



# BRIDGE HOUSE

PRE-PRIMARY · PREPARATORY · COLLEGE

## **DIVERSITY AND TRANSFORMATION STATEMENT**

Created: Melvin King

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As a member of the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA), Bridge House School is committed to fulfil its role in building a democratic, non-discriminatory South Africa. In this endeavour we will actively strive to establish a diverse and equitable school and community.

Bridge House understands that for every one of its students, education is about becoming. Bridge House recognises that our South African nation is equally poised at the edge of becoming, seeing its commitment to its students' journeys to a real and relevant world as inseparable from that same journey of our nation. Bridge House School, most of its students, and our nation as a whole, share a common trait: we are in our early young adulthood years, struggling to create new identities for ourselves by capturing what was valuable about the past; endeavouring to find new ways to free ourselves of pain and heal wounds that linger in the present; finding ways to co-create a common vision of the future that can draw us forward beyond, any obstacles that may appear.

In its own Values Statement, Bridge House School reaffirms its commitment to creating a learning community which values integrity, love, wisdom, happiness and inner strength. The school's vision includes grasping the opportunity to innovate and lead in our ever-changing world, while our Mission Statement speaks of a creative and dynamic environment where each member of the Bridge House community is encouraged to develop sound values, self-discipline, respect for others, empathy, responsible citizenship, a healthy self-image and a passion for life. The key to the success of Bridge House's commitment, is the quality of the environment it is able to create within the boundaries of the school, and the quality of the internal, personal environments it is able to foster in every one of its students, staff, governors and families of its students.

It is in these environments where bridges of mutual understanding between self and other and past and future are constructed and the playing fields are levelled; where gender, racial, cultural and religious diversity are respected and celebrated and no longer feared;

where the culture of human rights inscribed in our South African Constitution is nurtured and upheld; where the responsibilities that derive from those rights and upon which those rights depend become part of who people are and how they act towards one another; where a new sense of belonging can be discovered; where new understandings about one's own self are found; where artificial barriers are broken down and new friendships are discovered and formed; and where learning itself is set free from all that hinders it. Setting and reaching new goals at times requires individuals and institutions to move beyond their comfort zones to charter new playing fields that are self-determined. A truly equitable and non-discriminatory democracy must be etched into people's hearts, minds, words and actions not simply penned on paper. Such a journey of social transformation requires determination and gentleness; strength and vulnerability, inclusion and spaces for reflection; speaking and listening; feeling at times when one does not want to feel; patience; courage, generosity and care. The old and deeply internalised stories of inferiority and superiority that have undermined learning for all South Africans must be replaced by a new story of who we are and who we can become, individually and collectively.

It is here where Bridge House seeks to be a leader in creating new realities based on norms and standards for education that are profoundly human; that intentionally counter the dehumanising norms and standards of the past; and that nurture the students of Bridge House, the school itself, and the nation of South Africa, to become all they are capable of becoming in pursuit of human dignity and a proud legacy.