



Vista High School Focused RAPID Fire (RAFI) Review Report



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect

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





School: Vista High School
Address: 1 Military Road, Bo-Kaap, 8000
Circuit: C4
District: Metro Central
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Mrs C. Little



Scan for
directions
to school.

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

The evaluation was conducted by three (3) SEA evaluators who spent one (1) day at the school.

Information about this evaluation

The visit was the first RAFI evaluation since the school was rated a '1' ('Inadequate') in the 2024 evaluation. This evaluation is conducted under section 11D (4) of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act of 2018.

During the RAFI evaluation, meetings were held with the principal, two (2) members of the SMT, one (1) member of the SGB and three (3) learners to determine the progress the school has made since the last evaluation. The team undertook lesson observations, evaluated improvement efforts, and records of external support from both the education district office and/or Head Office (WCED), based on the SEA's initial priority recommendations for school improvement and development.

The purpose of the RAFI:

- To evaluate the progress made on the priority recommendations from the most recent evaluation conducted on 23 and 24 July 2024.

Context:

Since the previous rated evaluation:

- The principal is the only permanent member of the SMT.
- The Deputy Principal resigned. There is no acting Deputy Principal.
- There are three (3) acting Departmental Heads, all of whom are PL1 teachers.
- There is a new School Governing Body.

Colour key

GOOD PROGRESS/COMPLETED

SOME PROGRESS

NO PROGRESS

MAIN FINDINGS

KEY AREA 1: LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT	PROGRESS	NO PROGRESS
i) Vista High School must be given immediate targeted support. As an 'under-performing school', it must be classified as a Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school (a term used at the SEA). Although it is a Section 58B school, this is a classification that may not ensure a targeted support approach to school improvement.		
The school has received targeted support from: • Subject advisors. • Back on Track programme for Grade 10, 11, and 12 learners. • The Circuit Manager, who assisted with an action plan based on the SEA recommendations and visits the school regularly. • Grade 12 results improved to an 80% pass rate in 2025.		
ii) Professional development:		
a. The principal and SMT: Instructional Leadership.		
b. Teachers: The pedagogy of Mathematics and Science.		
c. Teachers: Pedagogical skills and differentiation strategies.		
iii) Internal moderation processes (policy) must be reviewed, revised and implemented to ensure consistency and quality in assessment practices.		
Grade 12 learners write common papers across all subjects, ensuring consistency and standardisation. Internal moderation has been strengthened through the introduction of generic moderation tools that systematically track cognitive levels across subjects, improving the quality and rigour of assessment.		
iv) The Mathematics and English Departments must address gaps in foundational knowledge by assigning targeted revision exercises to help learners practice and refine their mathematical and English skills, providing additional time and support as needed.		
Extra classes have been scheduled for Mathematics and Afrikaans Home Language (Grades 8–9) and English Home Language (Grade 10) to reinforce core competencies. In addition, a ninth period has been introduced for all Grade 12 learners to consolidate learning and strengthen exam readiness.		
v) All subject teachers must be encouraged to provide more opportunities for learners to listen, write, and speak frequently across the curriculum.		
vi) Establish and develop a variety of sports clubs and societies, and cultural and service activities.		
2025: Soccer, netball, chess, table tennis and choir. 2026: An interhouse athletics event was held on 13 February 2026. No other sporting codes are currently active, although a netball team has been registered.		
vii) Establish and develop an academic, sports and culture learner recognition programme.		
Assemblies were held in June and November 2025, during which learners were awarded sports and academic certificates.		

KEY AREA 2: TEACHING AND LEARNING	PROGRESS	NO PROGRESS
i) Use of the Matrix for Quality Teaching (MQT) (Circular 0010/2018) or https://sea.westerncape.gov.za/guidelines-for-schools/		
ii) Develop an annual Peer-to-peer classroom observation model and Peer Observation Model.		
iii) Adopt and implement, an in-class support method to stretch-and-challenge all learners.		
iv) Enhance the nature and quality of written and oral feedback provided to learners.		
v) Ensure adequate IT resources are available for all teachers.		
vi) Professional development on how to use data analysis to do effective planning and to identify teaching and learning needs.		
In 2025, a PowerPoint presentation was shared with staff outlining the Grade 8–12 results data analysis; however, it did not sufficiently guide how the data should inform planning, teaching, and learning practices.		
vii) Promotion and implementation of a continuous staff development programme.		
viii) Enhance classroom environments to make them a more welcoming environment for both learners and teachers.		
ix) Ensure that teachers mark and monitor learner workbooks regularly to ensure that all learners are supported		
Monitoring and marking of learner books are inconsistent, with feedback often limited to check marks rather than constructive comments that support learner improvement.		

KEY AREA 3: BEHAVIOUR AND SAFETY	PROGRESS	NO PROGRESS
i) Collaboratively develop a Code of Conduct for Learners (CoCL).		
The CoCL was reviewed and updated in 2025 with input from teachers, learners and the School Governing Body (SGB).		
ii) Consistent implementation of the CoCL, especially with late coming and truancy.		
Latecoming and truancy remain a persistent challenge. A morning register period at 08:00 has been introduced to record late arrivals; however, staff movement to classrooms often begins around 08:05 following the staff briefing meeting. Some learners do not attend register classes and tend to gather in groups. The gates are locked at 08h20, with latecomers required to attend detention classes. These classes are poorly attended as the school serves a commuter community.		
iii) Disposal of broken, unusable furniture and equipment within a clearly defined time frame.		
Almost all broken, unusable furniture and equipment has been disposed of.		
iv) Develop a school Safety Policy.		
A school Safety Policy has been developed.		
v) Review the SBST practices/policies.		
The SBST policy was not available. Learners requiring support have been identified, but individual support plans (ISPs) have not been developed. Support Needs Assessment (SNA1 and SNA2) forms have been completed, and assessment concessions have been applied where required.		
vi) Conflict Management workshop for teachers and SMT.		
vii) Principal and SMT to consistently monitor movement between classes and break duty.		
A break duty roster is available, and a few teachers monitor movement between classes. Most learners move quickly between periods and arrive on time for lessons.		

KEY AREA 4: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	PROGRESS	NO PROGRESS
i) Review and refine processes of SIP, SSE and the Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) with input from all stakeholders.		
ii) Ensure that SIP priorities are implemented, and progress consistently monitored and evaluated.		
ii) In collaboration with the Staff, RCL and SGB, the SMT must conduct a SWOT analysis to complement improvement strategies.		
iii) Develop and implement a Peer Observation Model for classroom observations.		
No formal lesson observation roster was available, with only a few lesson observation reports on record.		
v) Develop and implement a targeted Professional Development Programme (SACE aligned with CPD points) for staff.		
vi) Workshop 'Progressive Discipline' and 'Roles and Responsibilities for teachers with all staff (the latter in line with the collective agreement of the Quality Management System QMS).		
vii) Removal of Illegal occupants from the school property within a clearly defined timeframe.		
viii) Liaise with the district office and other government departments to intervene concerning the informal settlement bordering the school.		
Since 2020, numerous requests for assistance have been sent to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), but no intervention has been forthcoming.		
ix) Implement a school nutrition plan		
x) Manage access control.		
Access to the main gate is controlled from the secretary's office. The pedestrian gate remains locked		

KEY AREA 5: GOVERNANCE, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY	PROGRESS	NO PROGRESS
i) SGB and SGB committee meeting times and venues that allow parents and learners to attend without safety and transport concerns.		
During 2025, most scheduled SGB meetings did not take place due to parents' lack of availability, even for online sessions. Departmental Head appointments were delayed as parents did not attend the interview processes. A by-election held at the start of 2026 resulted in a largely new SGB. All SGB meetings for 2026 have been scheduled, with good attendance recorded at the meetings already held. Learner representatives on the SGB are provided with a meal and transport home after meetings.		
ii) Relevant policies reviewed and updated.		
A few policies were reviewed and signed in 2025, including the CoCL, Religious Policy and Language Policy. The Finance Policy was last reviewed in 2024.		
iii) Ensure that the required signatories to the banking account are finalised.		
The confirmation letters indicating signatories was dated 20 November 2025		
iv) Training of the newly elected SGB for their roles and responsibilities.		
Members of the SGB attended district training on 24 January 2026 on the School Development Plan (SDP), School Self Evaluation (SSE), School Improvement Plan (SIP), School Improvement Monitoring (SIM) and Annual Academic Performance Review (AAPR) processes of the WCED.		
v) SGB to be involved in the development and monitoring of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).		
The current SGB was not involved in developing the SIP but received a presentation of the plan from the principal.		
vi) Policies that indicate processes in detail so that implementation can be monitored.		
vii) Strengthen relationships with the district to boost learner performance and staff accountability.		
- The Circuit Manager provided guidance on the progressive discipline process for a staff member, attended disciplinary hearings, and facilitated training sessions for the SGB. - The district provided common papers for all matric subjects. - Grade 10 and 12 Learners attend the WCED 'Back on Track' programme. Teachers attend the 'Just in Time' teacher training intervention programme for Mathematics, History, Mathematical Literacy and English HL. - Regular visits by subject advisors, accompanied by written reports.		

FINAL REMARKS

Following the previous school evaluation, the school was provided with clear recommendations to strengthen. At the time of follow-up, which is 18 months after the report was made available to the school, the school has not demonstrated adequate responsiveness to recommendations, especially in the key areas of Teaching & Learning and Leadership & Management. The absence of a coherent implementation plan with clear accountability measures has hindered sustainable improvement.

There are deep systemic challenges at the school. The RAFI indicates clear warning signs of weak accountability and internal capacity.

Possible reasons for this are:

1. Weak leadership capacity: the principal and SMT lack the skills to translate recommendations into action plans. In addition, there is poor instructional leadership. The focus is on daily administrative matters than on academic outcomes (despite the improvement in Grade 12 results in 2025). The SMT still does not monitor classroom practice consistently, key to the school's turnaround strategy.
2. Lack of ownership: does the school acknowledge the SEA Report as Vista High School in a 'mirror'? If there is little buy in, then priority recommendations will not succeed. The SEA Report belongs to the school. It must embrace the report, its findings and priority recommendations.
3. Absence of clear implementation planning: although there is district oversight, there are no smart targets, no timelines, assigned responsibilities or monitoring tools.
4. School culture and ethos: there remains low expectations of learners and staff. There remains resistance to change as well as staff morale issues.
5. Capacity constraints: staff turnover is high and the SMT is unstable (only the principal is permanently appointed).

What must happen next:

1. Mandatory submission of a revised School Improvement Plan by 30 March 2026.
2. Clear district oversight schedule (quarterly monitoring focused specifically on classroom practice).
3. Leadership development intervention (Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute OR Instructional Leadership Institute).
4. Continued targeted support for curriculum implementation.
5. Possible external mentorship (Principals' Academy Trust).

6. Monthly progress report (Principal - Circuit Manager - District Director).
7. Formal performance management review of school leadership.
8. Consideration of statutory intervention should non-compliance persist.

Leadership effectiveness must be the **pivot point**. Teaching and learning, and outcomes, will not improve sustainably without strong instructional leadership driving it.