



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Schools' Responses to Covid-19 Report:
Tuscany Glen Secondary School



School: Tuscany Glen Secondary School
Address: Vanguard Road, Tuscany Glen, Eerste River, 7100
Circuit: C5
District: Metro East
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Mr SG Jantjies



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

The Department of Basic Education's (DBE) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Guidelines were used to amend their timetable to create a safe and positive teaching and learning environment. Grade 12 learners attended school daily and ten classrooms on the ground level were reserved for them. Initially, the plan was for Grades 10 and 11 learners to attend school daily after Grade 12 learners from 12h30 until 15h00 but the school has changed from platooning to Grades 10 and 11 learners attending school two days per week from Monday to Thursday. Eight and 14 classrooms on the first floor are reserved for Grades 10 and 11 learners, respectively. Grades 8 and 9 attend school every alternative Friday. Only Grade 12 learners were present on the day of evaluation and teachers were present and actively teaching. Learners appreciate their teachers and there is mutual respect between teachers and learners.

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

Teachers follow the revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATP), which were facilitated by subject advisers. Grade 12 teachers are on par with the set timeframes whilst Grades 10 and 11 teachers plan to make up for lost time by working with struggling learners after school. Lessons are well planned and presented. Many learners participated actively lessons by asking and answering questions.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

Teachers in the subject groups who did not teach Grades 10 and 11 facilitated some of the smaller groups to ensure that all learners were motivated to attend school on the two days allocated for their grades. In one of the classes, cell phones were effectively integrated into the lesson.

Concerns, problems

The school will struggle to implement the revised teaching plans effectively when more teachers than those with comorbidities are absent.

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

Evaluative commentary

The 60 to 70% of the Grade 12 learners who attend school are well supported. Learner attendance on days of assessment is 80 to 90%. Handling of books and scripts are limited, so marking of learners' work is not evident. Teachers stayed in contact with the Grade 10 to 12 learners through WhatsApp groups. Between 80 to 90% of the learners have access to these teaching and learning materials. However, contact with the Grades 8 and 9 learners is not so effective. Hard copies of notes are available for learners not attending school, but most of the work must be repeated when learners return to school. There is no formal programme for vulnerable learners, but teachers deal with cases as they become aware of them. The many learners who were added to the National School Nutritional Programme (NSNP) serves as an example.

Concerns, problems

The school has reached out to Grades 8 and 9 learners by using mass SMS messages. Hard copies of notes are available for when they return, but their learning is not monitored.



2. Behaviour and Safety

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

Evaluative commentary

Learners interviewed said that initially they found it difficult not to have breaks, but they understood the rationale behind it and felt safe at school. Staff members comply with all safety measures and oversee implementation in the classrooms, ablution facilities and other parts of the school premises. Learners present were punctual, focused and were actively working in the classes visited.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

Owing to learners not hearing clearly when teachers taught when wearing face masks, teachers bought and used face visors to improve the situation.

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

3

Evaluative commentary

The school fully complies with all Covid-19 safety regulations. Everyone wears face masks throughout the day, classrooms and offices are cleaned with the appropriate cleaning and safety materials at least once a day and ablution facilities and frequently touched areas more than once a day. Everyone entering the school premises is screened and answer the Covid-19 related questions at the gate. Authorised visitors are only allowed to enter the school premises if they have an appointment to see the principal. All the groups interviewed were able to explain the procedures for responding to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 very well. They also knew exactly where the isolation room was situated. The NSNP kitchen is spotless. The food handlers wear caps or hairnets, aprons, and face masks, but not gloves. Only two learners are allowed to collect their meals from the kitchen at a time.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The governing body has appointed four non-teaching staff to ensure a clean and safe environment. Two staff members have been appointed to ensure that the learners' ablution facilities are always clean and hygienic.

Concerns, problems

On the day of the evaluation, there was a case of attempted abduction. A girl was saved by two other girls when a man tried to pull her out of the taxi. The principal dealt effectively with the situation, reported the case to the police, then requested her parents to fetch her from the school and arranged counselling to the other girls.

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

2

Evaluative commentary

The school used the DBE SOP and the WCED Guidelines to plan thoroughly for all grades to return and the optimal use of its infrastructure. Unfortunately, all these plans had to be revised when the phased-in dates were changed. The SMT reported for duty first and drew up the orientation plan. All staff members and every grade were effectively orientated on their first day back at school. The Covid-19 Compliance Officer is assisted by the Safety Officer and give feedback regularly to the School Management Team (SMT) and governing body. This has empowered the SMT to identify and mitigate the following risks: the challenge of learners adhering to social distancing during breaks, increasing teaching time and the original plan of platooning was changed to alternating the attendance of Grades 10 and 11. This included teachers rotating instead of learners to limit movement, but when subject choices necessitated learners to rotate, then the teachers fetched and accompanied them from the previous class. The number of learners in the NSNP kitchen is better regulated as only two learners at a time are served their meals to avoid overcrowding. Grade 12 learners' and staff attendance is checked effectively. Although 30 to 40% who are absent are encouraged to attend school, there has not been an improvement.

Concerns, problems

The SMT may become complacent because more than 80% of learners have access to online teaching and learning materials and may be shocked when the Grades 8 and 9 learners return to school.

3.2 The SMT acts effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school..... (2)

Evaluative commentary

The SMT arranged a training session for teachers on the use of online platforms which was beneficial when online teaching and learning materials were developed. A few classrooms are furnished with data projectors and screens which teachers can book for specific lessons. Departmental heads have weekly meetings with the subject teachers to check progress on the revised ATPs. The quality of teaching and learning materials and tasks are monitored, but vulnerable learners are not specifically catered for and lesson observations are not conducted.

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

Evaluative commentary

Staff members are effectively deployed, and tasks are rotated. Two fulltime staff members keep the ablution facilities clean and regulate the use of the ablution facilities. Only four girls and boys at a time are allowed inside to ensure social distancing and learners' hands are sanitised before they enter and when they exit. When teachers apply to work from home due to comorbidities, they must comply with the WCED requirements, but also specific SMT requirements. The Covid-19 Compliance Officer manages the cleaning and safety materials well and ensures that all bottles of sanitiser are regularly topped up. The school is awaiting its next consignment of cleaning and safety materials. Hard copies and online teaching and learning materials are available for all learners.

Good practice, innovation, imaginative solutions

The SMT holds teachers with comorbidities who are working from home accountable. The staff room was moved to the hall to create a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere. The addition of table tennis board allows teachers to play during their free time to release stress.

4. Governance, Parents and Community

4.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well (1)

Evaluative commentary

The governing body has not met since June 2020. However, the chairperson visits the school regularly. It has supported the SMT's request to appoint two additional non-teaching staff to take care of the learners' ablution facilities and buy cleaning and safety materials. The SMT has amended the Safety Policy, Cellular Phone Policy and Code of Conduct for Learners, but these must still be approved and adopted by the governing body.

Concerns, problems

Learners are allowed, in terms of the amended policy, to use their cell phones at school to access teaching and learning materials, but cell phones which were confiscated during the first term have not been returned to the learners.

4.2 The governing body fulfils well its functions with regard to the school's finances within its legal mandate (1)

Evaluative commentary

The governing has not yet reprioritised the budget even though school fees are not being paid regularly. The principal, in consultation with the chairperson, manages the school finances. Fundraising functions have not been planned for the near future. It will rely on the Norms and Standards allocation to meet its financial obligations until the end of 2020. It has not applied to the Unemployment Insurance Fund for support for the governing body employees.

Concerns, problems

The school will struggle financially next year if the first instalment of the Norms and Standards allocation for 2021 is used to settle its 2020 expenses.



4.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders

Evaluative commentary

The Representative Council for Learners is not functional with only the Grade 12 learners back at school. Therefore, there is no formal structure for learners to share their opinions, but they feel that the teachers are accessible when they want to raise issues. Staff have ample opportunities to present inputs which is evident in all the risks that the SMT has resolved. Initially, the school communicated effectively with parents to inform them about the school's Covid-19 safety plans. They were also informed about options in terms of home-schooling, applications for learners to stay at home due to comorbidities and how to support their children at home. However, it appears that the school has accepted the fact that only 60% to 70% of learners attend school. The school has regular contact with the district office and Head Office for support with its finances. Teachers are in contact with subject advisers and teachers from other schools via social media. The Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport officials allocated to the school are currently deployed to assist with the implementation of Covid-19 regulations. The University of Stellenbosch was also involved with motivation sessions for Grade 12 learners.

Concerns, problems

The lack of contact with Grades 8 and 9 learners.

Recommendations

1. Special attention must be given to Grade 8 and 9 learners when they return to school as they have not attended school since March 2020. Attending school every second Friday every second week is insufficient instructional time.
2. The SMT must return all learners' cell phones in view of the revised Cellular Phone Policy and the use of devices for online teaching and learning.
3. The governing body must address financial constraints urgently.
4. More psycho-social support must be offered to the staff and Grade 12 learners to address their emotional well-being.