



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



**Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report:
Riverlands Primêre Skool**



School: Riverlands Primêre Skool
Address: Riverlands Avenue, Attaway, Riverlands, 7354
Circuit: C1
District: West Coast
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (No-fee)
Principal: Mr JB Saunders



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:



Main Findings



1. Teaching and Learning

1.1 The teachers maintain a safe and positive learning environment 3

Evaluative commentary

The school follows the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines. All classes are divided into two groups and learners attend school on every alternative day. Toilet and lunch breaks are staggered for different grades. Each grade has two breaks. Eight out of nine classes were observed. All teachers were actively teaching and treated learners with respect.

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

Teachers could not follow the Annual Teaching Plans (ATP) from subject advisers via Microsoft Teams due to network problems. However, links and learning materials sent via email were downloaded, printed, distributed and discussed. They were adapted to be aligned to the school's plans so that all teachers are working in the same direction. Lessons are well prepared and presented, but it was observed that the repetition of work is time-consuming with minimal participation from learners.

Concerns, problems

Learners are not engaged in lessons.

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

Evaluative commentary

Most learners attend school, are effectively supported and receive regular feedback from teachers. Learners at home received work packs that were collected by 90% of the parents. The remaining 10% were delivered to the homes of learners. Revision packs for ten weeks were handed over to learners after the start of the lockdown. Answers were put on the WhatsApp groups. Screenshots were sent to learners. Initially 50% did the work, but when it was delivered the percentage increased to 90%. Most of the learners' workbooks checked during lesson observations were marked, signed, dated and included positive comments. This was the case before and after lockdown. The School-based Support Team (SBST) is functional and supported by the Learner Support Teacher (LST). Evidence of support for learners was available and included applications to Schools of Skills.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

Extra effort was made by the school to deliver work to learners' homes.



2. Behaviour and Safety

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

Evaluative commentary

A well-planned orientation programme with a huge emphasis on the safety of all stakeholders, resulted in comprehensive and willing compliance. The special efforts by the teachers to supply learners with work is indicative of their focus on the curriculum programme, despite the constraints. The attendance of learners is very good which can be ascribed to effective communication and special efforts by the school. Learners are punctual and diligent.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

All stakeholders entering the premises are screened, answer Covid-19 questions, wear face masks, sanitise their hands and adhere to social distancing. Social distancing markers are visible on the premises. Classes and offices are cleaned every afternoon and ablution facilities every morning and after breaks. All stakeholders were able to explain the procedures to respond to suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19. Access to the school premises is strictly controlled and unauthorised visitors are not allowed. Food is prepared under safe and hygienic conditions at the National School Nutrition Programme area. Food handlers and one Community Work Project member wear face masks, head gear, gloves and disposable aprons. Learners enjoy their food under the supervision of teachers and their hands are sanitised before and after meals. Learners received meals during lockdown.

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 compiled a Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP) which is aligned to the DBE SOP and WCED Guidelines. Copies were handed to all stakeholders after discussion and input. Orientation by the SMT was thoroughly planned and the focus was to address fears, the importance of compliance and the reasons for it. Emphasis was placed on reassuring role players that all precautionary measures have been taken. All stakeholders were orientated on the first day back at school. The SMT informed and discussed with staff members their new roles and responsibilities and their areas of deployment. The SMT monitors the implementation of the TREP and is responsible for managing tasks on the TREP. The SMT successfully promotes good attendance by learners and staff. The attendance for learners was over 95%, teachers over 90% and 100% for non-teaching staff. However, two teachers were absent without valid reasons on the day of evaluation.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The leadership is proactive.

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

2

Evaluative commentary

The SMT ensured that the teaching and assessment plans were in line with the requirements of the ATPs and encouraged teachers to share resources and good practices. Although the school has some resources such as new computers and data projectors, online teaching and learning is hampered by connectivity problems and power supply. The SMT outlined their plans for training and improvement, but it has not yet been implemented.

Concerns, problems

Problems with connectivity impact negatively on utilising learning resources.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

The SMT has allocated Covid-19 related tasks fairly to staff. During random discussions with staff it was evident that everyone is committed to the safety and well-being of staff and learners and their important contribution towards this. Interviews and observations confirmed the effectiveness of the deployment. Safety and cleaning materials are effectively managed by the non-teaching staff and the Covid-19 Compliance Officer. The school is well-stocked for the rest of the year. The school has plans to promote the effective use of online resources, but power supply and maintenance of infrastructure such as replacing wiring is a huge barrier to the implementation of the plan.

Concerns, problems

Maintenance of the infrastructure impacts negatively on the use of online resources.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well 3

Evaluative commentary

The governing body supported the SMT by appointing two teachers when requested. It is well informed. The governing body has not amended any policies but approved the Covid-19 regulations to be used in conjunction with the Safety Policy. The principal stated that the governing body changed the school's Constitution to accommodate 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 provided funds for Covid-19 related expenses from the Norms and Standards Allocation. The school can meet all their financial obligations for the year and has secured the salaries of its two employees. No fundraising activities were held. A donation of R5 000 was secured from a local businessman to supplement the school's income. Savings were made from transport for sport and staff and on cleaning material. The school is a member of the very successful pilot project, "Water saving initiatives at all ordinary public schools". The governing body entered a service contract with a water metering supplier that can meet certain technical conditions and carry the cost.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The water saving initiative at the school will be beneficial in the future.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders 3

Evaluative commentary

Feedback and suggestions by stakeholders are encouraged and platforms were created for this. Staff give feedback during staff meetings. The principal and non-teaching staff are in regular discussions. Input for the TREP serves as an example. Learners are encouraged to share their ideas with teachers. The school's most successful mode of communication is through personal contact with its community. Although they use WhatsApp and Facebook, letters are also sent. The school had data available for parents participating on WhatsApp groups. During lockdown work packs were collected at school by 90% of the parents while 10% was delivered to learners at home. Initially 52% of the learners did the work. After the school started with home visits, it increased to 90%. The stakeholders said parents were honest in acknowledging that this contributed to a changed mindset and better cooperation from parents. Teachers addressed the work that was to be assessed when learners returned. The school is supported by the district office but did not follow up the monetary contribution towards printing costs. The circuit manager visits the school and provides support. The subject advisers' support is held in high regard. The social worker and psychologist support the SBST whilst the LST supports learners as well as the SBST. The principal stated that the WCED supported the school very well on a confidential issue.

Recommendations

1. The SMT must plan with subject teachers to find ways to increase learner participation during lessons.
2. The SMT must address the issue of power supply and network problems.
3. The SMT must devise a plan to train all teachers to use online resources.
4. The SMT must follow up with the district office to ensure that money allocated towards its printing costs is paid.