



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



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



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Accountability • Quality • Respect

Date of evaluation
22 September 2020

Lead evaluator
Ms BD Houghton

Chief evaluator
Ms KN Bydell

School: **Garlandale Primary School**

Address: 5 General Street, Athlone,
7764

Circuit: C4

District: Metro Central

Province: Western Cape

Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)

Principal: Ms P Hector



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 (2)

Evaluative commentary

All classrooms are organised so that social distancing is observed. Desks are spaced at least 1,5 metres apart and all carpets for ability group teaching have been removed to create more space. The reading corners are also closed in the classrooms. All grades, except Grade 5, attend school five days in a ten-day cycle. Grade 5 learners are divided into three groups and attend school five days in a 15-day cycle because the school is short of one teacher.

Concerns, problems

Insufficient instructional time is allocated to the Grade 5 learners.

1.2 The adaptation of classroom teaching practice in the light of Covid-19 ensures that teaching and learning are of high quality (3)

Evaluative commentary

The teachers follow the Annual Teaching Plans (ATP) and find the focused lesson plans and resources very good and useful. During interviews, the teachers stated that they will complete the ATPs and that the subject advisers assisted them well in understanding the revised curriculum. The contents of the Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP) are effectively implemented. The School Management Team (SMT) drew up the plans with input from the rest of the staff. The school received approval not to teach Creative Arts in the Intermediate and Senior Phases. In the Foundation Phase, the time allocated to Life Skills is used for additional teaching in Language and Mathematics. Teachers appreciate the smaller class groups as the teaching environment is more relaxed for both teachers and learners. The Grade 7 learners are divided into groups according to their abilities so that the pace of teaching and learning differs for each group. The learners are more focused and cooperative.

1.3 Learners are supported well (in school and at home) so that they learn effectively (3)

Evaluative commentary

Teachers mark work regularly and give constructive feedback to learners. During lockdown, teachers formed WhatsApp groups to communicate with their learners and parents collected work packs for their children. All grades have returned, and the few learners who are still at home, receive work packs regularly. However, attempts to contact two learners who have not returned have been unsuccessful. A psychologist from the district office visits the school weekly and offers support to all learners, including vulnerable learners.



2. Behaviour and Safety

2.1 The school's environment is disciplined and purposeful and its ethos is positive (3)

Evaluative commentary

Learners and staff know and understand the measures necessary to manage Covid-19. In interviews, they were able to describe the procedures for screening and many learners reminded their peers to wear their face masks correctly. Some learners raised concerns about the well-being of their elderly relatives at home and were always careful and cautious. Learners and staff returned to school with a positive mindset and, despite the focus on safety and hygiene, remain committed to high quality teaching and learning. Most learners are punctual, well-mannered and greet staff and visitors warmly. The school is clean and brightly coloured murals, reminding learners about Covid-19 safety and hygiene procedures, are painted on the front walls.

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

2

Evaluative commentary

The school implements effective procedures to manage Covid-19. Classrooms, frequently used surfaces and ablution facilities are cleaned often. On arrival, learners and staff are screened systematically, wear face masks and adhere to social distancing throughout the day. Learners and staff understand procedures for responding to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19, and the school has a suitable isolation room. Even though the principal said that unauthorised visitors are not given access to the premises, we were not asked for proof of identification. At one stage, the gate was left open and unattended.

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.....

3

Evaluative commentary

The SMT adapted the Department of Basic Education Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to the needs of the school. A Covid-19 Policy was drawn up together with a Covid-19 Operational Plan. Staff discussed and implemented the WCED Guidelines and the TREP. They received hard copies of these documents. An orientation session was conducted for all staff and, in turn, the entire staff prepared the school thoroughly for orientation when different grades returned. The SMT monitors the safety of all learners and staff, and action is taken if rules are not followed. Although teachers are allocated duties during breaks, a few learners were observed playing together and sitting too close to each other. At first the return of learners to school was poor, but video materials on safety precautions at the school were sent to parents and this encouraged many learners to attend school.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The staff went the extra mile to create materials to remind learners of the five golden rules and safety protocols constantly. Attractive, colourful displays and posters on how to prevent Covid-19 are visible throughout the school.

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

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Evaluative commentary

The SMT gives effective direction, guidance and support to the teaching staff and the departmental heads hold regular meetings with teachers in their phase. Assessments are monitored and moderated. The principal trusts the departmental heads to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. However, they do not conduct classroom visits. The SMT did not provide opportunities for training and development of teachers during the lockdown period. Vulnerable learners are supported at school. A Grade 7 learner attends school, despite comorbidities, and receives care and support.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

Staff are deployed equitably and according to the needs of the school. The SMT ensures that the safety and cleaning resources are organised and stored in a large container and are used efficiently. During lockdown, teachers communicated with their learners via WhatsApp groups, but since the return of learners, online learning is limited.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well (3)

Evaluative commentary

The governing body understands the school's management of Covid-19 well and supports the principal and SMT. The chairperson monitors and assists on an almost daily basis. The governing body has reviewed the Code of Conduct for Learners and was involved in developing the Covid-19 Policy and its operational plan.

4.2 The governing body fulfils well its functions with regard to the school's finances within its legal mandate (2)

Evaluative commentary

Although the governing body has not reviewed the budget, it is aware of the challenges the pandemic presents. The principal said that less than 20% of school fees have been paid, but not many parents have applied for exemption.

Concerns, problems

As a result of the decrease in the payment of school fees and settlement of a large debt, the governing body has been unable to renew the contract of one of the Grade 5 teachers.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders (3)

Evaluative commentary

The learners and staff feel that they can contribute to discussions around the school's management of Covid-19. Some of the discussions have been about safe storage of the cleaning materials and overall safety of learners and staff. The school communicates with parents via online platforms but seldom seeks their suggestions and feedback. Advice on study methods is mostly given by individual teachers. The school receives good support from the district office. The subject advisers have been extremely helpful and responsive to the teachers and visit often. Psycho-social support has been very good, including regular visits by the psychologist and social worker from the district to address vulnerable learners' needs.

Recommendations

1. The timetable should be adjusted to enable Grade 5 learners to receive more instructional time.
2. Access to the premises must be monitored throughout the school day.
3. Learners and staff must continue to adhere to safety protocols and not allow complacency to set in.
4. The SMT must conduct classroom visits on a regular basis to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is excellent.
5. The governing body must review and reprioritise the budget and find ways to ensure that parents pay school fees.