



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report: Homba Primary School



School: Homba Primary School
Address: Dyani Crescent, D Section, Khayelitsha, 7784
Circuit: C4
District: Metro East
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (No-fee)
Principal: Mr M Jokazi (Acting Principal)



Areas of Evaluation:

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|--|---------------------------------|--|
| | 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 **2**

Evaluative commentary

Most classrooms are organised so that social distancing protocols are observed. In some classrooms, although the learners sit separately at a table, the tables were not one metre or more apart. The hall is used as a Grade 6 classroom because it can accommodate 40 learners comfortably. Grades had recently moved classrooms to accommodate 102 Grade 8 & 21 Grade 9 learners who had been placed at the school two weeks prior to the evaluation. The incorporation of these grades brought about many changes in terms of learner enrolment and staffing. Grades 1-7 learners attend school five days in a ten-day cycle, whereas the Grades 8 & 9 attend every day. All teachers were present and actively teaching. There is mutual respect between learners and staff as shown by the language used and relationships observed in the classrooms and on the school premises.

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

The school has adapted the Annual Teaching Plans and teach what is relevant for their learners. As learners did very little work at home during lockdown and continue to do little work on the days on which they are not attending school, there are backlogs which teachers are busy addressing by doing revision and consolidating previously taught concepts. Learners participated actively in lessons and focused on the tasks. Although there are a few classrooms with smartboards and data projectors, most only have chalk boards. The “Drop Everything and Read” (DEAR) programme is followed for 30 minutes once a cycle. Evaluators observed all learners and teachers reading in silence during this time.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The emphasis to improve reading and comprehension is good.

Concerns, problems

The entire curriculum might not be completed in the time available.

1.3 Learners are supported well (in school and at home) so that they learn effectively **2**

Evaluative commentary

Although there was little evidence of much work in the learners’ workbooks, all teachers marked, signed, and wrote comments on the work completed to date. At first, parents were reluctant to send their children back to school because they were very anxious, but when they understood that the school was safe, learners returned. There is a Learning Support Teacher at the school twice a week, a functional School-based Support Team, and vulnerable learners are referred to the district psychologist and social workers.



2. Behaviour and Safety

2.1 The school’s environment is disciplined and purposeful and its ethos is positive **2**

Evaluative commentary

Although most learners and staff show willing compliance with all the measures necessary to keep everyone safe, a few learners must constantly be reminded to adhere to social distancing protocols on the playgrounds and to wear their face masks correctly. Only a few learners complete their homework. This has impacted negatively on the pace and quality of the curriculum delivery as teachers must backtrack to help the learners to catch up. There is no bullying at the school and the Code of Conduct for Learners is implemented effectively. There is also a Code of Classroom Behaviour in each classroom.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

The school's procedures for managing Covid-19 are effective. The learners are screened on arrival, their temperatures are recorded and throughout the day teachers remind learners to wear their face masks correctly. The breaks are staggered to ensure adherence to social distancing protocols. Teachers are on duty to sanitise learners' hands when they use the ablution blocks. The learners are reminded that Homba means "cleanliness" and that this must be visible at the school. It was observed that there was very little litter on the school premises. The classrooms are swept and sanitised at the end of the day and the ablution facilities are cleaned after both breaks and at the end of the day. Although clean, the ablution blocks need to be repainted; some blocks have graffiti on the walls, doors and door handles are in a state of disrepair. Learners and staff know the procedures for responding to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19. There is an isolation room. No unauthorised visitors are allowed, and the gates are locked at 08h00. Parents may make appointments and are screened on entry. A register must also be signed upon entry to the building. The National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) is well-organised and fed the community during lockdown. The preparation and serving of meals are safe and hygienic.

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 returned to school first and complied with the Department of Basic Education Standard Operating Procedures and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines, including the Temporary Revised Education Plan. In turn, they orientated the non-teaching and teaching staff, and the latter orientated their learners. The leadership is values-driven and the school's motto, "The sky's the limit", is a motivation to learners to strive to achieve their goals. Staff attendance is good and an attendance template for learners is completed every morning. Parents are contacted if their child does not attend school for three days. Attendance is often a problem during the rainy winter months as most learners live in informal settlements and walk to school.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

The SMT undertakes classroom visits. The heads of department monitor and moderate lesson plans, books, files, and assessment. There is both pre- and post-moderation. Where necessary, intervention measures are implemented. Most of the SMT have been teaching at the school for over thirty years and mentor the younger staff. The Foundation Phase holds grade meetings once a week and the Intersen Phase twice a term; teaching plans are then shared, and the information disseminated. Professional development takes place in the form of virtual meetings and online workshops. Some classes have laptops, data projectors and interactive white boards. There is a well-resourced computer laboratory, and the Green Shoots Mathematics and Science programmes are available.

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

2

Evaluative commentary

All staff are involved in the screening and break duties on a rotational basis. The SMT and parents assisted with the NSNP during lockdown. Cleaning and safety materials are organised and used effectively. Online teaching and learning resources are not effectively used to support learning at home as very few parents have the facilities or data. Teachers are encouraged to use online teaching and learning resources at school.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

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

Evaluative commentary

A newly elected governing body has met three times since April 2021 and conducted interviews for new teaching staff. The previous governing body helped with preparing the necessary markings outside the classrooms to ensure that the learners adhere to social distancing protocols. In addition, they assisted with the NSNP during lockdown. No parents serve on the Health and Safety Committee. The Assessment and Health and Safety Policies have been revised and the governing body is currently busy updating relevant school policies 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 (2)

Evaluative commentary

The 2021 budget was approved, but as a no-fee school there has been little change to income and expenditure.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders (2)

Evaluative commentary

Daily staff briefings take place. Each teacher has a turn to be a “wiseman” and shares a motivational message with their colleagues. For example, we observed a teacher reciting reassuring, powerful words for a colleague who had recently lost a relative. There are ongoing attempts via social media to reach out to parents and although parent meetings are held, their response is poor. Most parents, who are very young themselves, are unable to assist their children with homework or encourage their children to do it. The circuit manager is supportive and subject advisers hold virtual meetings with the teachers. Staff participated in eLearning workshops provided by the district.

Concerns, problems

There is a lack of involvement and support by parents for their children's learning.

Recommendations

1. More online teaching and learning resources are required.
2. Maintenance is urgently needed to repair the ablution facilities, doors and door handles, which are in a state of disrepair.
3. The vacant promotion posts at the school must be filled as soon as possible.
4. The governing body must revise and sign off all policies.
5. The governing body must encourage greater parental involvement in the school and in their children's learning.