



# Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



**Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report:  
Salt River Secondary School**



**School:** Salt River Secondary School  
**Address:** Rochester Road, Salt River,  
7925  
**Circuit:** C3  
**District:** Metro Central  
**Province:** Western Cape  
**Category:** Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)  
**Principal:** Ms F Patel



## 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..... 1

##### Evaluative commentary

The school has based its Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP) on the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines. Grade 12 learners attend school daily and Grades 8 to 11 two days per week. The timetable is well aligned with the DBE SOP and the WCED Guidelines, but instructional time is lost due to poor attendance of especially Grades 10 and 11 learners. As learners had completed the assessments for the third term, most were absent on the day of the evaluation.

##### Concerns, problems

In only one of the four classes observed, a teacher was actively teaching. Teachers were not present in the other three classes. We were informed that these three teachers were busy with assessment-related tasks in the staffroom.

#### 1.2 The adaptation of classroom teaching practice in the light of Covid-19 ensures that teaching and learning are of high quality..... 2

##### Evaluative commentary

Subject advisers communicated via Zoom and Microsoft Teams to explain the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP) to teachers. The different subjects' needs informed the school's assessment plan and TREP. Teachers find the information on the WCED ePortal very useful. Learners and teachers appreciate the smaller classes. Discipline has improved and, consequently, teachers find it easier to teach and more learners participate in activities.

##### Concerns, problems

In one class learners were participating enthusiastically, but this good practice cannot be reported as being the norm in the school.

#### 1.3 Learners are supported well (in school and at home) so that they learn effectively..... 1

##### Evaluative commentary

There is no evidence that learners' workbooks are regularly marked. Tests and assignments are timeously marked, and learners receive their results. However, test scripts are not always returned to learners. Online learning materials are not effectively used by learners due to a lack of data and devices, but hard copies of work packs are available at school. Teachers stated that the work packs were not effectively used by learners. The social worker and the school psychologist had two meetings with Grade 12 learners and supported ten vulnerable learners. There is no evidence that the school has identified or supported learners in other grades.

##### Concerns, problems

Learners do not attend school regularly and many do not work at home. Instructional time is not always used well.



### 2. Behaviour and Safety

#### 2.1 The school's environment is disciplined and purposeful and its ethos is positive..... 2

##### Evaluative commentary

Staff and learners embrace the Covid-19 safety measures and they willingly follow all measures to keep everyone safe. Cleaning and safety materials are readily available, and the staff ensures that all facilities are kept clean and sanitised. Many learners show a lack of commitment to effective learning and there is no urgency to overcome the limitations caused by the pandemic.

### Concerns, problems

The poor attendance of Grades 10 and 11 learners and the inability of many to work independently undermines the academic programme of the school.

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

### Evaluative commentary

Classrooms and offices are sanitised every morning and cleaned every afternoon. Each classroom is supplied with a bottle of sanitiser for teachers and learners to ensure that the classrooms are sanitised throughout the day. A dedicated staff member cleans the learners' toilets regularly and ensures that social distancing is maintained. Everyone entering the school premises is screened, wears a face mask, sanitises and adheres to social distancing. All stakeholders can explain the procedures to respond to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 and know where the isolation room is situated. A staff member is on duty at the main entrance gate to ensure that unauthorised visitors do not enter the school premises. The construction workers, busy with maintenance, are well managed by their supervisor. They are screened and sanitised separately from the staff and learners.

## 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 ensures that the TREP follows the DBE SOP and the WCED Guidelines. The TREP is updated regularly with new directives. All stakeholders confirmed that they were orientated on the first day back at school. They are all well informed and understand their roles and responsibilities. Learners are constantly reminded about safety measures. The SMT monitors the safety of staff and learners by responding to challenges raised by staff during weekly meetings. The principal and the Covid-19 Compliance Officer meet daily. The SMT promotes good attendance by learners and staff. Staff attendance is good and on the day of evaluation, only one teacher was absent. As learners walk long distances to school or commute from across the Peninsula, some arrive late, and others do not attend school regularly.

### 3.2 The SMT acts effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school..... 1

#### Evaluative commentary

The SMT has made provision for the needs of the revised ATPs in its planning. It coordinates assessment and ensures that teachers adhere to the timeframes. After accepting the option of reducing the number of subjects from nine to seven, the SMT allocated the instructional time of the two subjects to Grades 8 and 9 core subjects. However, not all subject groups are effectively managed. Some subject meetings are conducted on an individual basis and consequently, there is no common approach for these subjects across all grades. Before Covid-19, the SMT used to check the quality of teaching and learning, but its monitoring processes have been ineffective since the second term. Hard copies of notes are available for learners not attending school, but there is no strategy to improve the effective use of these learning resources.

### Concerns, problems

The SMT does not have a common understanding and approach about the use of online teaching and learning resources. Some members believe that the integration of online resources is not worthwhile.

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

#### Evaluative commentary

The SMT rotates tasks amongst staff who are satisfied with the allocation of Covid-19 related roles and responsibilities. Stakeholders said that these new responsibilities have become part of their daily routine. Two teachers with comorbidities received approval to work from home. They took full responsibility for the administration of their subjects and emailed teaching and learning materials to the teaching assistants.

Both have returned to school and their work is on par with that of other teachers. The cleaning and safety resources are well managed by the SMT. The remaining stock is enough for the rest of the year. The SMT does not have a strategy to promote online platforms, although individual teachers use online resources and share links with learners.

#### Concerns, problems

The six data projectors and laptops are not equally accessible to all teachers.



## 4. Governance, Parents and Community

### 4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well ..... **3**

#### Evaluative commentary

The SMT said that it receives very good support from the governing body that had three virtual meetings where it discussed the school's Covid-19 safety plans. Its members communicate daily on WhatsApp. The chairperson and the treasurer helped with the cleaning of the classrooms before the learners returned to school. The governing body has amended the Code of Conduct for Learners and the Safety Policy to include Covid-19 regulations.

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

#### Evaluative commentary

The governing body has reprioritised the school budget to pay for expenses related to Covid-19. The salaries of its employees are secured, and it can meet all its financial responsibilities until the end of the year. Fundraisers were planned for the second term, but nothing has materialised due to the pandemic. The school has successfully managed applications for exemption from paying school fees in the past and it has plans in place to include more parents who are struggling to pay because of Covid-19.

#### Concerns, problems

The construction company is using the school's water and electricity which could result in a huge municipal bill.

### 4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders ..... **2**

#### Evaluative commentary

The school has effective communication channels for staff. Teachers raise their concerns and make suggestions either during the daily briefing or at the scheduled meeting held every Wednesday. General assistants raise their concerns and suggestions with the caretaker who reports to the principal. The administrative clerk and bursar make suggestions to the principal. The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) is not functional, but learners said that they give feedback to their teachers. The school uses bulk SMS, WhatsApp and letters to communicate with parents, but the parents' feedback is very limited. Despite the SMT's renewed effort to encourage parents to send their children to school, the response from Grades 10 and 11 parents remains discouraging. The school has effective links with the district officials. The SMT is satisfied with the support that the teachers received and still receive from the subject advisers. The social worker and the school psychologist met with Grade 12 learners twice and conducted a debriefing session with staff. Teachers said that this session addressed their anxieties and concerns. The principal reported that the circuit manager supports her well and that he regularly sends motivational messages on the principals' WhatsApp group.

#### Concerns, problems

The prefects interviewed believe that they are the official representatives of the learners instead of the RCL.

## Recommendations

1. The SMT must coordinate the functioning of subject groups better. Dates for meetings must be included in the school's calendar.
2. The SMT must draft a strategic plan as improved use of the available resources by all teachers is important.
3. The SMT must urgently pay attention to the low attendance of Grades 10 and 11 learners.

4. The SMT and governing body must consider recreational and motivational activities to boost the morale of staff.
5. The RCL must be revived and its roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined.
6. The governing body must monitor the water and electricity usage of the construction company and clarify who is responsible for payment.