

York

High School

Report



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect

“When accountability knocks, who will answer?”
(Abelmann & Elmore, 1999)





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Accountability • Quality • Respect

Date of evaluation 22 – 23 May 2025

Chief evaluator Mr David J. Millar

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School:

York High School

Address:

15 C/O Meade and Palgrave Street, George, 6529

Circuit:

C3

District:

Eden and Central Karoo

Province:

Western Cape

Category:

Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)

Principal:

Mr FM Moll



Scan for
directions
to school.

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:

Learner Achievement



Teaching & Learning:



Behaviour & Safety:



Leadership & Management:



Governance, Parents & Community:



Overall performance



KEY:

Outstanding

Good

Requires improvement

Inadequate

This evaluation report follows the Western Cape's Schools Evaluation Authority's (SEA) schedule for the evaluation of Western Cape schools (public, subsidised independent, special).

The evaluation was conducted by five (5) evaluators from the SEA who spent two days at the school.

Information about this evaluation

The evaluators conducted this evaluation under section 11 D (4) of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act 2018. This was the first evaluation that the school received.

Evaluators met with the principal, the School Management Team (SMT), subject leaders, other members of staff (teaching and non-teaching) and learners. Evaluators met with representatives of the School's Governing Body (SGB). These discussions were both formal and informal.

Evaluators also observed learners' behaviour at social times (before school, during breaks and after school), during formal tuition (teaching and learning) and moving around the school between periods.

Evaluators observed lessons for 1020 minutes (17 hours) and scrutinised samples of learners' work. As part of this evaluation, forty-one (41) teachers and forty-one (41) lessons were observed in the following subjects:

GET (General Education and Training):

Grade 8: Afrikaans First Additional Language, Creative Arts, English Home Language, Social Sciences: History, Mathematics, Natural Sciences.

Grade 9: Afrikaans First Additional Language, Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), English Home Language, Social Sciences: Geography, Mathematics, Natural Sciences.

FET (Further Education and Training):

Grade 10: Accounting, Afrikaans First Additional Language, Business Studies, Computer Applications Technology (CAT), Dance Studies, English Home Language, Geography, History, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy.

Grade 11: Accounting, Afrikaans First Additional Language, Computer Applications Technology (CAT), Consumer Studies, English Home Language, Geography, History, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Physical Sciences.

Grade 12: Afrikaans First Additional Language, Business Studies, Consumer Studies, English Home Language, Geography, Mathematics, Physical Sciences.

Evaluators evaluated safeguarding procedures. Evaluators met with those responsible for governance; they spoke with leaders, staff, and learners to evaluate the culture of safeguarding at the school.

Evaluators considered the views of the principal, SMT, SGB, staff, parents and learners who responded to the SEA's online surveys. The following total online responses were received: Learners = 408; Parents = 142; Staff = 37; SMT = 7; SGB = 9; Principal = 1. A total of 604 questionnaires were completed.

Evaluators considered a variety of policies and procedures, as well as information about their practical implementation.

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Help the school to improve its quality of teaching and learning.
- Help the school to improve learner outcomes.
- Help the school to address key areas relating to leadership, management, governance, safety, behaviour, parental and community involvement.
- Provide rigorous and reliable evaluation reports which will assist the school to recognize and celebrate its strengths, and to identify and remedy, areas for improvement.
- Inform parents and the wider Western Cape public of the quality of Western Cape schools by placing reports in the public domain.

Proportions used in the report are as follows:

90% - 100%	Almost all
80% - 89%	Most
70% - 79%	Large majority
50% - 69%	Majority
30% - 49%	Minority
20% - 29%	Small minority
Up to 19%	Few

Overall performance rating

The SEA Evaluation concludes with an overall rating of school performance. Using the SEA Evaluation Instrument, evaluation teams consider five (5) Key Areas, thirteen (13) Standards and seventy-five (75) Performance Indicators to determine the closest match to agree on the 'Overall Performance Rating' for the school.

Main Findings



KEY AREA 1: LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

4

Learner achievement at York High School is outstanding.

1.1 Achievement in the Senior Phase (Grade 9).

The Western Cape Education Department's Systemic Testing Programme 2024 asks schools, "How are we doing"? when it provides schools with its Grade 9 systemic test results. It indicates to schools that, for the school to have an 'adequate achievement' score, it must achieve a pass rate of 50%.

1.1.1 Language

The performance of the school in the 2024 Systemic Test for Language was outstanding.

The 2024 pass rate of 94.9%, with an average of 69.7%, surpassed both National Quintile 5 (NQ5) schools and provincial benchmarks. This achievement underscores the school's success in developing core language skills, which are foundational to academic achievement across the curriculum.

While the school maintained a high overall pass rate, the percentage of learners achieving 80% or higher in Language has declined by 23.5% - from 41.4% in 2022 to 17.9% in 2024. This downward shift in the proportion of top achievers is significant and warrants careful reflection. It points to the importance of understanding the underlying factors that may contribute to this trend and the need to re-evaluate strategies to support and challenge high-achieving learners.

Analysis of tested concepts reveals exceptional proficiency in 'Language Structure and Conventions' (94.9% correct answers), and 'Reading comprehension – logical order of sentences' (90.8% correct answers), indicating a strong grasp strong command of grammatical rules and their ability to sequence ideas coherently – vital skills for both written and oral communication.

However, the results also indicate areas for further development. In 'Vocabulary' 71.4% of answers were incorrect, and in 'Figures of Speech', 40.6% of answers were incorrect. These indicate gaps in learners' understanding and application of word meanings and figurative language. Such gaps can impede learners' ability to engage with complex texts and express nuanced ideas.

The English Department is to be commended for its outstanding results.

1.1.2 Mathematics

The performance of the school in the 2024 Systemic Test for Mathematics was good.

In 2024, the pass rate was 84.2%, and the average was 64.8%. Both the pass rate and average percentage exceeded those of NQ5 schools, as well as the provincial averages.

While the school maintained a high overall pass rate, the percentage of learners achieving 80% or higher in Mathematics has declined by 11.8%, from 31.7% in 2022 to 19.9% in 2024. This reduction of high achievers is notable and warrants reflection on the factors contributing to this trend, particularly in supporting learners capable of more advanced performance.

Learners demonstrated outstanding proficiency in several mathematical areas, including 'Exponents' (96.4% correct answers), 'Solve problems in measurement' (95.8% correct answers) and 'Decimal fractions' (93.4% correct answers). These results reflect a solid understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and procedures, as well as effective teaching strategies in these domains.

Significant challenges appeared in 'Determine the gradient' (82.3% incorrect answers), 'Interpreting graphs' (64.4% incorrect answers) and 'Calculations using numbers in exponential form' (60.4% incorrect answers) was significantly lower.

The disparity suggests that while learners are confident in foundational skills, they may experience challenges with concepts related to interpretation and application of data, algebraic reasoning, and graphical analysis. Mastery of these areas is particularly important, as they form the basis for more advanced mathematical concepts and applications in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase (Grades 10, 11 and 12).

1.2 Learners' achievement in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grade 12)

The school's performance in the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations was outstanding.

The pass rate was 98.9% and its bachelor pass rate was 82.3%, both of which surpassed the district, provincial and national averages. This achievement reflects the school's commitment to academic excellence. In addition, the school is to be commended for preparing its learners for their final examinations, and their tertiary studies.

In 2024, the school offered 19 subjects, with 12 of them achieving a 100% pass rate. 13 subjects achieved an average exceeding 60%.

A significant number of distinctions were achieved, with 226 awarded across all subjects. English Home Language (HL), Afrikaans First Additional Language (FAL), Business Studies, Dance Studies, Life Orientation and Visual Arts were particularly strong, with Life Orientation leading with 52 distinctions. Dance Studies and Visual Arts are subject leaders, both at district and provincial levels.

Accounting achieved 7 distinctions and a subject average of nearly 68% from 20 candidates.

Life Sciences recorded a 100% pass rate, with 31 of 55 candidates achieving above 60%.

Mathematics and Physical Sciences, key gateway subjects for STEM pathways, had averages of 53.7% and 49.4% respectively. Physical Sciences achieved a 100% pass rate.

Creative subjects such as Dance Studies (average: 84.3%, 8 distinctions) and Visual Arts (average: 73.7%, 13 distinctions) contribute significantly to the impressive academic profile. Both subjects stand out for their outstanding averages and distinctions, reflecting both candidates' talent and dedication.

Discrepancies between School-Based Assessment (SBA) results and the final NSC marks are a feature of a few subjects only. Engineering Graphics and Design (EGD) (4 candidates) showed a 20% variance and Physical Sciences (55 candidates) had a 14.6% variance. Such discrepancies affect the reliability of internal assessment and can influence learners' expectations and outcomes. Candidates enter the NSC examinations with an inflated mark for certain subjects, which, once results are released, are not the results they expected. This may affect the bachelor's pass rate at the school and the candidates' entrance to certain faculties at universities.

The combination of a high overall pass rate and significant distinctions demonstrates the school's capacity for cultivating academic excellence. The findings underscore the importance of consistency in assessment and focus on both pass and bachelor rates.

1.3 Learners' ability to read, speak, listen, and write in the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).

Learners demonstrate outstanding proficiency in the LoLT, reflecting the school's strong emphasis on the development of core language skills.

Most learners communicate effectively, participating confidently in discussions and expressing ideas clearly in both spoken and written forms. Their command of language structure and conventions is particularly strong, and they are able to sequence ideas logically, which supports both comprehension and expression across the curriculum.

Reading fluency is well established, with learners able to decode text accurately and read with appropriate pace and intonation.

Listening skills are solid, as learners follow instructions and engage meaningfully with spoken language.

Most learners have highly proficient writing abilities, producing well-written, coherent and organised pieces.

Nevertheless, some areas require further development. Learners occasionally experience challenges with vocabulary and figurative language, which can limit depth of comprehension and the ability to engage critically with complex texts.

1.4 How learners handle numbers, calculate (mentally and with electronic devices) and apply their mathematical skills effectively to solve problems.

Learners exhibit strong competence in foundational mathematical skills, including numerical operations, measurement, and the use of decimals.

They demonstrate a solid understanding of basic procedures and are able to apply these effectively in routine problem-solving contexts. Most learners calculate mentally with confidence and competently use electronic devices such as calculators to support their work.

However, a few learners experience greater difficulty with more advanced skills such as algebraic reasoning, interpreting and analysing graphical information.

While their confidence in foundational areas is evident, further development in critical thinking, data interpretation, and conceptual understanding will support more advanced mathematical problem-solving.

1.5 Learners' participation and achievement in extra- and co-curricular, as well as cultural activities as part of the school's enrichment programme.

York High School's enrichment programme is a defining feature of its commitment to holistic education and learner development. The school offers an exceptionally broad and dynamic range of extra- and co-curricular opportunities, ensuring that every learner has access to meaningful experiences beyond the academic curriculum.

A diverse array of activities, including after-school academic classes, peer-tutoring sessions accessed via a Quick Response (QR) code, a full spectrum of sports, and a rich selection of cultural initiatives—nurtures not only academic success but also critical life skills such as teamwork, leadership, resilience, and creativity. The school's ethos places a premium on learner voice and agency, evident in the continual expansion of offerings to include contemporary pursuits such as coding and robotics, alongside traditional disciplines like rugby, netball, cricket, hockey, swimming, tennis, golf, athletics, sailing, squash, and rock climbing.

Cultural enrichment is equally robust, with learners participating in public speaking, choir, 'Big Brag,' visual arts, dance, drama, and music. The drama club's participation in the annual Shakespeare Festival at the Dot Sure Arts Theatre and regular achievements in local eisteddfods exemplify a thriving culture of artistic excellence.

Sporting fixtures are a vital part of school life, including traditional derbies with Alexander Road High, Woodridge High, Grey High, Collegiate Girls' High School, as well as with Langenhoven Gimnasium and Oudtshoorn High School. These encounters foster a strong sense of camaraderie, school spirit, and sportsmanship.

A signature event in the school's calendar is the annual York Easter Hockey Festival (YEHF), one of the oldest hockey festivals in the country. This event, established in the late 1970s, continues to attract schools from across the region, creating an atmosphere of excitement, hospitality, and spirited competition. York High's 1st teams consistently perform at a high level, demonstrating the school's ongoing commitment to sporting excellence.

Through this vibrant enrichment programme, learners are equipped with opportunities to discover their passions, develop their talents, and contribute meaningfully to the broader school community. York High School's dedication to extra- and co-curricular achievement ensures that learners emerge as well-rounded individuals prepared for future success.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 1

- i. The principal and SMT must implement rigorous management and standardisation of internal NSC assessment moderation processes to maximise the benefit of SBA marks for learners and ensure fairness, especially in subjects whose variance at NSC level is 10% or higher.
- ii. Set academic targets (Grade 12 subject teachers and Grade 12s) to improve the bachelor pass rate to 90%.



KEY AREA 2: TEACHING AND LEARNING

4

Teaching and learning at York High School are outstanding.

2.1 How teachers foster a positive learning environment.

Classrooms at York High are vibrant and purposefully designed to foster a welcoming and supportive learning environment. Teachers thoughtfully structure these spaces to cultivate engagement, curiosity, collaboration, and meaningful academic experiences. The atmosphere within the classrooms, along with the positive interactions between teachers and learners, contributes significantly to learner participation and motivation.

The classrooms are visually stimulating, enhanced by dynamic learning aids and educational posters. However, learner work is currently evident in only a limited number of classrooms. Such displays serve to celebrate learner achievements and inspire others.

Teachers establish clear 'rules of engagement' rooted in mutual respect. They invest time in building respectful and supportive relationships with learners, consistently modelling these values in their interactions. For instance, teachers address learners by name during discussions, demonstrating patience and attentiveness. They create opportunities for participation for all learners, irrespective of background or ability, thereby fostering a safe and inclusive environment in which every learner feels valued, heard, and respected.

The cleanliness and orderliness of classrooms reflect the school's commitment to high standards in both academic and behavioural expectations. A clean learning environment supports physical health, emotional well-being, and cognitive performance. It contributes to a culture of respect and academic excellence.

Seating arrangements are structured in a way that allows all learners clear visibility of the teacher and instructional materials, encouraging active engagement. These arrangements significantly influence how learners interact with one another, how learning is facilitated, and how teachers manage instruction. Teachers move around the room freely, monitor learner work, and offer individual support. Although traditional row-based seating remains prevalent, collaborative and group-based learning practices are also common in the majority of classrooms, supporting peer interaction and cooperative learning.

2.2 The quality of classroom teaching.

Classroom instruction is marked by effective teaching practices. Lessons are well-structured, goal-oriented, and delivered with a high degree of teacher confidence. Each lesson begins with a clear explanation of its objectives, providing learners with a purposeful direction for the lesson.

Interactions between teachers and learners are healthy, vibrant, and intellectually meaningful. Although these exchanges are guided by teachers, learners actively contribute by asking questions, collaborating with peers, and participating in reflective discussions.

In some classes, gamification strategies have proven particularly effective in encouraging participation, successfully drawing all learners into the learning process and enhancing engagement.

The majority of lessons currently focus on revision in preparation for mid-year examinations. These lessons are primarily structured around question-based activities. Teachers present carefully selected questions designed to encourage learners to engage critically with the content. Learners are provided with opportunities to respond, frequently offering diverse perspectives on the topics under discussion.

The revision questions are intentionally designed to extend beyond basic recall. Instead of eliciting one-word responses, they encourage deeper cognitive engagement and require learners to make meaningful connections between the current content and previously covered material. This approach supports the development of higher-order thinking skills and reflects a deliberate effort to promote critical analysis and integrated understanding. Learners demonstrate the ability to make these connections effectively, indicating both the depth and breadth of their comprehension.

Judging by the levels of learner participation, it is evident that the majority of learners perform at a relatively similar academic level. As a result, the pace of instruction in most lessons remains consistent. However, in instances where diverse learning styles or needs are present, the majority of teachers demonstrate the ability to adapt their instructional approaches accordingly. When misconceptions arise, teachers respond effectively by providing additional scaffolding questions to support understanding.

Neurodiverse learners are appropriately identified and supported by the Learning Support Teacher (LST) and are referred for specialised intervention when necessary.

Learners benefit significantly from the constructive feedback provided by their teachers, both during lessons and in their workbooks. In most cases, this feedback focuses on reinforcing learners' strengths while highlighting areas that require further attention. Within the workbooks, the majority of teachers offer specific and actionable suggestions aimed at helping learners achieve the expected level of understanding. Additionally, in most classrooms, teachers have successfully normalised mistakes as a natural part of the learning process. As a result, learners feel supported and respond positively to opportunities for academic growth.

The large majority of the revision lessons align clearly with the topics prescribed in the Revised Annual Teaching Plans (RATPs). The ability to formulate broad, discussion-based questions that connect various sections of the curriculum reflects a high level of lesson preparation and pedagogical competence. Furthermore, the school's online planning platform functions effectively in ensuring that content is delivered in accordance with the specified timelines, thereby supporting structured and timely curriculum coverage.

One of the key strengths of the teaching at the school is the ability to make complex concepts engaging and accessible to learners. This is largely attributable to their exceptional subject knowledge and pedagogical expertise. Moreover, their emphasis on philosophical dimensions of education enables them to frame discussions at varying levels of abstraction, thereby deepening learner insight. For example, lessons often extend beyond a narrow focus on examination success to include broader themes such as lifelong learning and success in life, thus fostering more meaningful and holistic educational experiences.

The school is equipped with excellent Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure, which is seamlessly integrated with the D6 planning and reporting system. Teachers utilise a diverse array of instructional tools, including data projectors, the Google Suite, eBooks, traditional textbooks, and printed materials. In a few lessons, digital game-based tools enable learners to interact with content via their mobile phones. This approach fosters learner focus and promotes rapid information processing in a manner that is both enjoyable and educational.

2.3 Teachers' support for learners, and for learning.

Learners' workbooks reflect a substantial volume of work completed over the course of the year. The frequency of activities suggests an average of two exercises per teaching day. These exercises are varied and thoughtfully designed to address the diverse needs and ability levels of learners. They progressively build toward the development of key subject-specific skills, thereby supporting the learning process in a structured manner. The exercises promote meaningful engagement with the content, enabling learners to consolidate and apply newly acquired knowledge effectively. In numerically based subjects, the use of repetitive practice appears to have significantly enhanced learners' understanding of core concepts.

Learner self-marking is a prevalent practice in the workbooks and appears to be strategically employed to reinforce key concepts while fostering learner accountability. The enthusiasm with which learners engage in this process indicates an awareness of their responsibility for their own academic progress. Learners express a sense of satisfaction when they observe that their efforts are yielding positive outcomes.

Teacher oversight during self-marking is applied selectively and purposefully. They intervene to identify common errors and misconceptions, using these insights to refine their instructional strategies. These moments also provide opportunities for teachers to offer written feedback on learners' work, thereby establishing a meaningful feedback loop. This process enables learners to track their progress and seek clarification where needed. In the majority of cases, subsequent work demonstrates that learners benefit from such feedback, showing improvement and a clearer understanding of the content.

Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure that all learners benefit from lessons. These strategies range from direct instruction and whole-class teaching to more flexible, learner-centred approaches such as student presentations. The majority of teachers demonstrate the ability to adapt their methods to accommodate diverse learning styles, thereby making lessons both relevant and engaging for each learner. As a result of implementing differentiated instruction, learners are exposed to multiple modes of thinking and expression. Furthermore, all learners—including those with special educational needs—receive appropriate support, fostering a strong sense of belonging within the classroom.

Assessment practices at the school are varied, appropriately challenging, and aligned with clearly defined learning objectives. Teachers design assessments to address the diverse needs of learners, ensuring that those requiring special accommodations are suitably supported. Most assessments incorporate a balanced mix of lower-order and higher-order thinking tasks, promoting the acquisition of foundational knowledge while simultaneously encouraging deeper cognitive engagement for advanced learners. The school's commitment to thorough analysis of assessment results underscores the critical role of data in informing instructional strategies and determining necessary learner support interventions.

The school offers a combination of voluntary and compulsory support programmes to assist learners. Those requiring additional academic assistance may be either required or given the option to attend extra classes held after school. Learners who voluntarily choose to participate in these after-school sessions are also welcomed. A distinctive feature of the school is the Learners' Academic Panel, which is responsible for coordinating the extra tuition activities. Additionally, the school develops Individual Support Plans (ISPs) tailored to provide targeted assistance for learners who have been identified as needing specific support.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 2

The School Management Team (SMT) must ensure that teachers receive professional development in the following areas:

- i. Professional development:
The use of the 'Matrix for Quality Teaching' (Circular 0010/2018) or <https://sea.westerncape.gov.za/guidelines-for-schools/>
- ii. Differentiated instruction:
 - a. Expand the consistent application of differentiated instructional strategies to ensure equitable support for the full range of learner abilities.
 - b. Conduct more regular classroom observations and planning reviews to track the use and variety of differentiated activities. Document this process in detail.



Behaviour and safety at York High School are outstanding.

3.1 The school's environment: is it disciplined, purposeful and is its ethos positive?

York High is a public, co-educational, English-medium school with just over 1,000 learners. It has a proud history of fifty years serving English-speaking communities in George and surrounding areas. The school's environment is disciplined, purposeful and driven by a positive ethos.

Learners from various cultural backgrounds bring a rich blend of traditions and perspectives. There is a strong culture of acceptance, where differences are valued, and everyone feels safe to express themselves. The learners feel special, heard and supported. This sense of safety promotes positive mental health and well-being. The principal's invitational and community-building style allows learners the freedom to approach him directly.

The school's core values emphasise authenticity, confidence, integrity, and embracing both strengths and flaws. These principles align with the school's mission to prepare confident young adults for life. Almost all learners, as well as staff, actively model these values across various platforms. In addition, learners demonstrate self-regulation during non-contact school events, such as assemblies and school events, reflecting a culture of responsibility and respect.

Attendance is outstanding, with learners valuing punctuality and eagerness to learn. Time management between lessons is orderly, with movement between periods prompt and disciplined.

Procedures outlined in the Code of Conduct for Learners (CoCL) are followed, and corrective actions are taken against those who transgress. When necessary, the principal and deputy principals meet with the learners and parents to collaboratively restore justice, emphasising responsibility and resolution.

Serious transgressions are escalated for intervention. Respect for school rules is widespread, with minimal bullying or disciplinary issues reported. Learners appreciate the school's restorative justice approach. In addition, the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) receives guidance to promote positive behaviour.

3.2 School safety and safeguarding of learners

The school recognises each learner's uniqueness and provides tailored support to help them reach their potential. The principal, the School-Based Support Team (SBST), and the School Governing Body (SGB) play pivotal roles in safeguarding learners. Support includes concessions, accommodations, scribes and readers, counselling services, and a learner tutoring programme. Discreet support is also provided to learners facing socioeconomic and nutritional challenges.

York High liaises proactively with the education District Office, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Health, and various local organisations. The school also has an excellent relationship with the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Facilities, including recreational areas, sports fields, ablution blocks, and the boarding house, are well-maintained, and contribute to a safe, hygienic environment. Safety is further ensured using roadworthy school buses driven by qualified drivers, all complying with relevant regulations, including PDP requirements.

Learners generally adhere to safety rules during school hours, events, and in the boarding facilities. This fosters a community where peers support, and look out for, one another.

The school is enclosed with a perimeter fence, motorised vehicle gates, and a 24-hour security company. A comprehensive closed-circuit television (CCTV) system monitors all areas, bolstering security.

The school's values, such as mutual trust, underpin its safety ethos, and incidents are addressed promptly following established protocols, including searches and seizures when necessary.

The school's tuckshop operates as a cafeteria, offering a variety of nutritious options, with menu adjustments made based on learner requests when feasible.

The extensive after-school programmes, including team sports like rugby, netball, cricket, hockey, swimming, tennis, golf, and athletics, along with cultural activities such as public speaking, choir, visual arts, dance, drama, and music foster a vibrant, values – driven environment. include public speaking, choir, 'big brag', visual arts, dance, drama, and music.

3.3 The school's boarding facilities (safety, care and welfare of learners).

York High Hostel strives to be an extension of the school's mission serving as a safe, caring home away from home. It accommodates 35 boys and 66 girls, although it has the capacity to accommodate up to 180 learners.

The boarding house staff strives to create a safe and comfortable environment, that respects individual privacy and promotes diversity. This fosters a community founded on mutual respect and an inclusive sense of belonging.

The boarding house is well-maintained, with separate dormitories for girls and boys. The facility includes recreational spaces and sporting activities, with opportunities for in-house competitions, further enhancing overall satisfaction.

The kitchen provides nutritional meals, meeting learners' dietary needs, and most boarders express satisfaction with the variety and quality of food.

Safety protocols include sign-in and sign-out procedures for all boarders. Staff members – supervisor, matron, and kitchen manager – are responsible for learners' welfare, always ensuring safety and well-being. Staff and learner leaders on duty also ensure that everyone is safe and accounted for.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 3

None.



KEY AREA 4: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



Leadership and management by the principal and SMT are outstanding.

4.1 The direction the School Management Team (SMT) gives to the school.

The school radiates a warm, inclusive spirit, nurtured by leadership that is not only visionary, and transformational but also compassionate and responsive. This ethos is deeply embedded in the fabric of school life, evident in the daily acts of kindness and mutual respect shared between learners and teachers. This inclusive ethos is brought to life through the active participation of teachers and learners in meaningful initiatives such as Staff Care, the Pastoral Panel, the Academic Panel - featuring tutoring sessions where learners access detailed information via a QR code on peer tutoring services, including tutor profiles, schedules, and connection procedures - and the Hospitality Panel.

The school promotes a values-driven, family-oriented environment in which learners develop a strong sense of belonging, in clear alignment with its articulated vision and mission:

"To be known as a centre of excellence in secondary education throughout South Africa, to be kind, show respect, serve, be inclusive, be family so that we achieve excellence."

By embedding its core values into everyday interactions, the school ensures that all learners are recognised, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.

The school's leadership and management are highly effective, characterised by a clear and visionary direction set by the principal. This strategic guidance empowers the SMT to drive innovation and promote ongoing professional development. A strong culture of distributed leadership is evident, with SMT members operating within clearly defined portfolios, spanning academics, grounds and discipline, sport, marketing and learner support, culture, and finance. Each area is managed with responsibility and accountability, contributing to the smooth operation of the school and outstanding external academic performance, sporting excellence, and cultural achievements.

The current School Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed through a consultative and inclusive SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis involving the principal, SMT, staff, Representative Council of Learners (RCL), and the School Governing Body (SGB). The SIP is strategically aligned with the priorities identified in the School Self-Evaluation (SSE), ensuring coherence and consistency between the school's self-assessment processes and its strategic planning, implementation and monitoring efforts.

The School's Academic Performance Improvement Plan (APIP) is informed by data-driven analysis to identify key development areas, thereby guiding the strategic allocation of resources and responsibilities.

The priorities outlined in the plan are strategically aimed at equipping learners with essential 21st-century skills, preparing them for academic success and meaningful participation in the workforce. To ensure effective oversight, progress is regularly communicated to staff and the SGB, promoting transparency, accountability, and a shared sense of ownership in the school's continuous improvement process.

4.2 The SMT's actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

A structured analysis of assessment data is conducted by the school, and its systematic application to inform differentiated instruction, classroom planning, and targeted learner interventions is evident in the large majority of classrooms. This approach ensures the effective application of assessment insights to address the diverse needs of learners.

The principal, SMT and subject heads maintain oversight over curriculum coverage, ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently aligned with policy directives and academic standards. Central to this oversight is the structured pre- and post-moderation of formal assessment tasks (FATs), which strives to uphold the integrity, fairness, and consistency of assessment practices in all subjects.

The school employs a comprehensive approach to support teacher growth and professional development. This includes regular informal and ad hoc lesson observations by the principal, and a few members of the SMT. These observations take place in a culture that develops reflective practice and collaborative learning. Teachers receive timely, constructive feedback aligned with their individual development goals, which helps refine their classroom practice. In addition, a mentorship programme and the sharing of good practice, provide ongoing guidance and support to novice teachers.

The SMT has identified training needs to better support learners facing barriers to learning. Teachers received focused training on specific needs, such as Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD) and classroom management strategies. Staff have also participated in emotional self-regulation training, aimed at promoting a positive mindset to strengthen their ability to create supportive and inclusive classroom environments.

4.3 The SMT's actions to ensure that effective use is made of human, financial and physical resources.

The SMT promotes a culture of accountability and collaboration by clearly defining staff responsibilities, encouraging professional ownership. Systematic monitoring and oversight ensure that all staff consistently fulfil their roles, contributing to the school's efficient operation. This culture is further reinforced through structured performance appraisals that support reflective practice and professional growth.

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to professionalism and dedication, as evidenced by the exceptional attendance and punctuality among both teaching and non-teaching staff. To maintain these standards, the school implements robust monitoring systems that ensure accountability of all staff members. Any deviations from established attendance and punctuality expectations are promptly identified and addressed in accordance with clearly defined protocols.

Classrooms are well-equipped with modern technology and up-to-date learning resources. While most teachers effectively use available technology to project content, the full interactive and engaging potential of ICT tools, such as interactive platforms, has yet to be fully leveraged.

The school supports inclusive assessment practices by providing learners who require accommodations with access to online assessment platforms and designated assessment venues, thereby promoting fairness and accessibility.

The school's coding and robotics programme plays a key role in developing critical competencies by engaging learners in hands-on, problem-solving activities that strengthen computational thinking, creativity, and collaboration. These initiatives effectively prepare learners for future academic and career opportunities in an increasingly digital and innovation-driven world.

The school takes pride in its exceptional sports facilities, which include a state-of the-art hockey astroturf, tennis, squash and netball courts, cricket fields, rugby fields, a swimming pool, and well-maintained rugby fields. These high-quality amenities provide learners with meaningful opportunities to balance academic demands with physical activity, thereby supporting a holistic development and promoting overall well-being. Furthermore, the school plans to expand its sports infrastructure through the development of a Multi-purpose Indoor Centre, which will accommodate a wider range of sporting and recreational activities.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 4

None.



KEY AREA 5: GOVERNANCE, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY.....

4

Governance, parents and community are outstanding.

5.1 The SGBs fulfillment of its key responsibilities.

The SGB demonstrates proficiency in fulfilling its core responsibilities. It plays a vital role in fostering a nurturing and safe learning environment that caters to both the academic and holistic development of learners. The SGB recognises and appreciates the dedication of staff in promoting learners' well-being and academic progress.

Learners get opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, where they discover and develop talent and live out their passions. The SGB is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that accommodates learners from diverse backgrounds, ensuring that they feel at home within the school community.

The SGB identifies improvement priorities aligned with the SIP through a collaborative and inclusive approach. In continuous consultation with the principal and the deputies, it closely monitors the execution of the SIP priority areas and secures funding for key initiatives, such as infrastructure improvements. The SGB has established several sub-committees with delegated responsibilities to strengthen its oversight role. During monthly meetings, these committees present written reports and proposals, which help initiate and direct discussions to bring about improvement. These practices highlight the SGB's commitment to realising the school's vision.

A key responsibility of the SGB is the recruitment of suitably qualified staff. Members are knowledgeable about recruitment and selection processes and can effectively fulfil this role. The Human Resources Department oversees the entire recruitment process, from advertising to final nomination, ensuring appointments are made in line with the school's needs. In addition to staff appointed by the WCED, the SGB makes additional appointments.

The SGB upholds high standards of governance, as demonstrated by its annual policy reviews. Existing policies are discussed and examined for relevance to the school's aspirations. While most policies are under review to ensure they meet the evolving needs of the school, this ongoing process ensures responsive and effective management.

5.2 The SGB's fulfilment of its financial roles and responsibilities.

Sound financial management is a hallmark of governance at the school. While the SGB has recognised a need to update the Finance Policy to further strengthen oversight, it consistently implements the current policy to meet the school's needs. This demonstrates the SGB's commitment to transparent and sound financial management.

Income and expenditure are closely monitored by the Finance Committee (FinCom) which meets monthly to maintain transparent financial processes. The bursar prepares monthly financial reports, which are reviewed in FinCom meetings and subsequently presented to the SGB by the treasurer. This promotes accountability.

Annual and monthly financial statements are prepared and monitored. Financial records are securely stored with controlled access, safeguarding sensitive information.

Budget planning for 2025 involved collaboration with various stakeholders, facilitated by the FinCom and SGB to ensure alignment with SIP priorities. Regular financial reviews ensure expenditure remains within the approved budget, an approach which supports financial discipline and accountability. The school supplements its resources through sponsorships, partnerships, and fundraising initiatives, which help address the increasing number of fee exemption applications and instances of bad debt.

5.3 The SGB's engagement with all stakeholders.

Learners are valued and are given opportunities to provide input on decisions that directly affect them. The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) is allocated time to present proposals on learner-related matters at SGB meetings e.g.'s, new extracurricular clubs and a policy for electronic device restrictions for junior learners (Grades 8 and 9).

Two learners, one selected by the learners and the other by the principal, serve on the Transformation Committee, which addresses issues relevant to learner inclusion. The committee addresses a range of issues, including hairstyles and suitable songs for school events, ensuring all learners feel represented and included. This demonstrates the school's commitment to diversity in a safe, inclusive environment.

Learners are given opportunities to lead through sport, culture, and service. They take control of different areas, such as leading community service, control panels for latecomers, and detention.

Parental engagement in school activities is robust. Multiple communication channels, including the D6 communicator,

emails, and Facebook, are used to keep parents informed about learner matters. The school organises events such as parents' evenings, braais, academic feedback sessions and subject choice discussions to foster relationships and strengthen the school community. In addition, the school reaches out to local businesses and promotes interactions between parents, staff, and sponsors by hosting events such as golf days and derbies. The school enjoys lasting connections with its alumni, who offer expertise and support through projects such as the alumni trust, learner assistance programmes and alumni sporting events.

Most professional relationships are characterised by collegiality, resulting in a sense of belonging, support and trust. The SGB places emphasis on nurturing positive relationships with the principal and the staff.

The school maintains a positive relationship with relevant education district office components, particularly the Circuit Manager and the Inclusive and Specialised Education Support (I-SLES) component. The education district office provides resources, professional development, and guidance to the school's leadership.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 5

None.

FINAL REMARKS

York High School stands as a beacon of vision, inclusivity, and excellence in the George community. Under the courageous leadership of its current principal, a thought leader, and a dedicated staff, the school continues to embody the progressive spirit that has defined it since its earliest days. The caring and supportive environment ensures that every learner feels valued and inspired to reach their full potential. The school has an inspiring, lived vision which is the driving force for all decisions.

A hallmark of the York High experience is the emphasis on service, creativity, and collaboration. Learners are encouraged to engage in service to the community, discovering the transformative power of serving others. Through a wide variety of academic, sporting, and cultural activities, they are empowered to express themselves, develop confidence, and work together toward shared goals.

The school's commitment to fostering creativity and critical thinking is evident in every classroom, on every stage, and on every sports field. High performing systems of teaching and learning are evident. Learners gain unforgettable experiences - whether performing at the annual Shakespeare Festival, competing in the legendary York Easter Hockey Festival, or leading learner-driven initiatives. Each opportunity not only enriches their personal growth but also contributes to the vibrant cultural legacy of York High School.

With its visionary principal, dedicated SMT and sustained high quality administrative, teaching and support staff and unwavering ethos of 'Heart and Soul', York High School remains deeply rooted in its community. It stands ready to meet the needs of a new generation, shaping confident, compassionate, and creative young leaders for the future.

York High School is a proudly South African school in every sense. It is transformation in action, with a leader (the principal) setting the tone for access, equity and liberation. York High School an outstanding school in every respect.