



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report:
Hoërskool De Kuilen



School: Hoërskool De Kuilen
Address: Church Street, Kuils River,
7580
Circuit: C7
District: Metro East
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Mr JH Mellet



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

All grades are divided into two groups each which attend school every alternative day. Almost all Grades 11 and 12 learners were actively working during the lockdown and are still working independently. The Grade 12 curriculum has been completed and learners are currently preparing for the September examination. All teachers were present and actively teaching. There is mutual respect and admiration between teachers and learners.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

All class tests are written after school to maximise instructional time. The use of one-way passages helps with movement and minimises contact between classes. The teachers with comorbidities arrive 30 minutes before the commencement of their lessons and allowed to go home afterwards, but they prefer to stay at school. Breaks are staggered breaks so that only two grades have a break at the same time.

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 subject advisers explained the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP) online with all teachers, which subject groups discussed further and finalised. The needs of all subjects have been included in the Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP). Teachers are ahead of the timeframes in the ATPs. Teachers and learners have adapted to the new conditions. It is clear in the way they comply with all Covid-19 regulations and amended school rules throughout the day. They wear face masks, sanitise their hands and maintain social distancing. Lessons are well presented, and learners are actively involved in all teaching and learning activities.

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

Evaluative commentary

Learners write regular assessments and receive feedback within seven days. Grades 10 to 12 teachers have built strong relationships with their learners and parents during the lockdown. Grades 8 and 9 did not work much at home and teachers had to repeat most of the work when they returned to school. Between 10% and 20% of learners were found to be vulnerable. They are supported with food and clothes donations. Data was supplied to all learners who struggled with access to online teaching and learning materials. The school has a dedicated staff member and a social worker to work with learners with special needs and behavioural problems.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

Assessment and feedback in some of the subjects are conducted via WhatsApp video calls which language teachers found to be particularly useful for Oral. Learners with comorbidities complete assessments online or at a convenient time after school. The school has plans to assist Grades 8 and 9 learners who did not work at home. Each Grade 12 learner has a guardian teacher who collaborates with the parents and cares for their wellbeing.



2. Behaviour and Safety

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

Evaluative commentary

Staff and learners are well informed about Covid-19 regulations and they willingly comply. All staff members are on duty during breaks and it was observed that learners did not have to be reminded to adhere to social

distancing during breaks. Learners are punctual, committed and concentrate on their schoolwork. Although Grades 8 and 9 learners did not work much during the lockdown, they are focused now that they are back at school.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

Everyone entering the school premises wears a face mask, is screened, sanitises their hands and adheres to social distancing. Markers indicating the regulated 1,5metre distances are visible throughout the school premises and are adhered to in all classes, passages, screening points, ablution facilities, offices and designated areas. Classrooms and offices are cleaned every afternoon and the ablution facilities are cleaned every hour. Each teacher and learner received a cloth to clean their work area at the beginning and end of every lesson. All computer keyboards are covered with plastic and sanitised before use. All groups interviewed were able to explain the procedures to respond to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19. During the visit, the Covid-19 Compliance Officer followed the correct procedures when attending to a learner with symptoms. The school does not have a National School Nutrition Programme and food is not prepared on the school premises. Access to the school is strictly controlled and unauthorised visitors are not allowed onto the premises.

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 principal orientated the SMT and staff on their first day back at school and teachers orientated the different grades as they returned to school. The teachers have developed a video clip to demonstrate the procedure for reporting back at school and disseminated it via WhatsApp groups to learners and parents during the lockdown. The SMT arranged daily meetings for teachers to discuss plans, new developments and give feedback when only Grade 12 learners were present. Weekly meetings have been held since the other grades returned to school. Risks tabled by staff were mitigated as follows:

- The number of learners per class was further reduced or bigger classrooms were allocated to ensure social distancing and protect the teachers with comorbidities.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers were fixed to the floor to minimise handling.
- For safety reasons all test scripts and learners' books are stored for three days before being marked and another three days before being returned to learners.

The teachers are passionate about their school and learners. The SMT is well respected and their guidance is appreciated by staff. Learner and staff attendance are outstanding.

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

4

Evaluative commentary

The SMT provides for weekly subject meetings in their planning and teachers submit their weekly plans every Friday to the principal. The SMT encourages teachers to use online platforms and resources effectively. All lessons are available in hard copies and on various online platforms. The SMT has a reliable database of all vulnerable learners. Teachers are in constant contact with these learners and their parents. Social needs are attended to by the social worker and academic needs are addressed by each subject teacher. Special arrangements are made for learners to complete assignments and assessments. The SMT can give a good account of all academic activities. All teachers have data projectors and a laptop.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The SMT requested younger teachers to take the lead in training other staff members in the use of eLearning resources. An Information Technology (IT) committee has been established to support teachers who struggle with eLearning resources continuously. In addition, learners were taught how to use Microsoft Teams.

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

Evaluative commentary

The sports coaches were given the choice to continue working in a different capacity or to cancel their contracts for the rest of the year, but they opted to be redeployed. The SMT has drawn up a timetable, specifically for Covid-19, to ensure that all tasks are fairly and equitably distributed. The cleaning and safety materials are effectively managed by the Covid-19 Compliance Officer. There is enough cleaning and safety materials for the rest of 2020 and part of 2021.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

All teachers have full access to online resources and are well supported by the IT committee. Learners who cannot afford data are assisted by the school. Food parcels were given to the non-teaching staff as a token of appreciation.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well 4

Evaluative commentary

As the chairperson is a medical doctor, he and the rest of the governing body members supported the SMT very well during lockdown. He advised teachers how to keep themselves and learners safe whilst handling paper in the classroom.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The following policies were amended:

- Code of Conduct for Learners to introduce a point system for transgressions of Covid-19 regulations and to allow learners to attend school without wearing uniform every day.
- Finance Policy to cater for new applications for exemption from paying school fees.
- Communication Policy to allow the use of cell phones and social media.
- Safety Policy to include all Covid-19 regulations.
- A set of rules for the construction company on site.

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

Evaluative commentary

The bursar has calculated the loss of income and the savings on municipal accounts due to Covid-19. The governing body uses a discount system to encourage parents to pay the school fees in the first term of every year and parents made use of this opportunity. The governing body has reprioritised the budget to cover the loss of income and to provide for Covid-19 related expenses and other needs.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

Due to effective financial planning, the governing body has secured funds for the following:

- Safety equipment such as hand sanitiser dispensers and cleaning materials.
- Replacement of IT equipment for teachers.
- Renovation of an office and boardroom into an isolation room.
- Salaries for the remainder of the year.

The governing body applied to the Unemployment Insurance Fund and received financial support for its employees. The school will be able to meet all its financial obligations for 2020.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders 3

Evaluative commentary

All groups interviewed stated that feedback and suggestions were encouraged at the school. Non-teaching staff report to the deputy principal who takes requests and suggestions to the principal for a decision. The request to purchase additional safety items is an example of the effective communication. The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) is functional, and learners also voice their opinions via the prefects and teachers. A theme week is organised every term for teachers and learners to join in fun activities. There is a box for suggestions in the staffroom. These suggestions are well received by the SMT and it always responds in writing to the whole staff. The possible introduction of an electronic system for RCL elections is an example.

The parents are kept informed via various online platforms and have access to various teaching and learning materials. Parents and teachers, especially Grades 10 to 12, are constantly in contact with one another. Even after the learners had returned to school, parents requested extra work and enquire about their children's progress regularly. Parents check their children's work and communicate regularly and effectively via social media. The school has good links with the district office through subject advisers and the circuit manager. The University of Stellenbosch conducted a motivational session for Grade 12 learners. The school has strong links with the Department of Health. The social worker played an active role in arranging the motivational sessions by a Non-Government Organisation for the school. Psycho-social support is rendered by the school psychologist when learners are referred. Communication on all levels is highly effective and all stakeholders respond efficiently to all request and needs.

Concerns, problems

Despite all the efforts of teachers and the availability of teaching and learning materials in hard copies and soft copies on various platforms, the parents' support for Grades 8 and 9 learners was very disappointing. Requests for information was done at very short notice by officials.

Recommendations

1. The SMT must guide teachers in setting timeframes for communication with parents and academic support to learners.
2. The SMT must consider relaxation activities for especially Grade 12 learners because they work extremely hard and the focus is only on the academic programme.
3. The governing body and the SMT must consider motivational and recreational activities for teachers.