



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report: Ysterplaat Junior Primary School



School: Ysterplaat Junior Primary School

Address: Forridon Street, Ysterplaat,
7405

Circuit: C9

District: Metro North

Province: Western Cape

Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)

Principal: Ms YL Stassen



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 follows the daily rotational timetable and each learner attends school five days out of a ten-day cycle. Learners who require additional support attend an extra day. There are five classes per grade and all 15 teachers were present and actively teaching or busy with scheduled assessments. There is mutual respect and inclusivity between teachers and learners. Teachers care for their learners and, in return, learners said that they loved their teachers. All classrooms were very clean and tidy, and the seating arrangements adhered to social distancing specifications. Dots on each desk indicated where learners from the red and orange groups must sit. All mats had been removed in the light of Covid-19. Learners' work is beautifully displayed on the walls of the classrooms and passages. The teachers take great pride in displaying teaching and learning materials. In interviews with learners, it was mentioned that they are grateful to their teachers for helping them so much.

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 received the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP) and the deputy principal and departmental heads adjusted them to the changed conditions in the classroom and the ability levels of their learners. The teachers from each grade held meetings with teachers from the previous grade to outline the concepts and skills that needed to be revised before the learners could continue with the current ATPs. Teachers confirmed that the learners are progressing well as the smaller classes enabled them to work more effectively by giving more individual attention. Each grade has established its own baseline plans for teaching and assessments over a ten-week period. The Temporary Revised Education Plan (TREP) is aligned to the requirements of the revised ATPs. All learners were engaged in activities in their workbooks, writing assessments in Languages and Life Skills or being individually assessed orally. Most teachers used the available resources effectively to enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms. During a few lessons, there was lively interaction when the teachers used online platforms to assist learners with counting and listening skills. Grade 1 learners used relevant examples when reciting the alphabet, for example, C is for CD-players, P is for Pick 'n Pay, or X is for X-Box. Teachers asked questions and, in most classes observed, learners engaged in activities according to their progress. All teachers followed the grade plans and delivered them accordingly. A teacher in each grade sets the assessment for a subject for the entire grade so the workload is equally divided.

Concerns, problems

Most learners' home language is French, Portuguese, Shona or Xhosa so this impacts on the pace and understanding of the ATPs and lesson plans because the LoLT is English.

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

Evaluative commentary

Lesson plans are adapted to the current ability levels of the learners. The focus is to ensure that work from the previous grade is taught and learnt thoroughly before progressing with the work required in the grade. Learners' workbooks are marked, signed and most teachers write encouraging comments or place stickers and stars in the books. All learners have returned to school and those requiring additional assistance attend an extra day. Vulnerable learners receive support from the Learner Support Teacher (LST), who is employed at two schools, and volunteers from a non-governmental organisation, Word Works, teach learners needing support on a one-to-one basis. There are also volunteers who assist learners with extra reading. The school has not found it necessary to call on the services of the district psychologist and social worker this year but know that these are available. The School-based Support Team is functional.



2. Behaviour and Safety

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

Evaluative commentary

All learners and staff willingly comply with and embrace the measures necessary to keep everyone safe while remaining focused on teaching and learning. Teachers interviewed are concerned about the high quality of teaching and learning and are focused on ensuring that their learners are competent at the appropriate levels. Learners and staff are proud of their school and attendance is very good. Staff arrive 45 minutes before classes commence and are all in their classrooms when the lessons commence promptly in the morning and after break. Assistant teachers are available to help with the preparation of resources and general duties. Learners are allocated time to enjoy physical education lessons in the school hall. Learners were observed walking whilst balancing bean bags on their heads and skipping while adhering to social distancing.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

During the time allocated for some form of physical activity each week, learners were observed balancing bean bags on their heads and skipping while adhering to social distancing.

2.2 The school is safe, and protects and cares for its learners and staff well (4)

Evaluative commentary

The non-teaching staff share the cleaning duties to ensure that the school is spotless. Although the building is old, the ablution facilities, floors in all rooms and passages are very clean and hygienic. Every morning learners from Grades R to 3 enter from four different entrances. Instead of spraying under the shoes, learners walk on a mat soaked with sanitiser. Class teachers, together with their assistants, sit at the entrance gates and screen learners upon arrival. Each teacher enters the learners' temperature and answers to the five health questions onto their laptops immediately. This captured information is then sent to the secretary. The process is very efficient, and no time is wasted. Learners are allocated different sections in the playground for a 30-minute break and carry their plastic chairs from their classrooms to the area where they sit and eat their lunch under staff supervision. Learners and staff know what to do if there is a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 and the isolation room is known to all. Access to the school is strictly controlled. Only visitors with scheduled appointments are allowed to enter the premises and are screened accordingly. The Peninsula School Feeding Association provides meals for over 100 children before school and at break. The kitchen is spotlessly clean and plastic bowls and forks are provided. Donations are received from church groups towards the food so that the meals are more nutritious. Throughout lockdown, the school provided food hampers to vulnerable families.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The immediate entry of the screening data and submission to the secretary's office is time-saving and efficient.

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 School Management Team (SMT) planned thoroughly and complied with the Department of Basic Education Standard Operating Procedure and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines, including the Temporary Revised Education Plan. They first held meetings with the non-teaching staff and then with the teachers. In 2020, the learners returned to school for five days in a 15-day cycle, but in 2021 this was changed to five days in a ten-day cycle. All staff received a Covid-19 file containing the WCED Guidelines and essential information. The orientation sessions were held with the staff and then the teachers orientated the learners on their return. The SMT is meticulous in ensuring that safety protocols are adhered to on the school premises and monitors the safety of learners and staff. The major risk identified is that many parents do not comply with the safety protocols, including the wearing of face masks. The learners interviewed said that they do not wear face masks when they are at home or playing outside their

homes. Attendance is very good. Staff attendance is generally 100% on most days and learner attendance is above 90%.

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

Evaluative commentary

The SMT members interviewed are proud of their teamwork and the passion that the staff display towards their work. The SMT moderates all lesson plans and assessments, which are developed for a two-week cycle. Once the departmental heads have signed the teachers' files, they are sent to the principal. "Jolly Phonics" is used in Grade 1 and Grade 3 learners will commence the "Green Shoots" programme shortly. Online teaching and learning were difficult during lockdown because the parents do not have data or facilities. However, online teaching and learning resources were sent to parents on WhatsApp groups. Teachers continue to upgrade their computer literacy skills. Vulnerable learners are offered additional support by either attending school more often, receiving help from the LST and volunteers from Word Works.

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

Evaluative commentary

Teachers were deployed to assist learners in other grades when their class teachers were absent. All staff have since returned. There is a good supply of cleaning and safety materials which are organised, stored and used effectively and efficiently. It was difficult to use online teaching and learning resources to support learners at home during lockdown as most parents do not have data or facilities.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

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

Evaluative commentary

The governing body supports the principal and SMT. During lockdown, members of the governing body assisted with sanitising school premises, organising the desks to adhere to social distancing and orientating themselves on the WCED Guidelines. The Covid-19 Policy was ratified, and all policies have been revised to ascertain any addendums required in the light of Covid-19.

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 reviewed and reprioritised the school's budget in the light of changes in income and expenditure. The 2021 budget was ratified in November 2020. When many parents were unable to maintain the payment of the current school fees of R400.00 per month, they were requested to pay whatever they could afford. The salaries of the Grade R teachers have been reduced.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders (3)

Evaluative commentary

During interviews, learners said that they were very happy to talk to their teachers about what was happening at school and felt that their teachers listened to them. Parents and the community are not very involved in the school and cannot assist their children with their schoolwork as many do not speak or understand English. The school's links with the district office is strong. The circuit manager visits regularly and assists whenever required. The subject advisers are very helpful and provide additional activities for the teachers.

Concerns, problems

There are language barriers as many parents do not speak or understand English.

Recommendations

1. Teaching and learning resources must be adapted and simplified to improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills.
2. Online teaching and learning programmes such as "Green Shoots", must be used as soon as possible as it is available at the school.
3. The SMT must encourage ongoing professional development
4. The governing body must continue to encourage parents to pay school fees.
5. Despite the language barriers, the school must find ways to communicate more effectively with parents.