that become bloody or soaked with other bodily fluid must be disposed of responsibly.**
- **Toilets and change rooms must be clean, hygienic and free of blood spills.**
- **Female staff and learners must be familiar with appropriate, safe methods of disposal of sanitary towels.**

5. SUPPORT

- **Ready access to counselling will be made available to learners or educators or other support staff who are diagnosed as HIV/AIDS positive so that they can look forward to a number of years of productive and normal life.**

- **Awareness programmes will be promoted to reduce stigmatisation and discrimination of infected learners, educators or other support staff.**

- **Counselling will also be made available to learners, educators or other support staff whose colleague/s have been diagnosed as HIV/AIDS positive.**

- **Counselling will also be made available to educators who refuse to work with a colleague or teach a learner with HIV/AIDS.**

- **Learning Programmes dealing with the issues of HIV/AIDS will be incorporated in different Learning Areas.**

- **Educators, Secretaries and General Assistants are sent to workshops with the aim of:**
  - **Keeping everyone abreast of the latest developments**
  - **Using the information gained to assist staff or learners who are HIV positive or have Aids.**