



# Woodcrest Academy

Always our best

3 Msinsi Road, Sezela  
P.O. Box 32 Pennington 4181  
KwaZulu-Natal, RSA

Established 2017

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## PROSPECTUS

Woodcrest Academy is an independent school registered as a non-profit organisation (Woodcrest Academy NPC registration 2019/215101/08). The school has been extremely successful since inception, receiving excellent feedback from learners, parents and the wider community.

### MISSION STATEMENT AND CHARTER

**To provide a quality, independent education with small classes, employing dedicated, professional staff to meet the varied needs of young learners and help them reach their full potential in a nurturing, enabling environment.**

- To provide an education programme accessible to each learner while remaining linked to South African (CAPS) and International qualification standards.
- To nurture, grow and accept each learner as an individual, and develop their self-worth and talents in a 'family' environment.
- To develop each learner as a socially aware individual who shares and contributes meaningfully to their community.
- To help each learner develop a sound work ethic through positive reinforcement and a reward-based programme that helps learners understand the consequences of their actions.
- To link education to the real world using technology, skills development and a multi-faceted approach to problem solving.



## Woodcrest Academy

*Always our Best*

### OUR CHARTER

**The Aim**

*To establish a system of broad discipline guidelines that steer and develop each individual and our school community.*

*To ensure all stakeholders understand the standards from which deviation is unacceptable.*

**The Charter**

*Respect – for self, others, the school, and the environment around us.*

*Tolerance – for the beliefs, the feelings and the considerations of others.*

*Integrity – honesty and openness in all that we undertake and a sound work ethic.*

*Compassion – kindness and empathy toward others.*

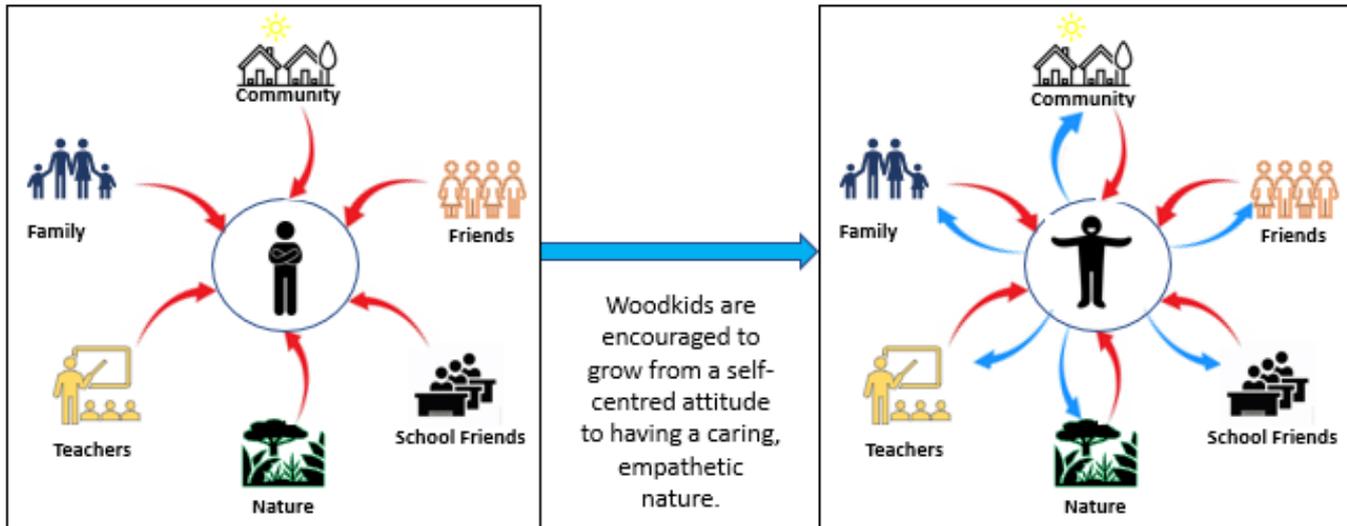
**Implementation**

*All stakeholders will ensure that no breach of this Charter goes uncorrected.*

*The Charter applies to all stakeholders.*

## ETHOS

Woodcrest has a firm but fair approach to discipline which allows learners to enjoy the education process. The school embraces an outdoor lifestyle where learners play barefoot and climb trees. The curriculum focuses on developing a love for the natural environment and its conservation, and the school is fortunate to have access to Nkumbane Dam and Umdoni Nature Reserve, both within walking distance of the school. Teachers also foster a tolerant, caring attitude among learners, and no form of bullying or discrimination is accepted.



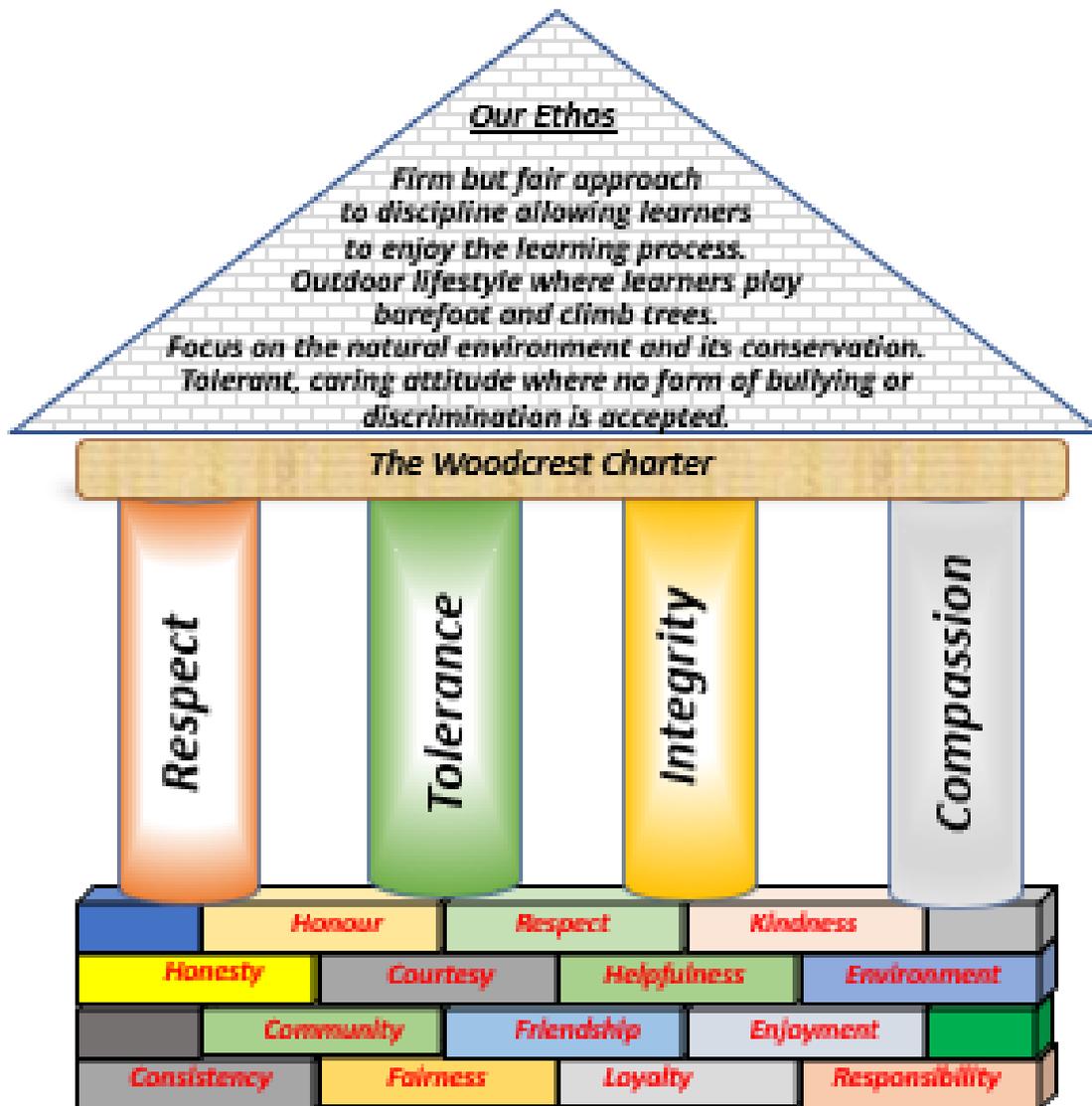
## OUR OFFERINGS

Woodcrest Academy proudly offers:

- Affordable independent education for Grades RRR-9
- CAPS curriculum (despite Covid, fully completed in 2021 by all grades through a variety of learning platforms)
- IEB-linked exit program if required
- SACE-registered teachers who are highly motivated and nurturing
- Small classes providing individual attention to all learners supported by teacher aides
- Technologically-enhanced lessons
- Specialist therapists and educators as required
- Lifestyle-oriented sports programme incorporating fitness training, strength building, spatial awareness, balance development, ball skills, swimming, and at higher grades sports such as golf, paddling, netball and volleyball, with cricket coached by a paid specialist
- Extensive park-like grounds for playing barefoot, climbing trees, and learning to love the natural world
- A strict and effective policy against any form of bullying or discrimination
- An outsourced aftercare facility run on the school premises
- An outsourced tuck shop, again run on the school premises

## BUILDING BLOCKS

We have a series of building blocks that are fundamental to the smooth functioning of the school, starting with our overarching ethos through the Woodcrest Charter and supported by policies and codes that enable us to instil desirable characteristics in our Woodkids.



### UNDERPINNING POLICIES AND CODES

These policies and codes are essential in ensuring all stakeholders are fully aware of their responsibilities and the expectations of their fellow stakeholders.

Admissions Policy

Cellphone Policy

School Fees and Collection Policy

Uniform Policy

School Times and Attendance Policy

Valuables and Personal Possessions

Code of Conduct

Disciplinary Code and Procedure

School and Classroom Rules

Communications Policy

## STAFF AND STRUCTURE

Woodcrest Academy takes pride in selecting high calibre SACE-qualified teachers to ensure that our Woodkids are given the best possible education in a nurturing, enjoyable environment.

Ruth Hannah is the founder and Principal of Woodcrest Academy and has some 25 years as an educator in 3 different schools. Her last position at Pennington Primary saw her educate a significant number of local pupils who still remember her – generally with fondness! Ruth is passionate about education seeing it as a calling and not a career and she is determined to provide as many children as possible with the skills to get ahead in life. Ruth teaches Grades 4 and 5.



Joanne Hannah is the Head of Department for the Senior Phase and teaches Grades 8 and 9. She has several years as an educator and she too is driven to develop and nurture learners with a wide range of capabilities.

*"I like to develop in learners a sense of self-drive, self-pride and divergent thinking. I help them to unlock the box holding their potential so that they can be the best that they can be. Our children are the world's future so they should be equipped with all the tools necessary to thrive and make our world a better place"*



Jenny Gossman is the Head of Department for the Foundation Phase and teaches Grades 2 and 3. Jenny has many years of teaching under her belt and provides learners with an excellent foundation for their advance through the phases of their educational experience.



Jeanine Dunn fills the motherly role which Grades R and 1 need as they transition from home life and pre-school into the mainstream educational system and she ensures they are well-equipped both emotionally and intellectually.



Priscilla Radebe is our IsiZulu specialist and relief teacher.

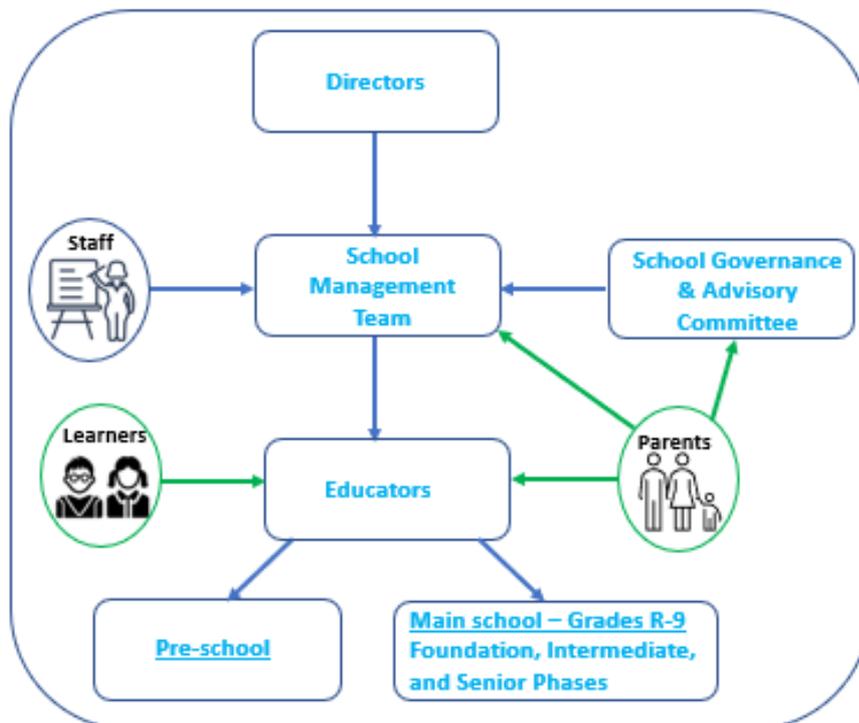


Buyi Hlongwa is our teacher aide and fulfils an essential role in assisting the teachers in the multitude of activities that go into educating our learners.



We also welcome on board our newest additions, Therenha Hanafee who has recently retired and will be teaching Grade 6 and 7, and Kim Wootton who nurtures and reins in our pre-school Woodkids to prepare them for the big step up into formal education.

Our management structure allows parents and learners to have an input into teaching and governance practices at the school and to interact with the relevant personnel.



## SOME COMMENTS FROM PARENTS AND LEARNERS

Some parents' comments from our website:

*"Woodcrest Academy is the best thing that has happened to Gordon. Ruth and Joanne have taken him from a nervous, academically battling child to a confident achiever. Words are not enough to express my gratitude."*

– Michelle Bester

*"A school full of love and understanding where dreams are reached and obstacles overcome."*

– Zelda and Leme

*"Woodcrest Academy has been an absolute blessing for our son these past 3 years! Watching him develop socially and academically through Grades 1 to 3 under the individual care offered by the staff has left us with nothing more to ask, we look forward to many more years with the Woodcrest family!"*

– Shaun, Kim and Jordan Wootton

*"Chante was always shy, quiet and lacking confidence, she doubted her ability to do anything. Since moving her to Woodcrest, Chante has blossomed. Almost a different child altogether. She is confident, happy and now knows she can do anything. Her school work has also improved tremendously. She no longer thinks she is "dumb". That's because of her teacher, Miss Hannah, who is patient, understanding and kind to her. Thank you Woodcrest, you've changed her life for the better."*

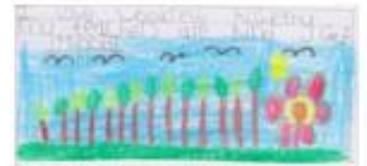
*"My sons started at Woodcrest Academy last year, they have thrived since being there, their academic results have improved drastically, as well as their desire to do well at school. This is due to the dedicated staff at Woodcrest."*

*"I have not seen a social dynamic quite like this where individuality is so openly accepted and the children play in a big group that completely disregards age, gender, race, status and physical ability. My quirky daughter shows absolutely no desire to conform to societal norms, she is absolutely comfortable with who she is! The Woodcrest teachers place a lot of emphasis on social and emotional development that is unparalleled in mainstream schools."*

– Tracey

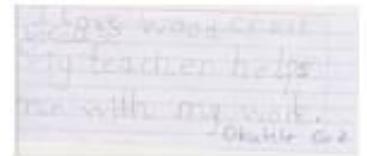
And especially rewarding are comments from our Woodkids:

Gordon - *"I love Woodcrest because the teachers work hard to give us the knowledge to succeed beyond their and our expectations."*



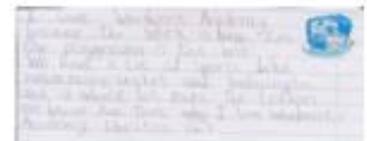
Chante - *"Woodcrest Academy has transformed the me that I was, I am now brave and strong and smart and am so delighted to call Woodcrest my school."*

Nombuso - *"The teachers are kind, they don't shout at you for no reason! The statues in the garden are beautiful. I like the art that we do!"*



Paul Walker - *"This place lets us learn very good knowledge and the teachers let us do fun stuff. When I came to this school my brain was pushed to its limit, and it helped me with my attitude....that's why this school will always be in my heart."*

Rikus - *"The thing I like about Woodcrest is the teachers are friendly and the playground has a trampoline and swings."*



Ethan - *"What I like is the teachers give you more time to finish work, and the big playground. There is no school that is better."*

Aaron - *"I love this school because the teachers always help me if I need them and they have helped me to be a better person."*

Beki - *"Woodcrest has NO BULLIES - It's full of kindness and love."*

Uzile - *"I adore being a Woodkid because everyone is accommodating, kind, affectionate. Nobody judges you no matter your colour, religion or style."*

Sfundo - *"I like it that the teachers and children are very kind, and they push us to be the best learners we can be. They teach us to respect each other."*

Alondwe - *"There is so much to learn at Woodcrest, the teachers are kind and always there for me. Learning is fun because you never know what splendid thing you are going to learn each day!"*

Darnell - *"I like this school because it has no bullies or bad kids."*

Lwandile - *"I love being at WCA because teachers and friends feel like family."*

Jayden - *"I love being a Woodkid because they focus on each child's individual needs, no matter what."*

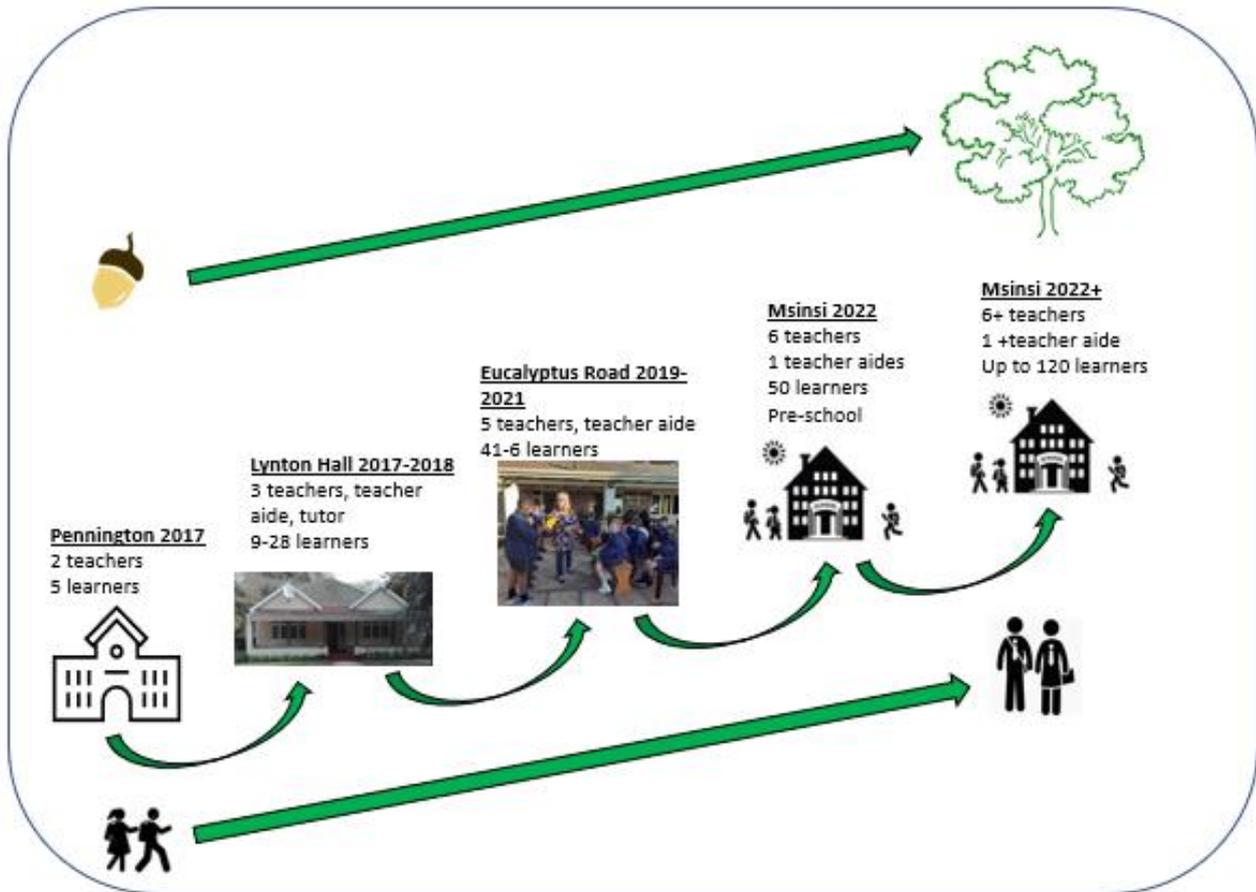
Daniel - *"I like WCA because it has small classes which means the teachers can help us whenever we have problems."*

Liyanda - *"I love going to school everyday because of its amazing teachers and students."*

Ayabonga - *"I love this school because it is very nice and it has lots of things."*

Shivesh - *"I like this school because it has dogs. The teachers give me confidence in me."*

## **BACKGROUND AND PROSPECTS**



- 2016: Founder Ruth Hannah was approached by several local parents about establishing an independent school for 2017 due to uncertainty of placement as the local schools were full. The current business model was agreed to after several meetings, although most of the interested parents were later offered places at other schools.
- 2017: The school was launched to fulfil commitments to parents whose children required focused teaching. The school started with 5 learners and 2 teachers in a basement flat in Pennington.
- Mid-2018: The premises had become too small for the school's rapid growth, so we moved to the gatekeeper's cottage at Lynton Hall with additional staff. Numbers grew through 2018 and 2019.
- 2020: As the school was unable to expand on the existing property, a move was made to Eucalyptus Road in Sezela in January. During this year, the final phase of registration with the Department of Basic Education was delayed by the Covid pandemic.
- 2021: We were unable to obtain Consent of Use as the final step in registration due to property limitations. The school has now found an alternative property in Msinsi Drive in Sezela and taken an investment partner on board. This step will allow the finalisation of the registration process and the growth of the school to our proposed maximum of 120-140 learners over the next 2-3 years. This number is considered the limit we can reach and still proudly deliver the same level of individual attention and maintain the ethos of the school.
- 2022+: We opened at the Msinsi Road premises in January 2022 and will continue to grow the school through improving and extending our range of offerings and in striving for excellence in all we do to continue enriching the education experience of our Woodkids. In addition, we are excited that we opened the Woodkids pre-school phase in January at the same site. We have also obtained the last of the clearance certificates from various authorities and look forward to the completion of the registration p