



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report: **Danie Ackermann Primary School**



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect

Date of evaluation
24 & 25 March 2021

Lead evaluator
Ms BD Houghton

Chief evaluator
Ms KN Bydell

School: **Danie Ackermann Primary School**

Address: De Beers Avenue, Somerset West,
7137

Circuit: C9

District: Metro East

Province: Western Cape

Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)

Principal: Mr M Manus



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 3

Evaluative commentary

All grades are divided into two groups and each group attends school five days out of a ten-day cycle. The names of learners in each group are indicated on the 26 classroom doors and desks are labelled to indicate where each learner must sit. The names of learners attending the classes of the Learner Support Teacher (LST) and Resource Centre are purposefully not listed on the outside doors as the school is mindful, respectful and inclusive of all learners. In 26 classes observed, all teachers were present and actively teaching. All learners were engaged in their lessons and teachers in each grade follow the same lesson plans and activities but use different methodologies. Each classroom displays educational posters and are beautifully decorated with learners' work and relevant information. There were also displays on the outside walls enabling learners to understand numerical concepts. Although the physical structure of the school building is old, it is spotlessly clean and tidy.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

Despite the old physical structure of the school building, efforts to beautify the inside of classrooms are commendable. Acceptance of and respect for all learners is ensured in that those requiring additional support, remain anonymous.

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 revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP) are aligned to the elements of the Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP). The 2021 ATPs are slightly different from the previous year's ATPs. While teachers in the Intersen Phase find the ATPs useful, teachers in the Foundation Phase said that the current ATPs do not align with the lesson plans. They are also teaching work carried forward from the previous years and are doing what is necessary for their learners. They contacted the subject adviser and it was agreed that they only assess what they are teaching. The principal and teachers aim to teach whatever is required well, even if they are unable to complete the ATPs. The motto is, "Do little, but do it well". The grade heads monitor and moderate work and the deputy head moderates all assessments before and after it is written and the subject heads complete schedules. Teachers in each grade follow the same lesson and assessment plans. It was interesting to observe how different teachers used different methodologies to teach the same concepts. Teachers have good knowledge of their subject/s and attempt to make the work interesting for the learners. All the Grade 7 classrooms have data projectors, white boards and laptops, whereas learners in the other grades generally follow the lessons and activities in their workbooks.

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

Evaluative commentary

Learners' workbooks which show a good range of exercises and completed work, is marked and signed by the teachers. Many teachers write encouraging comments. There was no evidence that different tasks were set for more advanced learners, but learners who are not able to cope academically receive additional support from the LST. There are many resources available to assist them. Psycho-social support for all learners, including vulnerable learners, is outstanding. Apart from assistance from the district psychologist and social worker, the Hope Explosion Youth Ministry (HEY) visits the school two or three times a week to speak to class groups as well as individual learners and assists them with emotional issues. The HEY group has its own classroom in a prefabricated container but during Covid-19 they preferred to visit the classrooms.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

There is outstanding psycho-social and learning support from the LST, volunteers from HEY and church groups as well as from the district psychologist and social worker. It is evident that learners benefit from their input.



2. Behaviour and Safety

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

Evaluative commentary

There is a positive ethos and energy throughout the school and learners and staff willingly comply with the measures to keep everyone safe. The school insists that learners are allocated time to exercise and different classes were observed doing physical exercises on the netball court, while adhering to social distancing. The principal also leaves it to the discretion of the teachers to allow their learners a ten-minute break outside. Learners are prompt in moving to their classrooms. The Code of Conduct for Learners is implemented effectively by the staff. There is a Disciplinary Committee and phase heads report to this committee every week. Learners receive a yellow card and are sent to detention during their break times from Mondays to Thursdays. If their behaviour improves, they do not attend detention on the Friday. If learners receive a red card, then their parents are informed of their misdemeanours.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The staff and learners show mutual respect and the staff arrive 45 minutes before the commencement of classes for their duties

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

Evaluative commentary

The school premises are clean, hygienic and safe. Learners from the different phases enter the school through three different entrances. Volunteers from the "Walking Bus" project, six teaching assistants and teachers are responsible for screening the learners upon their arrival, ensuring that they are wearing their face masks correctly, sanitising their hands and answering the five health questions. Learners then line up at clearly demarcated points and class teachers accompany them to their classrooms. The ablution facilities were recently tiled and painted by a group of parents and are well maintained. The school responds effectively to suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19 and there is an isolation facility and sick bay. All stakeholders know and understand the procedures. A teacher, who had been at the school for many years, passed away from Covid-19 earlier in the year, and this had been a warning to both learners and staff to adhere to the safety protocols. Authorised visitors contact the secretary via the intercom system at the entrance. Unauthorised visitors are not allowed onto the premises. The Peninsula Schools Feeding Association (PSFA) provides food for the learners and it is prepared in a clean kitchen. Plates and spoons are thoroughly washed after learners have eaten. During lockdown, the group in charge of the PSFA prepared food for the community. The school's vegetable garden provides onions, tomatoes and cabbages to supplement the meals. The Learner Transport Scheme (LTS) provides transport to and from the school and it is managed well. There are 11 buses available to transport learners on the various routes, and it is used by 80% of the learners. As the buses are shared with learners from the neighbouring high school, the LTS manager ensures that the primary school children are safe.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The school prides itself on its cleanliness. There are ten closed-circuit television cameras installed to monitor the school and peripheral 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

Throughout the school there is a strong sense of shared vision, mission and ethos. The principal formerly lived in the area and some of the staff attended the school. There are many young teachers employed at the school and they praised the principal and School Management Team (SMT) for welcoming them warmly and assisting them whenever it is required. Three younger teachers spoke of their passion for the profession and how proud they are to be teachers at the school. The school has a clear and appropriate plan for complying with the amended Department of Basic Education Standard Operating Procedure and

the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines, including the TREP. The SMT returned to school first and went through the guidelines thoroughly. Many of the staff were fearful but worked together to ensure that the school was safe for all. A PowerPoint presentation was made to show learners on their return. The principal orientated the Grade 7 learners and the other grades received orientation from their teachers. The SMT monitors the safety of learners and staff. Although the new environment is quieter the learners need to play again and become more active. Mini-cricket, mini-rugby, netball and cross-country are examples of what the school is introducing to encourage more activity. The exhaustion of teachers is a risk and the principal encourages them to relax when they are at home. The attendance of learners and staff is very good. The principal shows concern for the well-being of the staff and learners by his visible presence throughout the school and inquiring how they are feeling.

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

Evaluative commentary

The SMT monitors and moderates lesson plans and assessments. Teachers have attended online courses offered by the WCED such as a course on Google Fundamentals. Online teaching and learning are difficult as the learners do not have access to data and facilities at home. Vulnerable learners are well supported by the SMT, teachers, LST and HEY volunteers.

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

Evaluative commentary

The SMT ensures that all staff are deployed equitably. The cleaning and safety materials are organised, labelled and stored in two clean storerooms. They are used effectively and there are enough materials available for the next six months. The principal is the only one who has the key to both storerooms. Online teaching and learning resources are not used effectively to support learning at home because the learners do not have the facilities, but the school has a computer laboratory which both teachers and learners may use.

4. Governance, Parents and Community

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

Evaluative commentary

The governing body supports the school. On their return to school, it gave teachers packages containing a small bottle of sanitiser, hot chocolate sachets and a muffin to encourage and thank them. The school policies have been revised and the Textbook Policy has changed so that learners may not take their textbooks home unless the parents request that they do so.

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

Evaluative commentary

The 2021 Budget was approved. School fees have not increased from R500.00 per annum as more parents have applied for exemptions. The Finance Committee oversees the income and expenditure of the school. All financial documentation is filed and available for perusal.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders (3)

Evaluative commentary

Learners and teachers can give feedback to the SMT without reservation. Communication is difficult as most parents do not live close to the school and are contacted via social media and letters. The response from parents is generally poor. Although, when asked to assist with maintenance at the school, for example, tiling and painting the ablution facilities, some respond positively. Most parents do not assist with their children's learning. The school's links with the district office, circuit manager, psychologist and social worker are sound. Many local organisations and the Grayswan Investment Foundation assist the school community.



Recommendations

1. The teaching staff must explore the latest online teaching and learning programmes to improve literacy skills.
2. Although the screening process is good, learners, teachers and non-teaching staff must continue to adhere to health and safety measures and remain vigilant.
3. The governing body must revise all policies and add addenda, if required, and reprioritise the budget.
4. The principal and governing body must encourage greater parental involvement.