



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



**Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report:
Monte Vista Primary School**



School: Monte Vista Primary School
Address: Huising Avenue, Monte Vista,
7460
Circuit: C8
District: Metro North
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Ms SJE Swart



Areas of Evaluation:

	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:



Teaching & Learning:



Behaviour & Safety:



Leadership & Management:



Governance, Parents & Community:



Overall performance



KEY:



Outstanding



Good



Requires improvement



Inadequate

Main Findings



1. Teaching and Learning

1.1 The teachers maintain a safe and positive learning environment (4)

Evaluative commentary

The school has organised the classrooms and timetable very well and was ready to welcome back all learners. All desks and tables are adequately spaced according to social distancing recommendations. Learners in the two sessions occupy different desks. The school decided on the platooning system so that all learners attend school daily. There are two sessions per day and each session is three hours. 30 Minutes are allocated to screening and the transition between sessions. The timetable was adjusted to enable all learners to return at the same time as the Grade 7 learners. The focus during the two three-hour sessions per day is on Languages, Mathematics and one other subject. Each session includes a 10-minute snack time. A teacher in the Foundation Phase shows a video to learners in each session to show them their classmates from the different session. There is great excitement as the learners see their classmates when they view the video. Ten teacher assistants sit in the corridors outside the classrooms to help the teachers and accompany learners to the ablution facilities during class times.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The platooning system enables all learners to attend school every day so that learners enjoy stability and structure after spending such a long time at home during the lockdown.

1.2 The adaptation of classroom teaching practice in the light of Covid-19 ensures that teaching and learning are of high quality (4)

Evaluative commentary

The school appreciates the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines and Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs), and finds that the documents are structured and give staff guidance. Teachers have adapted positively to the changed conditions in their classrooms and were excited when the learners returned. A newly qualified teacher commented that for the first time she felt like a teacher and felt good about herself. The smaller classes enable teachers to focus on each learner. As there are no discipline issues, time is not wasted. Teachers and learners feel that although the instructional time is less than before lockdown, it is better managed. Resources are utilised effectively. Learners often ask good questions when their curiosity is aroused.

1.3 Learners are supported well (in school and at home) so that they learn effectively (4)

Evaluative commentary

Teachers mark the learners' books regularly and provide feedback. All books are sanitised before and after contact. The school has provided lessons on Google Classroom since 31 March 2020. Most learners have access to it, and the few who did not have access, used the ClassDojo app. Therefore, all vulnerable learners received work during the lockdown. Parents went to the school every Friday to collect work packs for the learners and returned them after two weeks. Virtual lessons for Creative Arts were prepared on the Clever Touch interactive whiteboard for all learners, except Grade 7 learners. Learners and staff benefit from the services of a permanent psychologist.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The school employs a registered psychologist who consults many learners and parents.



2. Behaviour and Safety

2.1 The school's environment is disciplined and purposeful and its ethos is positive (4)

Evaluative commentary

Learners, teachers and non-teaching staff demonstrate comprehensive and willing compliance with all measures necessary to keep everyone safe. Teachers are focused on maintaining the high quality of teaching and learning. In Languages, the themes are the same, so all video clips are translated before use. Social Sciences and Creative Arts are not taught to the Grade 7 learners, so this instructional time is used for other subjects. As all classrooms have cameras, the principal monitors how safety and cleaning protocols are implemented in the classrooms and would have evidence should there be a question from a parent. The teachers remain committed to deliver high-quality teaching and learning.

2.2 The school is safe, and protects and cares for its learners and staff well..... 4

Evaluative commentary

The Cleaning and Sanitation Schedule is prepared by the caretaker. It is comprehensive and followed by the general assistants. All staff and learners wear face masks and implement social distancing. Screening procedures are thorough and quick due to the efficiency of the overall process. A few learners interviewed said that they were reluctant to use the ablution facilities at school because they were wanted reassurance that they were thoroughly disinfected. All staff and learners know the procedures well for suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19. Any suspected case of Covid-19 is reported immediately, and the learner is taken to the isolation room. Parents are contacted to fetch them and advised to take them to a clinic for testing. Authorised visitors are first identified at the gate and, once granted access, are screened and sanitised. No unauthorised visitors are allowed on the school premises without an appointment and confirmation from the principal. Deliveries are limited.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

There are learners who do not have food at home. A “Mothers’ Prayer Group” prepares food packs for these learners and it is placed under their desks to avoid any form of identification or embarrassment. The screening process in the school hall is outstanding. Learners enter and queue in a snake-like formation. A Face Recognition Thermal Imaging Camera with temperature screening functions is used most effectively.

2.3 (Where applicable) The school’s boarding facilities (hostels), cater well for the safety, care and welfare of learners – Not Applicable



3. Leadership and Management

3.1 The School Management Team (SMT) gives clear direction to the school..... 4

Evaluative commentary

The SMT implements a clear and appropriate plan that complies with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the WCED Guidelines, including the Temporary Revised Education Plan. After the principal received guidelines and instructions, she held Zoom meetings with the SMT and staff to keep them informed and minimise anxiety. The SMT returned to school two weeks before the rest of the staff and adapted the plans further to suit the school. Each member of the SMT focused on and workshopped a section from the DBE SOP to ensure that it was user-friendly for the staff to understand fully. Class teachers conducted orientation sessions when the learners returned. The SMT first identified anxiety as a risk for returning learners. To mitigate this, parents were asked to introduce learners gradually to wearing face masks before they returned to school. The school psychologist assisted staff to ease their anxieties when a teacher tested Covid-19 positive. Attendance by learners and staff is very good. The SMT engaged with parents and learners from March so that most parents felt that the school had never been closed. The measures put in place focused on the academic programme and ensured that attendance is very good. The teamwork amongst the SMT members is transparent and visible.

3.2 The SMT acts effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school..... 4

Evaluative commentary

Regular phase and grade meetings are held to ensure that the changes to the curriculum and any related matters are addressed adequately. The SMT stated that it was made clear to staff that the additional focus

on safety and hygiene must not impact on the normally high standards of curriculum delivery. The SMT continued with its normal monitoring and moderation policies and class visits still take place. The quality of teaching and learning is maintained due to the smaller classes and suspension of the extensive extra-curricular programme. It also checks that vulnerable learners are assisted online, and parents collect work from the school every week. The subject advisers hold Zoom meetings with the departmental heads and the information was conveyed to the teachers. The principal is connected to every classroom via camera, except the Grade 4 classrooms situated in prefabricated rooms, and knows exactly what is happening in the classrooms. This is not seen as invasive, but a protective measure for teachers, if parents complain.

3.3 The SMT ensures that good use is made of all school resources (human, financial and physical)..... 4

Evaluative commentary

The school has a large staff complement and deploys them well to maintain academic standards and effective safety and hygiene protocols. All staff are always busy with tasks and the SMT manages their functions well. The SMT manages staff with comorbidities well, ensuring their safety regarding contact with their colleagues and learners. Teachers with comorbidities prepare and drop off work at school. The caretaker is supported and managed by the SMT. Two additional venues have been deep-cleaned and are on standby in case a used classroom needs to be evacuated and deep-cleaned. The SMT encourages the use of online resources.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well..... 4

Evaluative commentary

The governing body supports the school well. Its members have been part of the initial discussions and received and workshopped the WCED Guidelines. The governing body has a good understanding of the implications of Covid-19 for the school. It was keen to support the school in additional purchases, including the Face Recognition Thermal Imaging Camera with temperature screening functions. It has approved the addendum to the Health and Safety Policy to include the protocols relating to Covid-19, the Grounds and Maintenance Policy, and the revised dress code.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

After the pandemic, the Face Recognition Thermal Imaging Camera will be re-purposed for staff and visitor registration on arrival and departure.

4.2 The governing body fulfils well its functions with regard to the school's finances within its legal mandate..... 4

Evaluative commentary

The governing body created a Covid-19 fund from its emergency funding. All purchases related to Covid-19 come from the fund and, as a result, a minor adjustment was made to the budget. The planned expenditure for extra-curricular activities has been reprioritised for other essential costs. The budget has been reviewed and will be ratified at a scheduled parent meeting.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders..... 4

Evaluative commentary

The learners, teachers and caretaker interviewed said that they are able to give suggestions and feedback to the principal and SMT. For example, staff have given feedback on procedural matters and their contributions are always appreciated. The caretaker's suggestion about washing overalls at school daily was accepted. Communication with parents is frequent and informative. It has been effective from the start of the lockdown and most parents appreciate the transparency. The SMT is grateful for their support. Parents were informed which session their children should attend and children from the same family attended the same session. The district director provided the school with an operational plan, which proved to be very helpful and useful for future planning. Support from the district officials is excellent and the circuit manager is in constant contact with the principal. Subject advisers inform the academic head and departmental heads on the effective implementation of the adjusted plans.

Recommendations

1. The school must continue the momentum of teaching and learning as teachers have worked hard to ensure that their learners are able to complete the curriculum.
2. The SMT must reassure learners that the ablution facilities are thoroughly cleaned daily.
3. As a few teachers interviewed indicated that they felt overworked; the SMT must take precautionary measures to prevent any signs of burnout among its staff.