



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Ysterplaat Primary School Report



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School: Ysterplaat Primary School
Address: 62A Koeberg Road, Ysterplaat, 7405
Circuit: C9
District: Metro North
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Ms N Horn

Areas of Evaluation:

	Learner Achievement	To evaluate the knowledge and skills that learners have acquired, progress made by learners over a period of time and recognition of learners.
	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:



Overall performance



KEY:



Main Findings



1. Learner Achievement..... 3

The Grade 6 systemic test results in Languages and Mathematics in 2022 were 54,9% and 50,5% respectively. The Languages results have increased slightly by 2% from 52,9% to 54,9% in 2021 to 2022. The results are above the circuit, district and province. The Mathematics results have increased by 7,2% from 43,3% to 50,5% in 2021 to 2022. The results are above the district and province, but below the circuit.

Individual reading was seldom heard in class as most teachers read texts and instructions on behalf of learners. Choral reading was observed in some classes.

It was observed that more assertive learners spoke freely while the majority of learners did not have the self-confidence to express themselves, especially in the presence of visitors. Learners often answered in a group and teachers did not always direct questions at individuals to develop individual speaking skills.

The skill of listening to instructions, recalling facts and content is hampered by the challenges of multilingualism. Teachers often repeat instructions before learners can actively engage. However, the positive class discipline observed in the large majority of classes creates a supportive environment where listening skills can be further developed. Learners' writing skills are practised in most classes, but printed worksheets still dominate and thus writing skills are not consistently practised across all subjects and grades. In addition, opportunities to respond creatively in writing are limited.

Some learners did not handle numbers with confidence and ease, but were able to count, recognise and identify the value of numbers. A good sense of numbers and operations was not evident in some classes which affected learners' confidence to use electronic devices effectively. The application of mathematical skills was not evident in some learners' reasoning skills when attempting word problems.

Learners participate in a rich extra-curricular programme. A few learners received acknowledgement for their outstanding achievements in athletics. The cultural programme includes participating in Eisteddfods, drama and poetry societies. Extra classes for identified learners are offered after school, but all learners are welcome to attend. The Robotics club participates at national level.



2. Teaching and Learning..... 3

Teachers were all present and most were actively teaching. All teachers were respectful in their interactions with learners and it was evident that they knew their learners well. However, an inclusive environment to support the diverse needs of all learners was not observed in all classes. While most classrooms were clean and organised learning environments, a few classrooms were not well kept. Seating arrangements allowed most teachers to manage their learners and activities more effectively, but it was not evident that it was consistently used for collaboration in most classes. Examples of beautiful Creative Arts work were seen on walls in the corridors and in a few classrooms, but work to serve as reminders of a particular lesson or to celebrate progress and excellence were not observed.

Most learners were attentive and engaged in learning, particularly in lessons that required active participation. Good use of questioning was observed in most classes. Teachers often used questions to ensure that learners were attentive or to check understanding as well as to initiate a discussion or inspire a higher order of critical thinking in a few lessons. It was observed that the majority of teachers affirmed learners who presented incorrect answers to questions, but in a few instances did not use the opportunity to further guide understanding of a concept. The adjustment of pace and content to support learning was evident in most classes. It was observed that teachers often paused to check learners' understanding of the content before proceeding with the rest of the lesson. Lessons are planned according to the Revised Annual Teaching Plans, but daily and weekly planning does not provide detailed outlining of instruction techniques, according to learners' needs. For example, daily planning did not indicate an introduction to a lesson with the aim to fascinate and engage learners. Verbal feedback to encourage and motivate was positive and supported learning. It also assisted learners to reflect and make adjustments while working independently and, at times, in groups. All teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge which enabled them to make their lessons more accessible to learners. However, some lessons were not interesting mainly because the activities and tasks were not challenging and did not promote creativity. The use of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) including video, audio, text and images were used effectively in a few lessons, and most teachers made good use of the chalkboard, textbooks and worksheets.



3. Behaviour and Safety..... 3

The school's ethos is positive and vibrant in many respects. Learners expressed their appreciation for their teachers' good pastoral care and academic support. Most learners feel safe and secure at school and agreed that their teachers would assist when they needed assistance. Most learners are focused during lessons and work diligently on their tasks and participate actively and respectfully in lessons. However, a few learners were disengaged in some classes. Teachers perform grounds' duty vigilantly which ensures that learners return to their classes on time after breaks. Learners' attendance is good, and this creates a more secure learning environment. The majority of learners are well-behaved and get along well with their peers, but some learners do not feel safe from bullying and aggressive behaviour. Teachers, however, consistently address poor behaviour, defuse conflict and monitor the behaviour of learners who transgress. The Code of Conduct for Learners (CoCL) promotes the values of good citizenship and clearly outlines the consequences for poor behaviour. Disciplinary hearings for aggressive and disrespectful behaviour, including bullying, are held on a weekly basis. Although the focus is on learners taking responsibility for their actions, limited success with modifying chronic poor behaviour was reported.

Most learners who have higher levels of need or who are vulnerable are identified and cared for. The School-based Support Team functions well and ensures that additional care is given to identified learners. Good liaisons have been established to provide support to vulnerable learners and full-time counselling from Community Keepers is offered on the premises. The assistance of a private educational psychologist is also accessed when required. Most of the ablution facilities are clean and hygienic. There are no obvious fire hazards or unsafe areas for learners and staff on the premises.

Learners have an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe and are assisted by their teachers who assist with maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment. The school is secured by an intact perimeter fence that allows learners to enjoy safe play during breaks. Although there are closed-circuit television cameras monitoring the grounds, it was observed that the pedestrian gate facing the administrative block is not always securely closed. However, unauthorised visitors are prevented from entering the school grounds by the security measures in place and the vigilant staff. Preventative measures against the bringing and possession of dangerous objects and illegal substances are in place and supported by the South African Police Service (SAPS). The National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) staff members provide nutritious meals, but the kitchen is not always optimally clean and hygienic. Meals are enjoyed in an attractive artificially grassed area which significantly adds to the dignity and support given to learners. Currently, the school offers a variety of after-school programmes such as chess, netball and ballroom dancing classes which serve to keep learners positively engaged, develop their social skills and help them to explore their creativity.



4. Leadership and Management..... 3

The school's vision and mission statements are relevant and drive the actions of the School Management Team (SMT) to give direction to the school. The school has a positive ethos as demonstrated by learners who openly expressed appreciation for their teachers' work ethic. School pride is reflected in the way learners embrace the selected values which are prominently displayed and explained on posters in the corridors. To strengthen the positive ethos, staff and learners wear clothing in the colour selected for an identified value and an award system is implemented for learners who model the values.

The SMT unanimously identified strengths such as well-qualified teachers, standardised online school administration processes and a heritage school that still serves the community well. Areas for development include increasing parental involvement, improving the poor behaviour of some learners and to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure of a heritage building. Members are aware of their roles in driving improvement and could explain the extent of the progress made, particularly with regards to infrastructure improvement. The SMT conducted an online school self-evaluation-based survey which assisted in identifying School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities such as the quality of teaching and learning, improved safety and security, the maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure, more sporting facilities and making Coding and Robotics available to as many learners as possible. Progress is regularly monitored at scheduled meetings.

The impact of the actions of the SMT is evident in its processes which include rigorous online curriculum administration and monitoring, learner profiling and relevant academic and pastoral daily data capturing to track learners' progress. Improvement can also be seen in the infrastructure due to the effective and efficient management of the maintenance programme.

The SMT ensured that a detailed analysis of learner achievement was conducted which identified strengths, weaknesses and trends and these findings were distributed to all teachers. Graphs based on recent and systemic test results clearly show the areas where learners across the school need support. In most grades, concerns were discussed in planning and reflection meetings.

Although most SMT members conduct lesson observations, this is not always done regularly and there is limited evidence of ongoing developmental feedback to strengthen teaching practices.

However, the detailed result analyses provide insight into the quality of classroom teaching and thus the majority of SMT members can judge most of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Mentoring for inexperienced teachers is provided by assisting with lesson planning, assessment and assistance with administrative processes.

The SMT ensured that all staff members received training in using the online management system to streamline the academic, discipline, pastoral and intervention programmes. In addition, related administrative duties are also managed on this platform. Teaching and non-teaching members receive sufficient opportunities to attend professional development training sessions. Most sessions which include leadership and management development, assessment irregularities and learning support processes are in line with the school's professional staff development plan which addresses the needs of the staff.

The SMT's actions impact positively on administration and systems development. However, strategies to improve the areas of weakness identified in learner achievement are not implemented consistently across all grades to ensure overall school improvement.

The SMT's leadership and management style is based on relationships of trust and providing opportunities for professional development by delegation of duties. This creates a conducive working environment where teaching and non-teaching staff know and fulfil their respective duties. In addition, the online monitoring systems provide regular updates which assist with managing duties effectively.

The attendance rate and punctuality of staff are excellent. Although punctuality for meetings or school-related functions is tracked on a register, no trends of concern need to be addressed.

The SMT diligently conducts subject, grade, staff and other meetings and uses signed rosters for holding staff to account, but detailed record-keeping of all processes is not evident. SMT members can give some evidence of their work in individual subjects or grades to improve performance. Staff members are held accountable for poor performance.

Most teaching and learning resources are used for the benefit of all learners. The newly built Moladi classrooms will provide new and spacious learning spaces. However, improved physical resources for extra-mural activities and sufficient IT resources were identified as areas for development. The LTSM coordinator and the SMT ensure that all learners have textbooks. The computer laboratory is earmarked for general computer use and Robotics, but it is currently not being used optimally. The feeding scheme kitchen and the area where learners enjoy their meals are small, but extension plans have been approved by the governing body.



5. Governance, Parents and Community.....



The governing body expressed its appreciation for the staff's commitment to their children and praised the accessible leadership style of the SMT which contribute to overall school effectiveness. It identified priorities for improvement such as poor learner behaviour and limited parental involvement. The school was built in 1906 and thus requires ongoing infrastructure maintenance such as the leaking roof which is a priority.

The governing body is supportive and works well with all stakeholders. It participated fully in the school self-evaluation survey, contributed to the SIP and clarified its own roles in driving school improvement. The governing body members serve on various committees and fully assist with fundraising efforts to supplement the school's finances.

All members were fully involved in the recruitment and selection processes to fill all vacancies successfully. The governing body has strategic plans in place to ensure staff stability when vacancies arise.

Although the governing body reviewed and adopted the admission and language policies, the CoCL and the Code of Conduct for educators as well as other core policies were not reviewed or adopted. The Finance Policy was adopted in September 2022 but has not been updated in line with legal and policy requirements. Recommendations in the audit report in relation to sound practices for income and expenditure are being implemented. Financial records are filed and safely kept, but security measures can be strengthened. Financial statements, including the annual statement and monthly bank reconciliation statements, were available and submitted on time. The annual budget was carefully prepared after consultation with all stakeholders and finalised according to the needs of the school. A new and creative strategy attracted more parents to the budget meeting held on 13 October 2022. The budget was presented and adopted. Regular finance committee meetings are held where reports are presented to monitor budgetary expenses in line with allocations.

Prefects and class monitors have been elected and they are informed and proud of the roles they play. Class monitors assist with class routines and support teachers with minor administrative tasks. The majority of learners feel free to make suggestions regarding learner-related matters to teachers or the principal. However, limited other platforms for the development of learner leadership and public speaking skills were observed.

A core group of parents from the diverse community is actively involved in school activities, but wider parental involvement remains a concern. Parents appreciate the online and paper-based communication which keep them informed about their children's academic work and behaviour. The school also provides extensive support to parents with online learner enrolment and assists with the school fee exemption process.

Good professional relationships are evident and staff members support each other. They are eager to empower themselves and undertake ongoing training to master the online systems used at the school. This contributes to a very positive professional environment where lifelong learning is encouraged.

The school engages positively with the district on a regular basis and support is provided with curriculum delivery, learner behaviour management as well as the maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure. The school has established good partnerships with the community which includes offering its facilities to a church group. The University of South Africa in conjunction with LEGO, assists learners with the resources to do Robotics, a special project at the school.

Recommendations

1. Teachers must create more inclusive learning environments in order to support the needs of all learners.
2. Teachers must use assessment data analyses to plan lessons which will accommodate all learning abilities and styles.
3. The SMT must increase anti-bullying and positive behaviour programmes in order to minimise incidents of bullying and aggressive behaviour.
4. The governing body must review and adopt core policies according to the annual plan.
5. The governing body must update the Finance Policy according to the latest financial regulations.