

Loreto Primary 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 19 - 20 March 2025

Chief evaluator Mr David J. Millar

Lead Evaluator Mrs Heléne van Zyl

Evaluators Ms Deneen Grobler, Mr Ndoyisile Miti and Ms Lyrice Trussell

School: Loreto Primary School
Address: 16 Gordons Bay Road, Strand, 7140
Circuit: C8
District: Metro East
Province: Western Cape
Category: Public Ordinary (Fee-charging)
Principal: Mrs VC Oertle



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 four (4) 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 of 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), parents and learners (from all grades). Evaluators also 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 observed learners moving around the school between periods.

Evaluators visited lessons and reviewed samples of learners' work. As part of this evaluation, nineteen (19) teachers and twenty-eight (28) lessons were observed in the following subjects:

Foundation Phase (FP: Grade R - 3):

Afrikaans First Additional Language (FAL), Arts and Culture, Mathematics, English HL, Life Skills (Physical and Social Well-being [PSW]) and Mathematics.

Intermediate and Senior Phases (INTERSEN: Grade 4 - 7):

Afrikaans FAL, English HL, Life Skills and Life Orientation (Religion Education), Natural Sciences, Natural Sciences and Technology and Social Sciences (Geography and History).

The evaluators spent a total of 670 minutes (11 hours and 10 minutes), observing lessons.

Evaluators evaluated safeguarding procedures. Evaluators met with those responsible for governance and 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 online surveys of the SEA.

The following total online responses were received:

Learners = 22; Parents = 72; Staff = 21; SMT = 1; SGB = 11; Principal = 1. A total of 128 questionnaires were completed.

Evaluators considered a variety of policies and procedures as well as information pertaining to 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.

Historical Background

(Extract from the Loreto Strand 100 Year Jubilee Booklet)

Loreto Strand's journey over the past century is a testament to the unwavering faith, perseverance, and courage of the Loreto Sisters and the entire school community. From its humble beginnings on February 1, 1925, with just three learners, the school has faced numerous challenges, including financial struggles and threats of closure. Yet, each time, the community rallied together, demonstrating remarkable resilience.

The school's history is marked by significant milestones, such as the transfer to its current location in July 1925, the closure of the boarding school in 1972, and the high school in 1976. Despite these setbacks, the spirit of Loreto Strand remained unbroken. The decision in 1987 to close the school was met with fierce resistance from staff and parents, leading to its survival and the appointment of a new principal in 1989.

In the same year that the Catholic Church celebrates a Jubilee Year with the theme 'Pilgrims of Hope', Loreto Strand celebrates her centenary and reflects on the incredible journey. The school, once shrouded in mystery with its black-clad sisters, has blossomed into a beacon of hope and success. Today, Loreto Strand stands as a symbol of the power of faith and community, bearing the sweet fruits of dedication and hard work. The legacy of the Loreto Sisters and all those who have contributed to the school's growth continues to inspire and nurture the children of Loreto, ensuring a bright and hopeful future.

Main Findings



KEY AREA 1: LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT

4

The Western Cape Education Department's Systemic Testing Programme 2024 asks schools, 'How are we doing?' when it provides schools with its Grade 3 and Grade 6 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%.

It is worth noting, as a contextual factor, that for many learners, English is not their home language. Additionally, many Afrikaans, isiXhosa and French-speaking learners enroll in all grades. Despite these language barriers, the school is committed to academic excellence.

Learner achievement at Loreto Primary School is outstanding.

1.1 Learners' achievement in the Foundation Phase (Grade 3)

1.1.1 Language

Language achievement is outstanding.

In 2024, the pass rate was 88.9%, compared to 80.8% achieved in 2023. The average mark was 66.1%, compared to 67.1% achieved in 2023.

The school achieved higher pass and average percentages compared to the province and schools classified as National Quintile Five (NQ5).

The percentage of learners who scored within the 80% to 100% range declined from 28.8% in 2023 to 16.7% in 2024.

An analysis of the results revealed that the pass percentage in 'Language Structure and Use' and 'Reading and Viewing' was 92.6%. The achievement indicates effective teaching strategies, active engagement and an understanding of language structure and reading concepts.

The majority of learners had a challenge with 'Writing'. This can impact their academic progress, confidence and overall development. They may also have difficulty expressing ideas (putting their thoughts onto paper). Poor writing can slow down reading and spelling progress. This can impact their future academic performance.

Overall, learners demonstrate remarkable readiness for more advanced cognitive and creative challenges, indicating a solid foundation for future learning.

1.1.2 Mathematics

Mathematics achievement is outstanding.

In 2024, the pass rate was 88.9%, compared to 84.6% achieved in 2023. The average mark was 72.1%, compared to 66.0% achieved in 2023.

The school achieved higher pass and average percentages compared to the province and schools classified as National Quintile Five (NQ5).

The distribution of scores in 2024 shows that 44.4% of learners scored between 80% and 100%, an increase from 25.0% achieved in 2023.

An analysis of the results revealed that the pass percentage in 'Patterns, Functions and Algebra' and in 'Data Handling' was 98.1% and in 'Space and Shape (Geometry)' was 90.7%. This suggests learners have a good grasp of mathematical concepts in these areas, demonstrating strong foundational understanding and application skills. Effective teaching strategies and learner engagement contributed to the overall success.

1.2 Learners' achievement in the Intermediate Phase (Grade 6)

1.2.1 Language

The achievement is outstanding.

In 2024, the pass rate was 92.3%, an increase from 84.6% in 2023. The average mark was 66.5%, remaining consistent with 66.3% achieved in 2023. These percentages are higher than the provincial performance level and the aggregated percentage for NQ5 schools.

The proportion of learners scoring 80% and above is low, with only 5.8% achieving scores within this range,

compared to 17.3% in 2023.

An analysis of the results revealed that the pass percentage in 'Reading and Viewing' was 90.4%, in 'Language Structure and Use' 86.5%, and in 'Writing' 80.8%. This achievement indicates effective teaching strategies, active engagement, and an understanding of language structure, reading concepts, and writing.

Overall, learners' outstanding achievement demonstrates that teachers are successfully fostering a deep understanding of language concepts through well-structured instruction and engaging learning activities. It reflects effective teaching strategies that emphasise creativity, organisation and language proficiency.

1.2.2 Mathematics

The achievement is outstanding.

In 2024, the school achieved a pass rate of 90.4%, consistent with the 92.3% achieved in 2023. The average mark was 71.5%, similar to the 72.9% achieved in 2023. These results are higher than the provincial performance levels and the aggregated scores for NQ5 schools, highlighting the exceptional performance.

The distribution of scores in 2024 shows a decline in the proportion of learners achieving scores in the 80% to 100% range, from 40.4% in 2023 to 34.6% in 2024. However, no learner scored below 40%.

An analysis of the results revealed that the pass percentages in 'Space and Shape' and in 'Numbers, Operations and Relationships' were 90.4%, 'Patterns, Functions and Algebra' 88.5% and in 'Data Handling' 84.6%. This suggests learners have a good grasp of mathematical concepts in these areas, demonstrating strong foundational understanding and application skills.

A small minority of learners (28.8%) found 'Measurement' difficult. This can affect their ability to understand and solve problems involving length, height, weight, volume, and time, which in turn can impact their mathematics skills and everyday problem solving.

Effective teaching strategies and learner engagement contributed to the outstanding results. The results reflect a solid mathematical foundation.

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

Learners' ability to read, speak, listen and write in English is outstanding.

Learners demonstrate exceptional reading, speaking, and listening skills. They engage with confidence when interacting with peers, teachers and visitors, highlighting high levels of linguistic capability from a young age.

In the FP, the implementation of Jolly Phonics, the Science of Reading and Funda Wande has improved learners' articulation, expression and overall language development.

In Grade R, learners develop auditory processing skills by identifying sounds, following instructions, and recognising patterns in language. They name body parts, sing songs, perform action rhymes and begin recognising names and high-frequency words. Their fine motor skills are strengthened through activities such as drawing, cutting, threading beads and using play dough. These skills are crucial for early literacy and reading development, as they improve hand-eye coordination, dexterity and control needed for writing and other literacy tasks.

In Grade 1, learners progress well in phonics, decoding and comprehension. They develop phonemic awareness by identifying sounds, recognising rhymes, blending words and segmenting them. They follow instructions, engage in conversations and write names and short sentences, though some need extra support in guided reading.

In Grades 2 and 3, learners express their ideas through writing and various art forms, including music. Learners develop their reading, writing and listening skills through a variety of exercises in music and poetry. This approach fosters a dynamic and engaging environment that supports holistic development.

As learners enter the INTERSEN Phase, they engage with more complex texts. Most learners demonstrate high proficiency in reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. Learners construct coherent sentences and paragraphs.

Listening is integrated into instructional strategies through storytelling, read-aloud and guided discussions. These methods strengthen learners' auditory processing and enhance comprehension. Furthermore, they develop key skills such as inference, prediction and narrative analysis.

Collaborative activities such as group projects, encourage learners to engage with each other's ideas and exchange feedback. This peer interaction underscores the importance of listening, a critical skill for learning and effective teamwork. It promotes academic growth and interpersonal skills.

Most learners display good speaking skills. Their clear articulation and confident speech indicate a sound foundation in language development. Speaking activities are interactive and inclusive. Learners use topic-relevant

vocabulary and pronounce words accurately. In the singing lessons, the teacher gives special attention to consonant pronunciation which supports learners to articulate words clearly.

Learners demonstrate good writing skills with proper language and punctuation. Learners follow writing conventions and have regular opportunities to practice and improve their skills. Progress is consistent. Books are neat, reflecting a sense of pride.

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

Learners' outstanding results showcase their confidence in handling numbers and applying their skills to solve problems, mentally and with the aid of electronic devices. In a large majority of classes, learners handle numbers, calculate and solve problems with ease. A large majority of learners enjoy counting even and odd numbers while playing number games. Group discussions are common, with learners working together to find solutions. This interaction with peers and teachers builds confidence and enhances subject knowledge.

In the FP, learners understand fundamental concepts such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. These foundational skills prepare learners to solve increasingly complex mathematical challenges.

The introduction of fractions in the Intermediate Phase encourages significant participation and deeper comprehension.

In the INTERSEN Phase, learners' numerical skills have reached the required competence, with most demonstrating proficiency in mental mathematics and problem-solving exercises. Activities such as measurement and data analysis help learners apply their skills in meaningful contexts. This strong foundation equips learners with the skills to grasp advanced mathematical concepts.

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

The school's high participation rate in extracurricular activities is sustained by teachers' active involvement and support from external coaches.

Despite limited facilities, learners are enthusiastic and participate in soccer, netball, tennis, athletics, cricket and cross-country events. Each age group has at least one competitive team and an external partner provides weekly karate classes. The school also participates in Catholic Schools' sport festivals.

The school's enrichment program offers a diverse range of cultural activities, with a focus on music, chess and drama. Learners participate in Eisteddfod competitions and choir festivals.

Learners enjoy excursions to the Helderberg Nature Reserve, the Iziko Museum and the Planetarium. The beach clean-ups to promote community involvement, is a favourite outreach activity.

A large majority of learners attend additional Mathematics and English classes and reading sessions in their recently renovated library.

These extra-mural activities improve learners' physical well-being, create a climate of inclusivity and contribute to their development.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 1

- i. Foundation Phase 'measurement':
 - a. Use more hands-on and play-based activities i.e.,
 - Non-standard measurement: let learners measure objects using hands, feet, blocks, or string before introducing standard units.
 - Real life comparisons: let learners compare everyday objects e.g., "Which bottle hold more water?" or "Which book is heavier?"
 - Sorting activities: have learners group objects by size or weight.
 - b. Introduce tools in a fun way:
 - Ruler games: let learners trace objects and measure them with a ruler.
 - Scavenger hunts: Ask learners to find objects of a certain length or height.
 - Balance scales: use simple balance scales with toys or fruit to compare weights.
 - c. Relate measurement to everyday life:
 - Cooking activities: let learners measure ingredients (use cups, teaspoons).
 - Calendar activities: mark special days to teach sequencing and days of the week.
 - d. Use songs, rhymes and stories:

- Measurement songs: sing songs about time, size, and weight to reinforce concepts.
 - Storybooks: read books about measurement.
- e. Encourage estimation and problem-solving e.g., Guess and Check: have learners estimate an object's length then measure to compare.

ii. Foundation phase 'writing':

- a. Use fun and engaging writing activities:
- Storytelling before writing: have learners tell a story aloud before writing it down in simple sentences.
 - Writing for real-life purposes: encourage writing through shopping lists, birthday cards or simple labels for objects.



KEY AREA 2: TEACHING AND LEARNING



The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

2.1 How teachers foster a positive learning environment.

All teachers are punctual and ready to start lessons. They are well-prepared, with extensive lesson plans to guide them. A few teachers do consolidation work in preparation for the term's formal assessments. Teachers move around and address all learners to ensure they are settled. In most classrooms, work is already written on the board or interactive whiteboard. Learners proceed with work immediately.

Teachers' preparedness builds trust and a sense of safety. Teachers engage learners in an interactive, inclusive and collaborative manner. Their positive tone encourages all learners to participate and contributes to good conduct. Classrooms are diverse and teachers' inclusive language and actions include most learners with barriers to learning.

Classrooms are clean, tidy and well-organised. There is clear order and structure, with designated, clutter-free spaces for teachers and learners to store resources. Most classrooms are functional and pleasant. The cleanliness and hygiene are commendable.

Innovative seating arrangements promote learning, balancing teacher- and learner-centred approaches. The flexible arrangements allow for individual, peer and group work and promote collaboration. Teachers have access to all learners. In a large majority of classes, carpets and inviting seating areas enhance the love of reading.

All FP classrooms are print-rich and innovative with subject-relevant learning walls. Learners' framed artwork is exhibited throughout the school. These colourful spaces promote visual stimulation and pride.

In the INTERSEN Phase displays are subject-specific. Learners' work is not displayed in the same innovative manner. Nevertheless, considerable effort is made to ensure all classes are engaging and welcoming.

2.2 The quality of teaching and learning.

Learners are engaged individually and collaboratively. They participate and show curiosity and interest in the topics being taught.

Various questioning techniques establish a deeper understanding of the topic of the day. Questioning of learners is frequent, open and thought-provoking. Teachers' questions probe and stretch learners and stimulate critical thinking. All learners are given opportunities and raise their hands to participate and ask questions. When asking or answering questions learners wait to be acknowledged. This reinforces respect and consideration.

Teachers adjust the pace, style and content to ensure effective learning. They are flexible and differentiate in class to meet the needs of learners. They transition between activities during lessons. Teachers regularly engage with learners to ensure everybody understands concepts before proceeding with the rest of the lesson.

Teachers excel in planning at all levels, including annual, termly, monthly, weekly, and daily plans. All plans are comprehensive and detailed, guided by the Revised Annual Teaching Plans (RATPs) for all grades. They introduce each lesson by referencing prior knowledge before teaching new concepts.

Tiered tasks, assignments, and activities are designed to meet the needs of learners. Teachers use assessment data to adjust lessons, with differentiation evident in learners' workbooks. A large majority of teachers circulate throughout the classroom during lessons and support learners to achieve the learning objectives.

Teachers provide immediate verbal feedback to learners to support and develop their understanding. As teachers monitor learners' workbooks, they offer constant and constructive feedback. Learners actively reflect on and discuss

their progress. Written feedback in learners' workbooks is affirming and encouraging.

All teachers are knowledgeable and present interesting lessons. Their experience and passion for their subjects encourage positive interactions, making the content accessible to all learners. All teachers apply support strategies to develop strong reading skills, encouraging exploration and discovery.

A large majority of teachers provide personalised and differentiated reading and writing activities. Learners are encouraged to watch relevant subject programmes on TV and access the internet to explore and develop their knowledge. Additionally, a programme for high-achieving learners is implemented.

A wide range of resources is used, including interactive whiteboards, the internet, videos, and textbooks. FP classes use activity cards, picture pages, play dough, interactive boards and videos. In the INTERSEN Phase, interactive games excite learners. All learners have access to the renovated library which has age-appropriate books. Most teachers use these resources to make learning a pleasant experience.

2.3 Teachers' support for learners, and for learning.

There is a wide range of appropriate and grade-specific work in almost all subjects. The tasks, activities and assignments are achievable and align with curriculum standards. There is evidence of learners' progress in workbooks.

Teachers mark, sign and date almost all workbooks and provide interventions. Learners' workbooks display constructive, high-standard comments that praise learners. These comments align with the school's ethos, developing the learner's sense of self. Teachers monitor individual and peer marking.

Almost all teachers employ flexible and responsive strategies and ensure lessons flow naturally from the previous one. They use differentiated approaches, varied resources and instructional materials to meet learning outcomes. They identify struggling learners and provide the necessary support. Feedback discussions help teachers modify content and activities.

Teachers use assessment analysis to plan differently and set clear expectations. All learners' individual and peer work are monitored and there is regular oversight over marking and corrections.

The school has a functioning School-Based Support Team (SBST). Class teachers, grade heads and departmental heads identify and refer learners for intervention. Individual support programmes are implemented for learners at risk. High achievers receive additional support to improve their results. Teachers provide enrichment activities before and after school. This targeted support helps high achievers to deepen their understanding, develop critical thinking skills and achieve excellence.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 2

- i. Display learners' work on walls in classrooms.
- ii. Use the Matrix for Quality Teaching (MQT) (Circular 0010/2018) or <https://sea.westerncape.gov.za/guidelines-for-schools/>



KEY AREA 3: BEHAVIOUR AND SAFETY

4

Behaviour and safety are outstanding.

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

The school is a beacon of academic excellence and moral integrity. Rooted in the Catholic faith, it offers a structured and nurturing environment characterised by a religious ethos. The school fosters a culture of respect and trust between learners and staff, committed to a holistic education. It develops well-rounded individuals, equipping them with the knowledge, values and resilience to navigate the future with confidence and a spirit of service.

The school upholds the educational philosophy of its foundress, Venerable Mary Ward. It promotes empowerment through education and instils core values of joy, sincerity, truth, justice and integrity. By blending Mary Ward's principles with the needs of its community, the school ensures these values remain central to its ethos. These principles are the foundation that shapes every aspect of the school experience.

The school's renovated and well-maintained grounds provide a welcoming and structured setting, establishing a sense of order, purpose and safety. Learners feel heard, with caring adults available for support. This positive atmosphere motivates them to excel.

The school's educational culture emphasises disciplined time management and structured routines. Learners engage in their studies with diligence, focus and enthusiasm, making the most of every learning opportunity. They show deep

appreciation for their education, are prompt and settle quickly after breaks or activities.

Teachers closely monitor learners' outstanding attendance rates, minimise disruptions and optimise instructional time. This commitment ensures a dynamic, efficient and highly engaging classroom atmosphere where learners can focus.

Learners appreciate the school's prompt and decisive response to bullying. Almost all learners feel cared for by their teachers.

All learners understand the Code of Conduct for Learners (CoCL), which is shared with parents and learners and posted on the school's website. The school rewards positive behaviour and addresses misconduct. Learners earn credits for demonstrating core values such as honesty, responsibility, helpfulness and care for others and the environment. The 'Care Bee' is awarded weekly during assembly to a child per class whose behaviour is considerate and kind. Misconduct, including classroom disruptions, rule violations, defiance, or possession of illegal substances, results in demerits and appropriate disciplinary action. Parents are invited for discussions if a learner receives detention more than twice per term.

The school's merit and demerit discipline policy integrate developmental and restorative approaches, prioritising responsibility and relationships.

3.2 School safety and safeguarding of learners

The school's dedication to safety and learner protection is evident in the care and support provided to those with specific needs and vulnerabilities. Teachers play a crucial role in identifying and referring these learners to the School-Based Support Team (SBST), which meets regularly to assess cases and provide assistance or guidance.

As a public school on private property, the school operates under the affiliation of the Archdiocese of Cape Town, which ensures that Catholic institutions in the Western Cape uphold safety and care. A collaborative approach, involving teachers, an educational psychologist, WCED specialists, the Department of Social Services (DSD) and families ensures comprehensive support for learners. Data-driven strategies related to learner well-being enhance planning accuracy and enable targeted interventions. These strategies are adjusted to ensure each learner receives the care needed to thrive.

The SMT and SGB maintain positive relationships with the South African Police Service (SAPS), the WCED and other provincial departments to secure access to essential services.

Teaching and non-teaching staff maintain a clean environment through regular cleaning schedules. Classrooms and ablution areas meet the highest possible hygiene standards.

Learners are educated on safety measures, protocols and strategies. These empower them to protect themselves and others. They know they can approach any teacher when they feel threatened or unsafe.

Ground staff manage access to the premises throughout the day. The school has a secure perimeter fence and locked gates. To enhance safety and security, designated areas and playgrounds are individually fenced. Teachers supervise learners during breaks reinforcing the school's commitment to protecting learners of all ages.

The School Safety Committee (SSC) prioritises learner safety through strict precautionary measures, risk assessments, proactive prevention strategies and well-structured emergency response plans. Regular evacuation drills ensure learners and staff respond swiftly in emergencies. Fire extinguishers are routinely serviced and the School Safety Committee (SSC) complies with safety regulations. The school bus is serviced regularly and meets safety standards. It is mainly used to transport small numbers of learners.

The staff remains vigilant against illegal activities, including bringing dangerous objects and substances onto the premises. While searches have not been necessary, protocols are in place to collaborate with SAPS and other agencies if needed.

Teachers promote physical well-being by encouraging healthy eating and educating learners on harmful habits. A tuckshop run by the school operates on Fridays only, primarily selling sweets such as wine gums, Jungle Bars and Lays plain salted chips, as well as water and fruit juice. Learners enjoy the occasional treats while understanding the school's commitment to healthy nutrition.

After-school programmes cater to learners' interests and developmental needs. Specialist teachers and qualified coaches foster positive relationships. There is a balance between academics and extracurricular activities. The majority of learners participate in at least one sport and one cultural activity per season. Learners choose from diverse sporting codes such as soccer, netball, cricket, tennis, athletics, cross-country and karate. Cultural activities include choir, music, chess and Eisteddfod competitions. Additionally, extra classes and interventions are offered based on learners' barriers and performance levels.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 3

None.



KEY AREA 4: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4

Leadership and management at Loreto Primary School are outstanding. The principal is values-driven, inspiring her Staff to achieve a shared vision by putting the child first. The principal leads with passion, purpose and integrity - and holds all staff accountable to deliver the highest standards possible. The principal sets the tone for the entire school.

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

The SMT upholds the vision, mission and values. In February 2025, the school celebrated its 100th birthday. The vision of Mary Ward (1585 -1645), the foundress of the international Loreto Schools, which was developed nearly 400 years ago, has been continually reviewed to align with modern-day expectations and values:

'We, the Loreto School, strive to be a vibrant, holistic, and all-inclusive learning community where each learner is valued and nurtured towards their own potential. We endeavour to respect the freedom and dignity of all and to develop personal integrity, moral courage, and social responsibility. Inspired by Jesus Christ, we promote our distinctive Catholic character and reflect the vision of empowerment by our foundress, Mary Ward'.

The SMT continuously communicates the displayed vision and mission at the entrance of the school. Regular SMT reviews, keep the vision and mission relevant. This ensures everyone understands and commits to the school's core goals. The SMT integrates the vision into all school plans, guiding staff and learners to move in the same direction. Over the years, improvements in results and community support, attest to the success of embracing this vision and mission.

The SMT's mission is to provide an inclusive faith-based learning experience. This approach nurtures academic, moral, and spiritual growth. It fosters learners' unique gifts and potential.

The Mary Ward Schools Compass, "Rooted, Responsive, and Relevant", guides the SMT in maintaining the school's ethos. It builds on principles such as:

- True values of justice, truth, sincerity, freedom, and joy.
- Guiding and guarding the use of media.
- Cultivating values that are traditional and relevant to present and future realities.
- Engaging with the bigger picture.
- Embracing and affirming diversity.

The three departmental heads, successfully lead and manage the staff, with the principal driving strategic objectives and accountability. The SMT understands the school's strengths. They review, revise, prioritise and drive areas for development. The principal maintains high expectations and the school's strengths are regularly monitored to ensure continued progress.

A complete School Self-Evaluation (SSE) and data analysis guide the SMT's understanding of the school's improvement needs. The SMT collectively prioritises the needs in the final School Improvement Plan (SIP), outlines priorities for improvement and identifies responsible staff members.

The SMT monitors the SIP at SMT, subject and various project meetings. When progress discussions identify new needs or crises, the SIP is tabled again and adjusted if necessary. Progress notes and minutes document infrastructure upgrades, staff development and wellness and learner behaviour and safety. With the support of the Catholic Schools' Trust, the privately owned school grounds and buildings are in pristine condition.

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

The SMT drives the quality of teaching and learning and knows what is achievable and what needs to be revised and adjusted or requires external support. Learners' academic results and the quality of teaching in the classes demonstrate that the school improvement plan is based on valid analysis of internal and external results. SMT members focus on the consistent improvement of learners' achievement.

The principal and SMT are instructional leaders. They evaluate learners' results to identify trends in learner achievement. This process effectively identifies areas of excellence and development among learners.

The SMT's outstanding example of data-driven decision-making informs planning. Targeted interventions with

achievable action plans are implemented across different phases and subjects. Reading in Grade R classes is emphasised, ensuring learners enter Grade 1 with strong reading skills.

The renovated library, reading corners and ample reading resources contribute to learners' foundational reading skills, crucial for mastering all subjects. The SMT is commended for its concerted and ongoing efforts to strengthen these foundational skills.

SMT members frequently conduct classroom observations to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and improve teaching practice. Written constructive feedback to teachers helps the SMT maintain and improve high standards of instruction. This feedback positively impacts instructional planning and lesson delivery. These observations track data-driven instruction, classroom management and teaching methods.

The staff development plan is tailored to individual needs, incorporating wellness programmes and emotional support. The SMT evaluates external support for professional development to ensure it aligns with the school's values and goals. New knowledge and skills are integrated into lesson planning. Programmes like the Science of Reading, Jolly Phonics, and Cami are effectively implemented.

The consistent outstanding results demonstrate that instructional leadership, data-driven decision-making and capacitating the SMT benefit learners.

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

The SMT ensures that all staff members fulfil their duties by setting clear expectations, providing regular feedback and offering support and professional development opportunities. Consistent monitoring drives accountability and enables staff to deliver high-quality work. The shared leadership fosters a culture of accountability leading to self-driven and disciplined staff.

The SMT monitors staff attendance and punctuality through systematic record-keeping and regular reviews. Staff attendance is above 97%, with less than 2% late arrivals. Teachers are punctual for lessons and ensure learners are always supervised. This demonstrates a high level of professionalism as well as a commitment to maximising tuition time.

The SMT uses standardised instruments to monitor teaching quality and learner achievement. Moderation of assessments is an important part of this process. Effective arrangements for holding staff accountable include performance appraisals, regular meetings, and clear communication of roles and responsibilities. Minor issues are resolved through one-on-one discussions. When poor performance is identified, the SMT responds promptly with targeted support. The SMT provides training and, if necessary, takes progressive disciplinary action.

Due to effective planning and resource management by the SMT, almost all teachers have the latest e-resources, integrating the outside world into daily teaching. Other resources are well-maintained, substantial, and neat. The school invests in high-quality materials and technology.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 4

None.



KEY AREA 5: GOVERNANCE, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY



Governance, parents and community are outstanding.

5.1 The SGBs fulfillment of its key responsibilities.

The SGB demonstrates an outstanding level of proficiency in fulfilling its fundamental duties. A key strength is its commitment to fostering the holistic well-being and academic excellence of the learners in its care. This dedication ensures that key SGB positions are filled by qualified individuals who uphold the school's values and objectives. The SGB prioritises the safety and maintenance of the infrastructure. The staff and parents appreciate the SGB's understanding and willingness to take responsibility for resources and finances.

The SGB operates on the foundational values of joy, sincerity, freedom, justice and integrity which guide all decisions for the enhancement and improvement of the school. The SGB supports key improvement priorities that elevate the educational experience provided by the school. Learners appreciate the infrastructure improvements recently undertaken. SGB members value the role played by the Catholic Schools Trust in the Western Cape in bringing certain projects to fruition.

The SGB regards its role in staff recruitment and selection as critical. A selection committee, including key members and a representative from the Western Cape Catholic Schools Trust, oversees the process for filling vacancies. The SGB's decision-making processes are well-documented and comply with regulations and protocols, reflecting a

commitment to transparency and high standards in staffing appointments.

The SGB prioritises its role in developing and adopting school policies. Policies are regularly reviewed according to a scheduled plan and the latest regulations. Review dates are documented, and progress is tracked in a comprehensive policy file. Relevant committees regularly assess and propose updates for adoption.

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

The last WCED-043 report from the School Finance and Records Officer (SFRO) outlined several important recommendations. Most important of these was an urgent review of the finance policy. Not only did the school pay attention to all the recommendations made, but also compiled a separate file that contains all the reviews and renewals. The correct processes are all filed in a coherent, logical manner. Due to the need for further scrutiny, the finance policy was signed at the latest SGB meeting in 2025. The Principal, School Finance Committee (FinCom) and SGB closely adhere to the finance policy and are mindful of the important changes.

The SGB monitors income and expenditure. It ensures financial records are securely stored with controlled and limited access. Regular oversight by the FinCom and the SGB ensures sound financial practices and compliance. The SGB is committed to transparency. This dedication to high standards aligns with the school's commitment to governance oversight. The FinCom meets monthly and tables detailed financial reports, including bank statements, annual statements and the monthly bank reconciliation statement.

The draft budget is developed through consultation with the staff and departmental heads and then collated by the treasurer and the school finance officer. The SMT and the SGB give their consent to the budget priorities. The draft budget is presented at annual budget meetings, for consideration and approval, in line with the necessary legislative mandates.

The budget makes provision for the possible loss of income due to parents who qualify for exemption from paying school fees. Exemption processes are communicated to parents and implemented according to the necessary formula for granting exemptions. The SGB follows a collection process to ensure that parents who do not qualify for exemption are held accountable for paying school fees.

School fees are supplemented by fundraising efforts, demonstrating a diverse approach to financing school operations. This strategy fosters a sense of involvement and participation among parents. However, the school struggles with parental involvement. To encourage attendance at meetings, parents are given 'civvies' vouchers that their children can use on 'civvies' days.

The SGB with the assistance of financial experts ensures effective monitoring of budgetary expenses tailored to the school's needs.

5.3 The SGB's engagement with all stakeholders.

The prefects ensure learners' voices are heard. During intervals and other social gatherings, the principal has conversations with learners. They share their views about their school and the changes they wish to see. Learners are free to raise matters about learner-related decisions with their class teachers.

The school places a high premium on communication with parents. Parents are kept informed about school events and their learners' academic progress. The commercial school-focused communication platform (D6 Communicator), social media, WhatsApp groups and school newsletters are ways to keep parents informed. Parents are informed about how to support their children's learning. Parents are free to make appointments with the principal and teachers on any matter related to their children. They express gratitude for the detailed information provided regarding their children's progress. Parents appreciate teachers for their willingness to offer support and assistance.

Relationships of trust, collegiality, loyalty and respect prevail among staff and the SGB. This positive atmosphere promotes mutual respect among staff members. The school's vision is visible in the halls, corridors and classrooms and is lived by all.

The school has a sound working relationship with the education district office. The district officials provide resources, professional learning opportunities and guidance to the SGB and staff.

Collaboration with external organisations and sister departments such as the Department of Social Development (DSD), external Social Services 'Badisa', the 'Afrikaanse Christen Vrouevereeniging' ('ACVV') and Health and Wellness coaches demonstrates the school's commitment to community engagement. The school has strong ties with the Western Cape Catholic Schools Trust.

On an international level, the school attends education conferences under the banner of the International Loreto Schools network. At one of these conferences, the vision and mission for all Loreto schools were reviewed and adopted for all schools. It is against this backdrop that the school actively promotes confidence, generosity and responsible living, aligning perfectly with its commitment to environmental friendliness and sustainability.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY AREA 5

None.

FINAL REMARKS

Loreto Primary School, located in Strand, Cape Town, is a beacon of Catholic Christian education with a rich history dating back to its founding in 1925 by the Loreto Sisters. From its humble beginnings with just three learners, the school has grown significantly, now accommodating 444 learners supported by a dedicated team of 27 educators and staff.

Celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2025, Loreto Primary School remains committed to fostering values such as joy, sincerity, truth, freedom, and justice, inspired by its foundress, Mary Ward. The school provides a nurturing environment where children from Grade R to Grade 7 are prepared socially, academically, spiritually, and emotionally for their future endeavors.

Situate don privately owned Catholic Schools' Trust (CST) property (building and grounds) Loreto Primary School receives approximately 25% of funds needed for infrastructure upgrades and maintenance from the CST. The remaining 75% funding is generated by income from school fees. One can describe the facilities and buildings as world-class.

Rooted in the principles of the Catholic Church, the school's ethos warmly embraces learners from all religious backgrounds, honoring their individuality and personal faith journeys. Loreto Primary School fosters high expectations and academic excellence, ensuring learners develop to their full potential. Reflecting on a century of dedication to education and community, Loreto Primary School is a testament to the enduring legacy of the Loreto Sisters and their unwavering commitment to nurturing future generations.

It is no coincidence that 'Sincerity' is the current value on the principal's door. Leading a school with a firm hand while staying true to her values is no small feat. Her unwavering commitment holds every staff member and learner accountable for outstanding performance while fostering their personal growth. As a strategic thinker, she has transformed the school into a beacon of excellence, defying all odds. Her visionary approach ensures leadership development for continuity and sustainable improvement. The principal recognises and nurtures potential, empowering part-time workers to grow and build meaningful careers. Her dedication and foresight have created a thriving, inclusive community that continues to excel.

Loreto Primary School is an outstanding school in every respect.