



PIETERMARITZBURG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY

PREAMBLE

In terms of section 5(5) of the South African Schools Act of 1996, the Governing Body of a public school must determine the admission policy of that school.

1.1 The Governing Body of **PIETERMARITZBURG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL** has accordingly constituted the following as the Admissions Policy of the school, in the belief that its provisions are consistent with:

- 1.1.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).
- 1.1.2 National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) and any applicable policies determined in terms of this Act, including the Regulations for Admissions to Schools.
- 1.1.3 South African Schools' Act (Act 84 of 1996) and subsequent amendments.
- 1.1.4 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000).
- 1.1.5 Judgments of the Constitutional Court on the rights, powers and obligations of School Governing Bodies.
- 1.1.6 Provincial Notice 74 in Provincial Gazette No. 5262 of 5 March 1998.
- 1.1.7 KZN Circular No. 99 of 2006.
- 1.1.8 KZN Circular No. 37 of 2010.
- 1.1.9 KZN Circular No. 58 of 2012.
- 1.1.10 KZN Circular No. 21 of 2017 and any other relevant KZN Circulars.

1.2 Whereas **PIETERMARITZBURG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL (hereafter known as "the school")** is a public school, the Governing Body and the Principal:

- 1.2.1 commit to working in partnership with the Head of Department to find workable solutions to matters of disagreement, and to engage meaningfully and in good faith on any disputes.
- 1.2.2 agree thereto that any such engagement will take into account the best interests of the child insofar as this does not impinge upon the rights or best interests of other children.

1.3 The School Governing Body requires of the Principal, the Head of Department and their delegates that they will at all times during any admissions process take the provisions of this policy into account and apply it fairly and in accordance with the law.

2 POLICY

2.1 **It is the aim of the school to:**

- 2.1.1 provide an environment where the race, culture, religion and economic standing of the individual are in no instances an impediment to her access to, or progress in, any aspect of school life.
- 2.1.2 make provision during the enrolment process for applicants from a variety of backgrounds, including disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 2.1.3 promote transformation in line with the country's Constitution.

- 2.2 **It is the policy of the school that:**
- 2.2.1 no learner will be refused admission on grounds of race, culture, language, religious belief or financial circumstance.
 - 2.2.2 the admissions policy will be applied with due consideration of the following:
 - 2.2.2.1 Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School is a designated girls' school.
 - 2.2.2.2 the language policy of the school is that the medium of instruction (LOLT) is English, therefore learners applying to be admitted to the school in preference to a school where the LOLT matches the home language of the learner, need to be sufficiently proficient in English so as not to prejudice their ability to progress academically.
 - 2.2.3 applicants will not automatically benefit from an "inherited advantage" during the admissions process. This aspect of the policy will, however, be applied with due consideration of the following:
 - 2.2.3.1 it is regarded as unreasonable to disrupt family relationships by arbitrarily splitting the schooling of siblings.
 - 2.2.3.2 the Head of Department (KZN Education) has not determined feeder zones for public schools in KZN, hence schools may not determine an order of preference for learner admission based on feeder zones (KZN Circular 58 of 2012).
 - 2.2.4 Any learner admitted to the school is admitted to the total school programme, and will not be suspended from classes, denied access to cultural, sporting or social activities of the formal school programme on the grounds of an inability by a parent to pay the laid down school fees.
 - 2.2.5 The admission of learners will be managed in such a way that the school's intake aims to include representation of the major demographic segments (i.e. cultural, religious, ethnic and economic) broadly reflective of the composition of the community it serves, without prescribing or accepting any predetermined quotas, numbers or proportions in respect of such representivity.

3. **ADMINISTRATION OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

In order to achieve the foregoing, but also to ensure a just and equitable selection process should the school be oversubscribed, the measures listed below will be implemented in managing the application process.

- 3.1 The closing date for online applications will be set annually and widely advertised.
- 3.2 Applications received by the closing date will be given preference over late applications.
- 3.3 Only after all applications received by closing date have been dealt with, will the school consider late applications, and then only if there are still places available in the school (Appendix 1).
- 3.4 A written response to every application received will be forwarded to parents/guardian who made the application.
- 3.5 It is specifically noted that the parent/legal guardian of a minor learner has the exclusive right to take an initial decision concerning which school they wish to apply to for their child/ward to be enrolled. Consequently, no application will be accepted or regarded as being valid unless it is made by the parent/legal guardian of the minor learner or by a person authorised thereto, in writing, by one of the foregoing.
- 3.6 The reality is that Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School can only, because of the demand for placement at the school, accept approximately 30% of the total number of applicants. All applicants are therefore advised to also apply to at least two other schools.

4. **ADMISSION DECISIONS**

All admission decisions are made by the Admissions Committee, which carefully considers all applications.

Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places in the school, grade, class or subject for which application is made and bearing in mind the school's policy on unfair discrimination, whether placement in the school is considered by the school Admission Committee to be in the best interests of the learner concerned and by the ability of the school to provide adequately for the educational needs of the applicant, applicants will be placed on the following basis:

4.1 **General expectations.**

In considering applications, a potential learner will be expected to have a proven record, as determined by the Admissions Committee and based on her latest school reports and application details, which indicates that she will:

- 4.1.1 **be supportive of the ethos** of Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School to the extent that it is evident that there is a clear desire to be educated in a school environment such as the one provided by the school.
- 4.1.2 **be willing to contribute** in the four critical areas of School life: i.e. academically as well as sport, culture and service, and to participate in activities offered by the school.
- 4.1.3 **be amenable to school discipline** as applied in this school, and display levels of behaviour and self-discipline such that she is likely to help create, maintain and enhance rather than to disrupt an orderly and disciplined school environment, the teaching process of the school, or the learning of the other learners.

4.2 **Factors and circumstances to be borne in mind during the admissions decision processes.**

- 4.2.1 The precise application of the admissions criteria and the weighting afforded to each of the criteria shall remain within the discretion of the Admissions Committee and the school Governing Body.
- 4.2.2 The transformational aims and imperatives relevant to the school.
- 4.2.3 Unique personal circumstances or capabilities pertaining to the applicant which would be in the particular interests of the learner and of the school.
- 4.2.4 Applications for admission to the school Boarding Establishment and to the school will be managed simultaneously.

4.3 **General criteria binding on all applicants.**

- 4.3.1 The successful completion of or promotion out of the grade immediately below the grade to which admission is sought.
- 4.3.2 The age of the learner for whom application is made. Please note that an applicant whose age varies by two years or more relative to the statistical age norm of the grade cohort (Appendix 1) will not normally be accepted into the school.

4.4 **Special criteria for the admission of learners to the school's Boarding Establishment.**
Decisions for admission to the Boarding Establishment will be made on the following basis:

- 4.4.1 preference will always be given to girls who live out of the Pietermaritzburg area.
- 4.4.2 that there is no suitable alternative public school in the near vicinity of her home, which caters to her particular needs and interests.
- 4.4.3 that it shall be in the best Overall interests of the child to be accommodated in a hostel rather than at home.

If, despite the fact that all applicants meeting the above Criteria have been accommodated, there remain vacancies in the hostel for the particular grade, applicants who would otherwise be excluded in terms of the above criteria may be offered admission to the Boarding Establishment in an order based on the decision of the Admissions Committee, taking the best interests of the child into consideration.

5. **READMISSION AFTER DEREGISTRATION**

Should a learner who has been removed from the roll wish to apply for re-admission to the school, the application would be considered in terms of this admissions policy and its Various Criteria.

6. **FINAL TOTAL NUMBER OF ADMISSIONS**

The capacity of the school is 1200 learners, distributed 240 per grade and 30 per class. Capacity is based on the number and size of standard teaching classrooms and specialised teaching venues in the School, the number of available ablution facilities and the need to provide space for teaching which is not less favourable than that laid down in the norms and standards legally enacted in respect of public schools (Appendix 1).

The class, grade and school enrolment shall in any event not exceed the calculated capacity by more than 2% in any one grade or two learners in any One class, without the ratification by the School Governing Body of a motivated explanation from the School Management Team or Head of Education for moving to such significant extent beyond the limits laid down in this policy.

7. **APPEALS**

Decisions made in terms of this policy are taken by the Principal and Admissions Committee acting on behalf of the Head of Department in this province. Anyone aggrieved by such decision has the right to appeal to the MEC (Minister of Education) in the province against the decision.

*Adapted from CTJG/GBF
November 2017*

DEFINING CAPACITY, STATISTICAL AGE NORMS AND INHERITED ADVANTAGE

1. CAPACITY

The capacity of the school is based on:

- 1.1 the number and size of classrooms in the school, excluding specialized areas.
- 1.2 the need to provide space for class teaching which is not less favourable than that laid down in the norms and standards legally enacted in respect of public schools
- 1.3 the need to provide an educational milieu which includes a broad curriculum and subject choice and which is based on educationally valid principles.
- 1.4 the creation and maintenance of a stimulating and sustainable educational environment. This is in part dependent on having designated and appropriately-developed space for:
 - 1.4.1 A Library/Media Centre
 - 1.4.2 Physical Sciences, Life Sciences and Natural Sciences laboratories
 - 1.4.3 Computer rooms and multi-purpose venues.
 - 1.4.4 Lecture Theatre (tiered seating)
 - 1.4.5 Music rooms for practices, teaching rooms and an Auditorium
 - 1.4.6 A School Hall (Norma Burns Hall)
 - 1.4.7 An Indoor Sport Centre and Community Centre (Sylvia Vietzen Community Centre)
 - 1.4.8 A Learner Support Centre/Counselling Centre
 - 1.4.9 A team-teaching venue (Joyce Dowse Communication Centre)
 - 1.4.10 Drama rooms
 - 1.4.11 Art Studios
 - 1.4.12 A physical fitness and wellness centre/gymnasium
 - 1.4.13 Venues and/or facilities conducive to the provision of an educationally valid extra-curricular programme are open to all learners (eg: McDowall Centre)
- 1.5 The need to support the educational process administratively by providing designated, appropriately furnished, relevantly equipped and exclusive space for:
 - 1.5.1 A staff common room and staff workroom.
 - 1.5.2 Offices and working spaces for management, administrative and support staff.

2. STATISTICAL AGE NORM

Calculation of the statistical age norm for a grade is as follows:

Statistical age norm = grade to which admission is sought + 6

e.g. statistical age norm for grade 8 = 8 + 6 = 14

3. "INHERITED" ADVANTAGE

This could include:

- 3.1 applicants who are siblings of current learners and/or past pupils of the school.
- 3.2 applicants whose mothers are "old girls" (Alumni).
- 3.3 applicants who live in close proximity to the school (as there are no designated feeder zones).
- 3.4 applicants whose parents work in close proximity to the school.
- 3.5 children of current members of staff.