



Schools Evaluation Authority

Accountability • Quality • Respect



Knysna Primary School **Report**



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School: Knysna Primary School
Address: 6 Long Street, Knysna, 6570
Circuit: C4
District: Eden and Central Karoo
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Mr IOC White

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:

Teaching & Learning:



Behaviour & Safety:



Leadership & Management:



Governance, Parents & Community:



Overall performance



KEY:

Outstanding

Good

Requires improvement

Inadequate

Main Findings



1. Learner Achievement:

This area of evaluation has been suspended due to the pandemic.



2. Teaching and Learning 4

Teachers set their learners up for success by creating a positive and stimulating learning environment. They were all present in their classes, well prepared and engaged learners by creating opportunities to develop and improve knowledge and skills. Teachers demonstrated positive behaviour by showing kindness, being respectful and giving praise when interacting with learners. They provided opportunities for all learners, including those with barriers to learning, to participate in lessons. Classroom rules and routines are well established so that learners keep classrooms clean and tidy. All teachers know learners' needs and behaviour and place them strategically to strengthen peer collaboration and communication and to prevent disruptions. There are good quality displays in the classrooms and corridors to celebrate learners' work and recognise their efforts.

Learners eagerly participated in lessons by solving problems, having discussions, or using learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) to assist them in understanding the content. Questions were posed frequently to gauge learners' understanding. Open-ended questions to develop critical thinking skills were also asked and learners were encouraged to think about their responses and to answer in full sentences. The pace of the lessons was well-timed, and this allowed learners to complete their work. The content and style were adjusted to address misunderstandings and to provide extension for learners. Some learners have a rich vocabulary and class discussions were insightful and meaningful as they used prior knowledge to support their responses. Teachers planned and delivered lessons that created a buzz of excitement. Lessons focused on enhancing literacy and stimulated learners' curiosity. Most teachers gave encouraging verbal feedback which helped learners to think more deeply and to request further explanations. Teachers have good subject knowledge and used it to help learners to relate one idea to another and to clarify concepts. Teachers made effective use of well-chosen LTSM which made lessons interesting and supported learning. Learners navigated with ease through various online platforms and, in a few classes, the activities were highly interactive.

In all classes, workbooks were filled with quality exercises that progressed through different stages from pictures to abstract interpretations. Learners' work was completed and very neat. Marking is done regularly, but although all teachers provided praise for the accuracy and quality of the work, only a few teachers gave constructive written comments to guide learning. Teachers used a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals and groups of learners. Learners were engaged in differentiated tasks and were happy when they performed well in their activities. Most teachers circulated the classrooms to support and determine learners' progress during the lessons. In addition, assessment data analyses are used to identify and plan for most learners with barriers to learning and to adjust teaching practices. The intervention programmes are well-planned and appropriate modification and accommodations are made for most learners with special needs, but enrichment for gifted learners is not always evident.



3. Behaviour and Safety 4

The hoisted South African flag, well-maintained premises and the digital billboard at the entrance cultivate national identity and self-pride. The entire school community understands the importance of creating a stimulating learning environment and the impact that this will have on the well-being of staff and learners. The values which include care, respect and integrity are continuously shared and openly discussed with learners. Learners speak highly of their teachers who listen to their concerns and ideas. Learners care about each other and this makes them feel safe on the premises while enjoying play. They work diligently and remain focused on tasks. Learners are happy and excited to attend school which indicate that they value their education. Rules and good procedures are followed which help to reduce or eliminate distractions when attending classes. Learner attendance is very good. As a result of the continuous encouragement to develop good habits, learners are well-mannered. In addition, learners are provided with a variety of activities during breaks that minimise poor behaviour, bullying and aggressive interactions. The Code of Conduct for Learners (CoCL) is known to learners and is consistently implemented by all teachers. Consequently, serious transgressions are managed according to the CoCL.

The School-based Support Team (SBST) is effective and provides pastoral care at a high level to vulnerable learners and to those who have barriers to learning. These learners are identified through various channels which include teacher identification, disclosure and communication from parents and through the analysis of assessment data. Learners are supported by the learning support teacher (LST) and referred for specialised support. The LST supports teachers who work with learners who have various barriers to learning and reports on the progress of these learners in regular SBST meetings. The school also reaches out to vulnerable families in various ways such as providing uniforms and other essential items. Good links are formed with agencies such as the Keller Foundation and Knysna Initiative for Learning and Teaching (KILT) that support the well-being of learners. The ablution facilities are hygienic and well-maintained. Learners' social skills and sense of responsibility are constantly being developed and thus they understand how to keep themselves safe. The school has excellent security measures in place to safeguard the premises. A healthy lifestyle is promoted, and mainly healthy options are available at the tuck shop. A wide range of after-school programmes is offered to develop multiple skills. Learners are very keen to participate in music, drama and the various sporting codes. Extra classes for academic support are also offered after school. The learners are very proud of their achievements in sports and cultural activities.



4. Leadership and Management..... 4

The School Management Team (SMT) embraces the vision and mission and ensures that the staff works actively towards achieving it. Examples of how they continue to drive the vision uniformly were visible throughout the school. As a values-driven school, the SMT ensures that all learners and parents understand the practical implications of each value. The positive ethos of the school is visible in the affirming behaviour of learners and staff. The SMT knows the strengths and areas for development and continuously engages with its roles and responsibilities. A strong, knowledgeable, and forward-thinking staff, capable of adjusting to change, is a key strength. The SMT channels the best skills of all teachers innovatively. Sound processes were followed to align subject and grade improvement plans with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities. The SMT reflects upon implementation in weekly meetings in order to monitor improvement. The focus is on improving the quality of teaching and learning by setting realistic targets. The holistic development opportunities for learners and driving a positive discipline system confirm the positive impact of SMT actions.

The SMT and grade leaders analysed the strengths and weaknesses in learner achievement, including systemic test results, in detail. Trends were identified across all grades and subjects and the actions of the SMT purposefully and consistently address areas for development. The SMT members conducted regular evaluative and developmental lesson observations. During one-on-one feedback discussions, areas for development such as the integrated use of technology in class, differentiation, intervention strategies, classroom management, and subject-specific teaching strategies were highlighted. The SMT has a sound judgement of the quality of classroom practices, and thus professional development is aimed at developing identified teacher needs or enhancing teacher strengths. Experienced mentors guide less experienced teachers which also assists in building relationships of trust and care. Detailed internal planning enriches the minimum requirements of the Revised Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs). In addition, there is strong evidence of the detailed monitoring of curriculum coverage and the actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The impact of the actions of the SMT is particularly evident in the improvement in reading with comprehension and the mathematics results. The SMT facilitates training to assist with the more effective integration of technology in lessons which will ultimately prepare learners for meaningful citizenship in the twenty-first century.

The SMT ensures that the allocated duties of both teaching and non-teaching staff are monitored well. It is evident that the staff is highly motivated and competently fulfil duties that extend beyond the minimum requirements. The non-teaching staff is proud of its contribution to the safe and caring environment. Staff attendance and overall punctuality during and after school are very good. The staff understands the progressive discipline system well and any issue of concern is dealt with immediately. Under- or poor performance and misconduct have not been identified due to high levels of accountability, but structured corrective actions will be instituted when required. The SMT manages the school's physical, human and financial resources well and the optimal use of LTSM is encouraged. Creative leadership and meticulous strategic planning, based on allocated funds, ensure that the SMT makes well-informed decisions with regards to the purchasing of additional resources, such as ICT equipment. Play areas are innovative spaces which enhance the learning experience.



5. Governance, Parents and Community..... 3

The governing body has a good understanding of the school's overall effectiveness and could identify the priorities for improvement related to its roles and responsibilities. It provided evidence of how it supported the improvement of the school, such as managing challenging maintenance and infrastructure upgrading or fundraising events. It reaches out to the surrounding communities by availing facilities to external bodies for sports, cultural or fundraising events. The governing body is forward-thinking and future initiatives of the school are carefully planned. It is regularly informed about the academic programme and results and knows that it is an important element of school improvement. The governing body consistently follows proper procedures to ensure that a variety of vacancies are filled according to the current and future needs of the school. It has contingency plans for when experienced staff members retire. The governing body was involved in developing, reviewing, and adopting some policies.

Although the Finance Policy was adopted in September 2021, it was not reviewed according to the latest financial regulations. However, the finance committee is legally constituted, apply the latest financial measures and has regular meetings to ensure that most requirements are adhered to. Income and expenditure are monitored, and regular feedback is given in finance committee meetings, staff meetings, and parent letters. The SMT works with the governing body to ensure that processes are followed and that financial documents are safely kept. Financial statements such as the annual statement and monthly reconciliation statements are correctly completed and submitted on time. The governing body ensured that all the necessary approvals for specific financial deviations were obtained and safely recorded. All expenditure is based on the budget that was approved by parents at a meeting in November 2021. The budget addresses the needs of the school and progress reports are presented on various platforms to ensure transparency. All stakeholders participate in fundraising which supplements the finances of the school.

The large majority of learners reported that they have a voice and that their requests are valued and implemented. Learner leaders play an important role in developing leadership skills. Leadership opportunities are also accessed through sports teams and cultural committees. A core group of parents is actively involved in school activities and functions. Parents are proud to be associated with the school and feel well informed about their children's progress. They appreciate the positive merit system that acknowledges good behaviour as well as the high level of individual care and support. Professional relationships are good and teachers are proud of their school. An air of educational enthusiasm is present and can be observed in teachers' committed activities even between lessons, during breaks and after school. The "People First" and "My Brain Code" sessions were attended by all staff members and the different personality types and each individual's strengths were highlighted. This information was used to form dedicated teams to work on allocated tasks and projects. Contributions from external organisations are carefully considered and monitored to ensure that it has a positive impact on overall school improvement. Several sponsors have been secured, acknowledged and kept informed about any new developments at the school. District support is based on the school's needs and responses are meaningful. The school fosters very strong partnerships with the community such as the reading and music programmes run by retired community members

Recommendations

1. Teachers must continue to plan and deliver quality differentiated lessons and assessment tasks that will drive and maintain excellence.
2. Teachers must apply instructional approaches that support all learners to reach their full potential.
3. Learners' safety must continue to be a priority and programmes to support their emotional and physical well-being must be increased.
4. The SMT must continue to make data-driven decisions, plan accordingly, implement, monitor and assess them.
5. The governing body must engage more parents by providing increased activities and programmes.

Areas for Evaluation

1. Learner Achievement:

Not applicable.

2. Teaching and Learning:

2.1 Positive learning environment

a) Strengths:

- Teachers were present and actively teaching.
- Respectful and inclusive environment.
- Clean and tidy classes.
- Seating arrangements are used to minimise poor behaviour and enhance learning.
- High quality displays of learners' work.

b) Areas for development:

- None

2.2 Quality of classroom teaching

a) Strengths:

- Learners were actively engaged with lessons.
- Questioning skills developed critical thinking and self-confidence of learners.
- Well-paced lessons.
- Content and style adjusted.
- Planning of interesting and accessible lessons.
- Verbal feedback supports quality of teaching and learning.
- Excellent subject knowledge and outstanding teaching practice.
- Innovative use of LTSM.

b) Areas for development:

- Increase interactive use of technology.

2.3 Learner support

a) Strengths:

- High-quality exercises.
- Regular marking.
- Integration of good teaching strategies.
- Effective use of assessment data.
- Individual support programmes are well developed and implemented.

b) Areas for development:

- Consistently provide constructive written feedback.
- Increased enrichment for gifted learners.

3. Behaviour and Safety:

3.1 School environment

a) Strengths:

- Value-driven ethos.
- Continuous cultivation of a respectful environment.
- Learners are listened to.
- Diligent and respectful learners.
- Excellent punctuality and attendance.
- Positive learning environment.
- CoCL consistently implemented.

b) Areas for development:

- None

3.2 School safety, protection, and care for learners

a) Strengths:

- Vulnerable and learners with barriers to learning are identified and cared for.
- Strong links with agencies.
- Good safety measures.
- Consistent development of social skills and sense of responsibility.
- Excellent security measures in place.
- Promotes healthy living.
- Wide range of high quality after-school activities offered.

b) Areas for development:

- None

4. Leadership and Management:

4.1 Clear direction from the SMT

a) Strengths:

- Vision and mission statements drive school improvement.
- Value-driven educational environment.
- Continuous reflection on strengths and areas for school improvement.
- Ownership of roles and responsibilities.
- SIP implemented and monitored.
- Realistic targets lead to improvement.

b) Areas for development:

- None

4.2 Improvement of the quality of teaching and learning by the SMT

a) Strengths:

- Trends in learner achievement are identified across the school.
- The SMT Intentionally and consistently addresses areas for development.
- Purposeful lesson observations conducted, and instructional feedback provided.
- Comprehensive evidence of SMT's actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Targeted professional development programme.

b) Areas for development:

- None.

4.3 Use of resources

a) Strengths:

- Effective monitoring measures ensure all duties are fulfilled.
- Staff attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Accountability levels are high, and no under- or poor performance is identified.
- Good use of all human, financial and physical resources.
- Efficient asset management.

b) Areas for development:

- None

5. Governance, Parents and Community:

5.1 Governing body's key responsibilities

a) Strengths:

- A supportive governing body who knows the strengths and needs.
- Actions contribute to school improvement.
- Full involvement in recruitment and selection processes.

b) Areas for development:

- Review and adopt all policies.

5.2 School finances

a) Strengths:

- Regular financial reporting.
- Income and expenditure managed.
- Financial statements are correct, and all necessary approvals acquired.
- Preparation and management of budget.

b) Areas for development:

- Update Finance Policy according to latest financial regulations.

5.3 Engagement with stakeholders

a) Strengths:

- Learners have a voice in school-related matters.
- Professional relationships and environment.
- Involvement of several external organisations and sponsors.

b) Areas for development:

- Broadening parental engagement.