



# Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



## Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report: Thandokhulu Secondary School



## School: **Thandokhulu Secondary School**

Address: C/O Main & Albert Road, Mowbray, 7700

Circuit: C9

District: Metro Central

Province: Western Cape

Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)

Principal: Mr JM De Villiers



## 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 effectively makes use of all its facilities to ensure social distancing. Learners' hands are sanitised at the main gate and the netball court is used to screen learners. The hall is used as a classroom for Grade 12 learners. Classes are divided into smaller groups up to a maximum of 20 learners. Each group attends school on a daily rotational basis and teaching time per grade is according to the requirements. On the day of the evaluation all teachers were actively teaching and there is mutual respect between teachers and learners. Learners were working quietly and independently in the class in which a teacher was absent, As the practical examination for the National Senior Certificate examination started the day before the evaluation, the Grade 12 learners had permission to stay at home. They will return to school during the holidays for the Spring School.

#### 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

All teachers are well informed about the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP). Most subject advisers used various methods to communicate with the teachers and the departmental heads ensured that all teachers have copies of the documents. Teachers and learners have adapted well to the new conditions. Lessons are well prepared and presented. Learners participated in lessons by asking and answering questions and focusing on their tasks.

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

##### Evaluative commentary

Learners are supported well and receive regular feedback after their workbooks, tasks and assessments are marked. Hard copies of notes are available to learners to work at home. Some teachers also make online teaching and learning materials available to learners. Vulnerable learners were identified and are supported. The school used donations to provide meals for the increasing number of learners relying on the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP).



### 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 show a comprehensive understanding of all measures necessary to keep everyone safe. All stakeholders were able to state their roles and responsibilities and they willingly comply with health and safety measures throughout the day. Teachers perform tasks related to Covid-19 diligently. Teachers and learners are committed to teaching and learning. Most learners attend school daily and are well-mannered, punctual and eager to complete tasks.

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

##### Evaluative commentary

Everyone entering the school premises is required to wear a face mask and to sanitise their hands. Classes are cleaned in the morning, during the day and after school. Bottles of hand sanitiser are supplied to all classrooms and offices. Learners sanitise their own desks and teachers ensure that desks are spaced to adhere to social distancing. Ablution facilities and offices are cleaned every afternoon and during the day. All facilities are well ventilated. Staff are on duty during breaks, at the NSNP area and the ablution facilities to ensure that learners adhere to social distancing. Stakeholders have a thorough understanding of how to respond to suspected and

confirmed cases of Covid-19. They know where the isolation room is and understand its purpose. Only authorised visitors are allowed onto the premises. They report to the administrative staff who ensure that safety protocols are followed. The area where NSNP meals are prepared and served is spotless, and social distancing is maintained. Food handlers are appropriately attired and wear face masks, disposable gloves and hairnets or caps. All utensils are properly cleaned, and sharing is not allowed.

## 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 used the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines to compile a well-written and comprehensive Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP). The orientation for stakeholders was very well planned. During the lockdown, all stakeholders were orientated via online platforms whilst formal orientation was conducted when each group returned to school. The staff and some governing body members were very anxious initially, but the orientation gave clarity and reassurance. This was confirmed by all stakeholders during the interviews. The principal, who is the Covid-19 Compliance Officer, stays abreast with all new developments and keeps stakeholders informed. The SMT monitors compliance with Covid-19 regulations and addresses challenges throughout the school day. Staff and learners are regularly reminded about the safety measures. The school has received a large donation of face masks and issues these to learners when theirs become worn. The SMT's success in promoting good attendance is evident in the large majority of staff and learners attending school daily.

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

### Evaluative commentary

The SMT guides and supports teachers effectively and ensures that they adhere to timeframes. All teachers must prepare worksheets for two weeks for learners to use at home or school. This is very useful should schools be required to close at short notice and when teachers are absent. The SMT has trained and encourages teachers to use online teaching and learning resources. Some also completed a WCED online training course. All assessments are moderated by the departmental heads who meet with their teams every term. Minutes of the meetings are submitted to the principal.

### Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The principal takes the lead in staying up to date with the use of online resources and shares his knowledge in the use of online assessment with teachers.

## 3.3 The SMT ensures that good use is made of all school resources (human, financial and physical) ..... (3)

### Evaluative commentary

Roles and responsibilities emanating from Covid-19 regulations are fairly divided amongst staff members. The SMT ensures that tasks are rotated amongst staff according to the timetable. Before Grades 8 and 9 learners returned to school, teachers from the same subject groups were deployed to teach grades they did not teach during the first term. Extra non-teaching staff were deployed to the NSNP kitchen and the learners' toilets. Suitably qualified teaching assistants were appointed for the two teachers who were working from home due to comorbidities. These teachers were responsible for providing lessons, setting assessments and tasks, and completing administrative tasks while the responsible departmental head moderated the teachers' work. Both teachers have returned to school. The Covid-19 Compliance Officer is satisfied with the amount and quality of cleaning and safety materials received. These are safely stored and well managed. The eLearning resources of the school are effectively managed and are accessible to all teachers. Most teachers make use of these resources while some enhance teaching and learning by interacting with learners on their cell phones during lessons.



## 4. Governance, Parents and Community

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

#### Evaluative commentary

The governing body is well informed about the school's plans and is very supportive of the principal and SMT. It responded positively to the SMT's request to appoint two teachers and three non-teaching staff members. The principal keeps the governing body informed via various online platforms. The principal provided proof that the TREP was discussed and approved by the governing body. The governing body has not amended any policies, but as the TREP makes provision for changes to the Safety Policy, it has sanctioned learners found in breach of 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 reprioritised the school's budget effectively. It has made funds available to buy hand cleaning and safety materials. The school received donations from various donors, including a sponsorship for the printing of notes for learners over and above the money received from the district office. The school can meet all its financial obligations and the salaries for the governing body employees are secured for the rest of the year. The governing body had a face-to-face meeting during September and held the budget meeting with the parents on 17 October 2020. It is aware of the increase in the number of parents unable to pay school fees and has encouraged them to either pay or apply for fee exemption.

### 4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders ..... 3

#### Evaluative commentary

The school communicates very effectively with all stakeholders. The principal researched the coronavirus in the very early stages of the pandemic and shared his findings with all stakeholders. He effectively addressed misconceptions and negative messages from some stakeholders with researched facts. The SMT developed a preliminary TREP which was tabled at the first staff meeting for discussion and feedback. The final TREP was approved after the governing body and staff gave input. Stakeholders are kept abreast with new developments and continue to give feedback and make suggestions. The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) was functional during the first term, but its members are not very active currently. However, learners feel that teachers are approachable and listen to their opinions. The school uses various online platforms to communicate with parents and the governing body plays a very supportive role. Parents are challenged with a lack of data and devices, but they are aware of all teaching and learning resources available. The TREP has very specific steps that parents can take to ensure the safety of their children at home. The circuit manager supports the school well through site visits and face-to-face principal's meetings. He also met with teachers after the first Covid-19 positive case to allay their fears. Teachers appreciate his concern and interest in their well-being. Most subject advisers give continued support to teachers. The social worker and school psychologist conducted a wellness workshop for staff after the August school holidays.

## Recommendations

1. The SMT must apply for the inclusion of additional vulnerable learners in the NSNP.
2. The SMT must ensure that the RCL functions to ensure that the investment made in it is not wasted.
3. As the number of parents unable to pay school fees has drastically increased, the governing body must find ways to motivate parents to submit applications for fee exemption.