



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report: Hoërskool Eben Donges



School: Hoërskool Eben Donges
Address: Van der Bijl Street, Belmont Park, Kraaifontein, 7570
Circuit: C6
District: Metro East
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Mr WJ Taylor



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:

4 Outstanding

3 Good

2 Requires improvement

1 Inadequate

Main Findings



1. Teaching and Learning

1.1 The teachers maintain a safe and positive learning environment 3

Evaluative commentary

The school uses all indoor and outdoor spaces effectively. The furniture and equipment in the classrooms and offices are arranged in such a manner that social distancing is adhered to at all times. All classes are divided into smaller groups. To minimise movement, learners remain in the same classroom throughout the day whilst teachers rotate. Grade 12s attend school daily and Grades 8 to 11 attend school on a daily rotational basis. Instructional time corresponds with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) prescripts. On the day of the evaluation, Grade 12 learners were writing Computer Applications Technology, Paper 1, for the National Senior Certificate examination. This was managed effectively even though the school experienced problems with its computer server.

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

Most subject advisers held virtual meetings with teachers to discuss the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP). Some teachers felt that the information received from the DBE was received after the learners returned to schools and was too lengthy. The ATPs were discussed and understood by all teachers. The Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP) makes provision for subject needs. Learners and teachers have adapted well to the changed conditions and appreciate the smaller classes. On the day of evaluation, Grades 8 and 9 were attending school and all teachers were actively teaching. Most teachers treated the learners with respect.

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

Evaluative commentary

Learners are well supported and receive regular feedback from teachers. Tasks and tests are marked timeously, and learners get feedback soon afterwards. Work in most learners' workbooks is marked and corrections are done. Hard copies of notes are available to those still not attending school. Most teachers use online resources which are also available to learners. The School-based Support Team is currently not functional, so the school does not follow a formal process to identify vulnerable learners. Those in need are supported by individual teachers.



2. Behaviour and Safety

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

Evaluative commentary

Stakeholders understand and demonstrate a willingness to comply with safety measures to keep everyone safe throughout the day. Teachers and learners are committed to effective teaching and learning despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic. Most learners attend school regularly, are punctual, focused and participate in learning activities.

2.2 The school is safe, and protects and cares for its learners and staff well 3

Evaluative commentary

The school has effective procedures in place to manage Covid-19. Everyone answers the Covid-19 related questions, is screened, sanitised, wears face masks and adheres to social distancing. Teachers are on ground duty during breaks to ensure social distancing. Classrooms, offices and toilets are cleaned after school and sanitised throughout the school day. Stakeholders have knowledge of the isolation room and its purpose. They

are well informed about their roles and responsibilities in responding to confirmed and suspected cases of Covid-19. Only authorised visitors are allowed onto the school premises and follow the same safety procedures as the staff. After completing the visitors' register, they are directed to the principal's office.

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 based its TREP on the DBE Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines. Stakeholders' input was taken into consideration before it was finalised. The TREP is updated according to the revised SOP. The orientation of stakeholders was well planned and effectively executed on their first day back at school. Everyone displayed a good understanding of the school's safety plans and their roles and responsibilities during interviews. The SMT monitors the implementation of the safety plans very well. Its members are responsible for managing specific tasks in the TREP and they work closely with the Covid-19 Compliance Officer. The SMT successfully promotes good attendance by learners and staff. On the day of the evaluation, the attendance rate for staff and learners was 100% and 97% respectively.

3.2 The SMT acts effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school..... (3)

Evaluative commentary

The SMT gives clear direction to teachers and it coordinates teaching, learning and assessment activities. The teaching and assessment plans meet the requirements of the ATPs. Some SMT members are subject heads and manage the subject groups very well. Teachers share information, teaching resources and good practices. Although most teachers make use of online teaching and learning resources, it is not managed or monitored by the SMT. Some teachers buy data for learners who cannot afford to do so.

3.3 The SMT ensures that good use is made of all school resources (human, financial and physical) (2)

Evaluative commentary

The SMT has allocated Covid-19 related tasks fairly to staff. Daily tasks are rotated amongst staff members. Everyone is committed to the safety and well-being of staff and learners. One teacher worked from home due to comorbidities but has returned to school since lockdown Level 2 was implemented. Safety and cleaning resources are effectively managed by the administrative staff and monitored by the Covid-19 Compliance Officer. The school has enough stock for the rest of the year. The unreliable Wi-Fi connection at school hampers the use of online resources. Fourteen classrooms were refurbished by the WCED as eLearning classrooms a few years ago, but the SMT and teachers reported that most of these resources are no longer in working condition.

Concerns, problems

According to the SMT, there is an Information Technology (IT) plan, but it was not clear about how redundant IT equipment would be replaced. Teachers use their personal resources to download teaching and learning materials at home.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

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

Evaluative commentary

The SMT reported that the school is well supported by the governing body. The principal supplied the agenda and minutes of the last two meetings at which the SMT's safety plans were discussed and supported by the governing body. The principal is in regular contact with the chairperson and ensures that the governing body is well informed and stays abreast of all new developments. The governing body has not amended policies, but the Code of Conduct for Learners and the Safety Policy are used in conjunction with the Covid-19 regulations.

4.2 The governing body fulfils well its functions with regard to the school's finances within its legal mandate 3

Evaluative commentary

The governing body fulfils its functions well regarding the school's finances. It had a special meeting to discuss and amend the school's budget. The bursar can give a detailed account of the school's finances. Provision was made for expenses related to Covid-19 and arrangements were made with the municipality and other service providers for two months' payment relief. This arrangement allowed the school more time to collect outstanding school fees. The school can meet all its financial obligations for the rest of the year and the salaries of governing body employees are secured. It has also applied for financial assistance from the Unemployment Insurance Fund and received payments for April and May 2020.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders 3

Evaluative commentary

Feedback and suggestions by all stakeholders are encouraged. The staff was involved in the finalisation of the TREP and they continue to give feedback during staff meetings. The Covid-19 Compliance Officer reports to the principal daily. Administrative staff communicate directly with the principal and the general assistants via the caretaker. Although the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) is not currently functional, learners can share their ideas and opinions with teachers. The school communicates with parents via WhatsApp, bulk SMS and its website. The principal has invited anxious parents to visit the school to experience the safety measures in place. During the lockdown, hard copies of notes were made available for parents to collect at school. Parents were included in subject WhatsApp groups to keep them informed and to help them monitor their children's progress. Many parents and learners did not have access due to a lack of data and devices, and consequently, the participation rate was very low. When learners returned to school, teachers only focused on work that was to be assessed. The school is supported well by the district officials. It received financial support for the printing of notes for learners. Most subject advisers give ongoing support to teachers and make sure that teachers stay abreast of new developments. The SMT said that the circuit manager is very supportive. He is not only concerned about work-related issues, but also the wellbeing of staff. According to the SMT, the support from the social worker and school psychologist was limited to a questionnaire which the school had to complete.

Recommendations

1. The SMT must revise its IT plan to improve the use of online teaching and learning resources.
2. The SMT, with support from the governing body, must plan for the replacement of redundant equipment.
3. The SMT must ensure that the RCL is fully functional.