



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



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



School: Perseverance Primary School

Address: 1 Rockies Street, Tafelsig, 7785

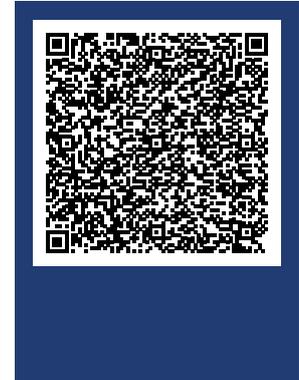
Circuit: C7

District: Metro South

Province: Western Cape

Category: Public Ordinary (No-fee)

Principal: Mr VA Kelly



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 a daily rotational timetable with learners attending school five days in a ten-day cycle. The school day was extended by 45 minutes each day to ensure that no teaching and learning time was lost due to time-consuming screening processes. All classrooms are organised so that social distancing is observed, and class teachers teach all subjects to their home class. The two Phases have staggered breaks and teachers are on duty during these breaks. In the 19 classes visited during the evaluation, all teachers were present and actively teaching. There is mutual respect shown between learners, teachers, and non-teaching staff. All classrooms were very clean and tidy. Although the classroom walls had teaching and learning materials, learners' work was displayed in only one classroom.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The extension of the school day enables more instructional time.

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

From evidence gathered during interviews, it was clear that the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs) were difficult to implement as the learners had to be taught work from their previous grades before they could teach the revised curriculum. It was felt that the learners were not yet where they should be at this stage of the school year. The division of the two groups attending school on different days was based on abilities i.e., those who achieved above 50% in their subjects formed one group and those who achieved below 50% formed the second group. Hence, the pace at which teachers can make up the backlog from the previous grades and move forward with the ATPs differs from group to group. This affects the pace at which the curriculum is delivered and therefore the effectiveness of both teaching and learning. On a positive note, the school introduced a reading programme for all learners, and this is beneficial for teaching and learning in all phases. Interested members of the community volunteered to assist with this programme. The school is building its library resources to encourage reading even further. With the reduced size of learner groups according to the rotational timetable, most teachers use the increased opportunities to encourage learner participation. The school is well-resourced with a computer laboratory and twenty computers in good working order and Grades 3-6 have lessons using the Green Shoots programme, whilst Jolly Phonics is used in the Foundation Phase. Coding and Robotics will be introduced shortly. In addition, the school received 45 tablets as a donation and this, too, has created enthusiasm and excitement for learning.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The school's focus on reading and computer skills.

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

Evaluative commentary

All teachers provided feedback to the learners. Workbooks were marked, signed, stamped and motivating stickers or comments were observed. Learners were questioned and participated enthusiastically in lessons. If they did not understand a concept or question, they raised their hands and their teacher assisted them. During lockdown, vulnerable learners had received work packs and video clips via online teaching and learning platforms. This practice has continued for learners at home on the alternate days. However, generally very little work is completed at home. All learners have since returned to school. The school has recently acquired the service of a Learning Support Teacher (LST) two weeks per month and the School-based Support Team is on hand to assist vulnerable learners. In addition, the district office social worker is very helpful and readily available.



2. Behaviour and Safety

2.1 The school's environment is disciplined and purposeful and its ethos is positive (2)

Evaluative commentary

The learners and staff willingly comply with the measures to keep everyone safe as the school is situated in an area where gangsterism is rife. Since there is no intercom system installed at the school, two-way radios are used for communication, including informing staff of any immediate danger, such as gang activity in the area. Learners and teachers are committed to remaining focused on high-quality teaching and learning and they strive to complete the backlogs that are prevalent. Most learners arrive punctually at school, and most are diligent and enthusiastic during their lessons. From information gathered during interviews, it is evident that there are incidents of bullying at the school, but it is dealt with in line with the Code of Conduct for Learners, in which there is a separate anti-bullying clause. This is acknowledged and appreciated by parents and learners. During classroom observations, different forms of bullying and how to deal with these were discussed in Life Skills lessons.

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. Appropriate materials are used to clean classrooms, offices, and ablution facilities throughout the day. The staff are on duty to screen the learners on arrival, hands are sanitised, and temperatures taken before moving to the outside area where they wait for the morning assembly. Although all learners wear face masks, they are reminded constantly to wear them correctly. The school has clear and appropriate procedures for responding to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 and has an isolation room. The National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) is well-organised, and the food is prepared in a clean and hygienic kitchen. Learners receive porridge on arrival at school and lunch is served in the classrooms to learners who request it. A vegetable garden has been started at the school and the non-teaching staff are currently expanding it.

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 has a clear and appropriate plan for complying with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines, including the Temporary Revised Education Plan. The school was only established in 2018 to accommodate Grades 1-3 learners, but each year an additional grade is enrolled. In 2022, the school will accommodate learners from Grades 1-7. The principal is involved in every area of the school and ensures that the teaching and non-teaching staff receive and understand all procedures and documentation. The DBE SOP and WCED Guidelines were workshopped and discussed thoroughly before the teachers orientated the learners. Parents were also given all the relevant information through online platforms such as WhatsApp groups. The major risk is from outside the school with gangsterism rife in the area. The school attempts to mitigate burglaries on the school premises by ensuring that there is a strong relationship between itself and the community. In this way, ownership is taken by the community for the school. In addition, a barbed wire fence surrounds the school. Staff attendance is generally above 95%. The attendance of learners is generally around 90%, but this figure varies after a weekend or if there has been a long weekend. The SMT tries hard to encourage good attendance. For example, if a learner is away from school without an explanation for three days, the principal follows up. There have been occasions where the school has called upon the assistance of a social worker and the South African Police Service to follow up on habitual absentees.

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

Evaluative commentary

The SMT provides guidance to the teachers on lesson plans, teaching, learning and assessment. The

principal visits and observes lessons frequently. The heads of department monitor lessons as well. Assessments are pre- and post-moderated; samples of work are selected, and marks are checked. Class teachers in each grade divide the work plans and assessment tasks amongst themselves and follow the same teaching and learning programmes. Each week the teachers are engaged in demonstration lessons on various aspects relating to teaching and learning, for example, how to draw up question papers and methodologies on classroom management. These are very useful as most of the teachers are newly qualified and want to learn from the more experienced teachers. They also attend virtual courses. There are classroom-based intervention strategies for vulnerable learners, in addition to those used by the LST during her lessons. Evidence from the files available showed that there is in-depth analysis of the learners' results, and this analysis is used to drive the intervention strategies used by the teachers.

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

Evaluative commentary

There is no deployment of staff. However, the school has additional teaching and general assistants to assist with screening, break, and toilet duties. Cleaning and safety materials are organised and securely stored. The non-teaching staff check all the sanitisers daily and replenish when necessary. Although online teaching and learning was available during lockdown, most homes do not have access to facilities or data. This impacted on the effectiveness of learning at home. Most classrooms only have whiteboards or chalkboards available and this, too, impacts on the effectiveness of learning.



4. Governance, Parents and Community

4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well 3

Evaluative commentary

The previous governing body assisted with preparing the markings so that social distancing could be observed, as well as with the NSNP during lockdown. The current governing body is most supportive of the principal and school. A member of the governing body serves on the school's Health and Safety Committee. The school's policies were all drawn up in the past two years and policies are in the process of being revised. The governing body, together with the school community, is currently revising the school's vision, mission, and motto. The principal is encouraging input from the larger school community.

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 after a budget meeting on 10 November 2020. As it is a no-fee school, there have been no major changes to its income and expenditure. During the interviews conducted, it was clear that the budget had remained stable throughout the period of school closure. The school receives many donations, both large and small.

4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders 2

Evaluative commentary

The teaching and non-teaching staff felt very comfortable in giving feedback and suggestions to the SMT. The learners interviewed were unsure when asked this question but indicated that they could easily and readily talk to their teachers. Teachers interviewed said that parental involvement in their children's education was limited in many cases. Efforts by the school to contact these parents were usually fruitless and this negativity impacts the learners in many ways. There is a newly appointed circuit manager who is supportive. However, from evidence gathered during interviews, it was apparent that support and assistance from the subject advisers could have been greater. The school is fortunate to have learning and teaching resources donated from business as well as from non-governmental organisations. The school is part of the Grow Smart Educational Programme, an initiative of Growthpoint Property in collaboration with three education departments. This literacy competition seeks to advance the learning experience and behaviour of children in Grades 4-6 by focusing on making learning fun.

Recommendations

1. The continued updating and investment in online teaching and learning resources is encouraged.
2. The learners, teachers and non-teaching staff must ensure that all face masks are always worn correctly.
3. The school must continue to protect the learners and staff against gangsterism in the area.
4. The governing body must encourage greater parental involvement in the school's activities, in assisting their children with homework and attending meetings.