



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Sans Souci Girls' High School Report



School: Sans Souci Girls' High School
Address: Esme Road,
Newlands, 7700
Circuit: C5
District: Metro Central
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-Charging)
Principal: Ms R O'Shea



Areas of Evaluation:

	Learner Achievement	To evaluate the knowledge and skills that learners have acquired, progress made by learners over a period of time and recognition of learners.
	Teaching & Learning	To evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
	Behaviour & Safety	To evaluate the level at which the school creates a positive learning culture, good behaviour, and a healthy, safe and secure environment for everyone.
	Leadership & Management	To evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school.
	Governance, Parents & Community	To evaluate the effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its key roles and responsibilities including financial duties, and the effectiveness of the school in building good relationships with its stakeholders.

Summary:



Overall performance



KEY:



Main Findings

1. Learner Achievement 3

Learner achievement in the 2019 Grade 9 Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Systemic Tests was good and achievement in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination was outstanding.

In the Grade 9 WCED Systemic Tests, the Language results were 90,7%. From 2018 to 2019, there was a slight decrease of 3,5%. The results are substantially above the circuit, district and provincial results. The Mathematics results indicate a substantial decrease from 2016 (67,1%), 2017 (60,6%), 2018 (60,6%) to 2019 (40,7%). This is lower than the district, but higher than the circuit and provincial results.

In the NSC examination, learners achieved a 100% pass rate with 82,6% achieving Bachelors' passes. The pass percentages are outstanding and consistent with the pass percentage achieved in previous years, namely, 2016 (100%), 2017 (98%) and 2018 (100%). There is a marginal increase in the Bachelors' pass rate, which is substantially higher than the provincial results. There was a 100% pass rate in 14 subjects offered at NSC level, 93,3% in Accounting, 85,7% in Physical Sciences and 77,8% in Mathematics.

In learner interviews and lessons observed, learners read, speak, listen and write well. Many learners volunteer to read in class. However, a few do not read with comprehension. Most learners speak with confidence and have a good command of vocabulary. The majority of learners follow instructions and generally, listen intently. Most learners enjoy the arts and do well in public speaking, debating and drama. Although learners' workbooks are neat, many contain obvious spelling and grammatical errors.

Learners handle numbers well. They use calculators and other Mathematical software, but many are unable to solve Mathematical problems. It is evident that differentiation in Grades 8 and 9, enables more able learners to work at a faster pace and do more challenging tasks.

There is a wide choice of extra- and co-curricular and cultural activities. Amongst others, the school offers tennis, swimming, athletics, softball, hockey, soccer, netball, dance, choir, orchestra, jazz band and the Green Girls (environmental club). Grades 11 and 12 pupils attend camps, while the other grades are offered additional programmes, for example, Lead 4 Life and Elevate Education.

2. Teaching and Learning 3

Teachers maintain a positive learning environment. All teachers are present, actively teaching, respectful and inclusive of all learners. Most classrooms are clean and tidy. Most seating arrangements promote learning. Very little of the learners' work is displayed, but within most classrooms subject-related educational materials are visible on the wall display boards.

The quality of classroom teaching practice is good. Many learners participate actively in lessons, asking constructive and critical questions, and focus on their tasks. Good questioning techniques are used. Most teachers adjust their teaching pace, style and content to address misunderstandings and to support learning. Planning is good and tasks are both appropriate and engaging. Teachers provide feedback that supports learning. Teachers' knowledge of their subject is good, and the lessons are interesting. Their subject knowledge extends learners. A wide range of resources is available and used, including data projectors, large screen television sets, tablets, worksheets and textbooks. From Grades 8 to 11, eLearning is the norm. The computer room and well-stocked library are used by learners during and after school. The Consumer Studies classroom is well-equipped with up-to-date appliances. The Music Department is situated in its own prefabricated building and is well-resourced with many musical instruments, including a drum kit.

Most sampled learners' workbooks show a good range of exercises and completed work, that are pitched at the right level for the learners' age and phase of education. Teachers give learners memoranda and the learners mark and correct their own work, including homework. This means that workbooks are not regularly marked by teachers and only a few teachers write useful comments in the workbooks. Teachers adjust their strategies to ensure all learners learn constructively. Both formal and informal assessments are used to understand learners' difficulties. All teachers are available after school should learners require assistance. This enables individuals to receive additional help and support. Extra-curricular Mathematics lessons are offered to all grades after school.



3. Behaviour and Safety 3

The school has a positive ethos, promotes good values and discipline among learners and staff. There is mutual respect and trust between most learners and staff. This is evident from interviews, discussions and general observations. However, a few learners felt that they were not listened to as some of their issues were not addressed or taken seriously by the principal. In contrast, other learners acknowledged the principal's "open door" policy. Learners attend classes promptly and new procedures are reducing the problem of late coming. Learner attendance is 96,4%. This is an improvement from 2019 when attendance was 88,5% in the third term and 86,5% in the fourth term respectively.

Learners feel physically safe and secure, but their belongings are not as there has been an increase in petty theft. The Code of Conduct is implemented effectively and consistently, and transgressions are dealt with accordingly. Learners feel cared for and protected. A full-time school counsellor, appointed in 2018, cares for vulnerable learners. There is an increase in learners suffering from panic attacks, anxiety and depression and a few learners are referred to social workers at the district office for additional assistance. The school-based support team is responsible for determining the support needs of the school, teachers and learners and coordinating support provision.

The school is situated in a picturesque environment and its lawns, tennis courts and garden are well-kept. Despite the building's age, few defects are visible. There was no sign that the building is a danger to learners. Equipment is safely stored when not in use. There are sufficient, strategically placed, serviced fire extinguishers and fire hoses. Areas which could pose a risk, such as the swimming pool, are fenced and access is controlled. The ablution facilities are sufficient and in a good condition. An upgrade to the toilets for the junior learners is beautiful and much appreciated by the learners. Access to the school is controlled. All staff have a code to enter and exit the premises and a support staff member monitors the gate for visitor entry. Gates are locked during the school day and parents use a drop-off zone. The school has closed-circuit television cameras installed in strategic places which are linked to armed response.

No instances of people bringing illegal drugs or dangerous weapons onto the premises have been reported. A tuckshop is available. Learners interviewed said that too much oil is used in food preparation and that the prices are high. However, it was observed that many learners buy food from the tuckshop. Learners are offered sufficient afterschool programmes with sporting and cultural activities, clubs and societies.



4. Leadership and Management 3

The vision and mission statement, as well as the values of integrity, kindness and inclusivity are clear to most stakeholders and visibly displayed in the reception area. In interviews with members of the School Management Team (SMT), it was evident that the vision and mission are not shared effectively. A few members of the SMT felt that these must be reviewed and updated.

The SMT meets to discuss priorities for improvement, but in interviews with members of the SMT, a few felt that they did not have input in the drawing up of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) or strengthening school improvement. There is insufficient evidence that the SIP is monitored effectively by the SMT.

During interviews with the SMT, it was evident that it is not operating in synergy. SMT members feel it would be better if they worked as a unit and in the same direction. We observed that there are cliques and this filters down to the rest of the staff. Despite these shortcomings, the SMT is currently able to implement initiatives effectively.

SMT members identify strengths and weaknesses in learner achievement through grade and subject meetings. The SMT monitors and moderates workbooks, teachers' planning schedules and assessments frequently. Apart from classroom visits during the Integrated Quality Management System process, only two SMT members visit classrooms and observe lessons regularly. During interviews with members of the SMT, it was mentioned that some learners complained to them about a few teachers not doing work and confirmed that classroom visits would be a solution. The SMT, however, does not conduct classroom visits regularly. The SMT mentors newly appointed teachers. The principal encourages teachers to attend courses, but there is reluctance to attend courses after school or during weekends.

Most teachers are accountable and fulfil their tasks and responsibilities. Teacher attendance is good. Learners are almost never left unattended. Teaching and learning resources are actively and appropriately used by learners.



5. Governance, Parents and Community



The governing body fulfils its responsibilities in support of school development and improvement. It employs 15 staff members, purchased a school vehicle and tablets for all teachers and agreed to the upgrade of all toilet facilities.

The Finance Policy is in line with legal and policy requirements and is implemented effectively. However, the policy must include amounts allocated to different procurement categories. The school follows sound financial practices for most income and expenditure. All financial records are neatly filed and stored. The 2019 audited financial statement was completed on time and forwarded to the district office. Monthly records are available and the WCED 043 forms are submitted quarterly. The finance officer prepares the budget and this is overseen by the governing body. The 2020 budget was approved by parents in October 2019 and serves the needs of the school. The school submitted evidence of a visit by the School Finance and Records Officer (SFRO), dated 19 May 2016. In the report reference is made to shortcomings and recommendations attached, but the attachment was not available for perusal.

The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) acknowledged that they had open channels with the principal but felt that their ideas were not always considered. Parents interviewed said that the school involves them in its activities and keeps them informed of their children's progress. There is also regular communication on techniques to assist their children in effective learning and homework. However, few parents attend meetings. The school engages positively with the district office and external organisations.

Recommendations

1. The school must continue with the Mathematics lessons after school hours to improve the overall results.
2. Teachers must mark workbooks regularly and include comments to assist learners to understand the areas for improvement.
3. The school must introduce additional, more stringent measures to counteract and end the petty theft of learners' belongings.
4. The SMT must reflect and discuss how best to work together as a team and offer clear direction so that, despite robust conversations, collective decisions are made in the interest of the learners.
5. All members of the SMT must be involved in drawing up and monitoring the SIP.
6. The governing body must review and ensure that all staff contracts meet legal requirements.
7. Greater parental involvement in school activities must be encouraged.