



Abridged report

Name of school: Hebron Christian Academy

Date of evaluation: 31 October – 01 November 2016

Evaluation team: Mrs G Samson and Mrs A Naidoo

Overall performance of the school:	3
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Areas for evaluation	Rating
Learner achievement	3
Teaching and learning	3
Behaviour and safety	3
Leadership and management	4
Governance, parents and community	4

The school is good overall. This is primarily because the standard of achievement by learners and the quality of teaching in the school is good. As a result of the good, solid teaching practices in all phases, learners achieve good results in the external assessment. We observed a high level of engagement and learning amongst the learners in all classrooms. Teachers make optimal use of instructional time throughout the day. Most workbooks are regularly marked with comments.

Behaviour and safety is also good. Learners behave with courtesy and friendliness towards each other and visitors. Teachers are committed to the learners' welfare and safety. The quality of care and consideration of learners' needs contribute to the caring ethos which is apparent throughout the school. Learners feel very safe and say that bullying is rare.

Leadership and governance and relationships at the school is outstanding. Members of the School Management Team (SMT) are able to explain the school's expectations for all learners. The focus is on continuously improving the quality of teaching. They know the strengths and weaknesses in the different subjects and phases. The governing body (GB) is informed about the work of the school and seek to appoint the best teachers. Parents have taken ownership of the school, support school activities and their children.

Main findings

1. Learner achievement

1.1 Learner achievement in Foundation Phase

The Foundation Phase internal assessments from 2013 to 2015 indicate that learners across the phase have made excellent progress in all subjects. The 2015 Grade 3 WCED Language Systemic Test improved substantially from 60% in 2014 to 81% in 2015, while the 2015 Grade 3 WCED Mathematics Systemic Test shows a marginal improvement from 76% in 2014 to 81% in 2015. The outstanding results achieved show that most learners achieve at or above their grade level and that they are equipped for both internal and external assessments.

1.2 Learner achievement in Intermediate Phase

Learner achievement in the Intermediate Phase internal assessments from 2013 to 2015 ranges from good to outstanding in all subjects. The 2015 Grade 6 WCED Language Systemic Test shows a substantial decrease from 85% in 2014 to 70% in 2015. The 2015 Grade 6 WCED Mathematics Systemic Test shows a significant improvement from 40% in 2014 to 70% in 2015. The achievements in the internal and external assessments in all subjects indicate that most of the learners have mastered the concepts taught across the phase.

1.3 Learner achievement in Senior Phase

Senior Phase learners have made good progress in most subjects in the internal assessments from 2013 to 2015. The exceptions are Mathematics, Social Science and Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) where achievements are below the expected standard. Structured interventions have been implemented in these subjects.

1.4 Learner achievement in Further Education and Training Band

N/A

1.5 Learners read, speak, listen and write well in language of learning and teaching

Learners across the phases are able to read fluently, with confidence and understanding at their appropriate level. The reading skills of most learners in all phases are well developed. Learners answer questions confidently and clearly understand reading texts. In all phases, they answer questions in full sentences. They are able to communicate with ease in the Home Language. They express themselves fluently and communicate with confidence in the LoLT. The majority of

the learners in all phases listen to instructions and are able to follow and carry out instructions as requested. Learners in all phases are able to construct sentences and their writing is neat and clear. Some learners have developed strong creative writing techniques and with few errors.

1.6 Learners handle numbers with ease, calculate mentally and with electronic devices and apply it to solve problems in Mathematics

Learners have an excellent grasp of number concepts at their respective levels. In the Foundation Phase, they are able to handle numbers at concrete, semi-concrete and abstract levels in different number ranges. Most learners have a solid foundation in the subject when progressing to the next grade. In all phases, most learners are able to use different techniques to calculate and solve problems. Regular Mental Mathematics, both verbally and in writing, is done to consolidate basic calculations, concepts and mathematical terminology. Learners are taught to use various techniques to quickly perform and check calculations. Intermediate and Senior Phase learners use calculators as required by the curriculum. Since June 2015, intervention strategies are implemented in Mathematics across all phases.

1.7 Learners participate and achieve well in extra- and co-curricular as well as cultural activities as part of the school enrichment programme

Many learners participate in the varied activities offered as part of the school's enrichment programme. Sports codes include rugby, netball, cricket, cross country, athletics and chess. Cultural and co-curricular activities include speech and drama, choir, dance, modelling and excursions. As part of Life Orientation, Intermediate and Senior Phase learners are taken on an annual camp where life skills are taught. Intermediate Phase learners went to Bracken Nature Reserve to extend their Natural Science knowledge. In soccer and cricket, a small number of learners have been selected to play Western Province Trials and one learner has been selected for the under 12A team at local football club. Two learners have obtained gold medals in swimming and ice skating.

2. Teaching and learning

2.1 A positive learning environment

Teachers make optimal use of teaching time for most of the school day. Most learning environments are conducive and enable learners to be productively engaged in individual or co-operative learning. Learners who need extra attention are assisted by the teacher or at times by the teacher assistant. They come from diverse groups and are treated with dignity and respect. Teachers deal with disagreements amongst learners in an amicable way. With the exception of the

Foundation Phase, other than a few subject related charts, no learners' work is displayed.

2.2 Good quality classroom teaching practice

Teachers have high expectations of the learners and work is pitched at a high standard. In most of the observed lessons, learners were attentive and participated eagerly by answering questions, doing tasks, completing worksheets, watching video clips, relating their own experiences and reading texts. Most teachers made good use of available resources such as video clips, laptops and data projectors to enhance the lessons. They often used open ended questions to stimulate critical thinking and involved all learners, not only the enthusiastic learners who put their hands up first or those sitting at the front of the class. They constantly check learners' understanding before proceeding to a new concept and provide regular feedback to address instances of lack of understanding. In most subjects, teachers give sufficient independent work to consolidate concepts taught. Teachers across all phases assist individual learners who do not keep up with the pace, whilst others continue on their own. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects allocated to them and could therefore explain the content/concepts clearly and accurately so that most learners could understand.

2.3 Workbooks, assessment and intervention that supports learning

Workbooks of learners in all phases show a good range of activities at and above the appropriate level. Homework forms an integral part of teaching and regular homework is set to consolidate learning and to prepare them for the work to come. A 'Marking Protocol' to serve as a guide when marking, has been discussed with teachers and a hard copy has been given to them. Most adhere to the protocol, mark workbooks regularly and provide constructive feedback. However, a few instances were found where marking merely consists of a tick on the page with incorrect work overlooked. At the end of each term, an in-depth analysis of formal assessment results is conducted. In 2015, this led to the development of improvement plans across all phases in English Home Language, especially reading, and Mathematics. In the Senior Phase, Social Sciences and Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) were also identified. Strategies include structured after school intervention classes and adapted teaching practices. The implementation of some of these strategies were observed during lesson observations e.g. regular spelling tests, the emphasis on communication skills where learners have to answer in full sentences and additional exercises in EMS. The effectiveness of these strategies is evident from the fact that very few learners progress with support.

3. Behaviour and safety

3.1 A disciplined and purposeful school environment with positive ethos

The school has a positive ethos based on a solid foundation of Christian values and morals. Teachers, learners and parents share open and supportive relationships and learners feel secure. Most learners are focused and eager to learn. Learners settle down immediately in classes. The average learner attendance of the first three terms at 96% shows that not many learners stay absent. Isolated instances of bullying and bad behaviour are encountered. The Code of Conduct for Learners is contained in the Admission Pack that parents receive when they enrol their children. They are also required to sign a declaration that they will abide by the school's rules and regulations. The school follows disciplinary regulations that are outlined in the Intervention Process for Behaviour and Attitude Offences when instances of serious misconduct occur.

3.2 The school is safe, and protects and cares for its learners

A Pastoral Committee implements an effective system of care which supports vulnerable learners and parents. The committee offers counselling sessions with either a trauma counsellor (from the local police station) or with pastor members. In addition to attending to individual learners, the team also identifies and addresses generic challenges, such as the increase of single parent families. Access to the school is controlled by means of a remote-controlled gate. However, a section of the front fence and part of the back fence allow unauthorised entry. Learners are monitored for the illegal bringing of dangerous objects and illegal drugs. The school provides cereal before school and sandwiches during break to a small number of learners. The after school programme includes the aftercare class where approximately 30% of learners are assisted with homework; as well as Mathematics and Economic and Management Sciences classes for Grades 7 to 9 learners.

3.3 School boarding facilities (where applicable)

N/A

4. Leadership and management

4.1 The School Management Team gives clear direction to the school

The School Management Team (SMT) is able to explain the school's expectations for all learners. They have a good understanding of the school's faith statement, vision, mission and their plans for achievement. As part of the Steering Committee, the different units regularly evaluate their areas e.g. curriculum, finances, administration and marketing, and identify areas for improvement. These areas are discussed at

management and staff meetings. In addition, the management team monitors new strategies and evaluate the extent of improvement.

4.2 The School Management Team improves the quality of teaching and learning in the school

The SMT is able to identify strengths and weaknesses in the different phases and subjects and are aware which teachers require assistance and support. They conduct formal classroom visits for the performance measurement programme as well as informal visits. In the Foundation Phase, two teacher assistants were employed to assist with administrative work. Teachers teaching the same subject were swapped between phases to allow for more effective classroom management. Teachers attend workshops when invited by the district office. In addition, the school actively encourages teachers to improve or complete their qualifications by assisting them with study bursaries.

4.3 The School Management Team makes good use of all school resources (human, financial and physical)

Staff members fulfil teaching, administrative and financial duties. They are trained and mentored to fulfil one another's roles in a three year succession plan. The principal and the deputy principal monitor that teachers are actively teaching by walking around to classes when they are not teaching. Teachers prepare lesson planning, worksheets and formal assessment tasks according to CAPS work schedules. Attendance records indicate that teachers are seldom late or stay absent. There have been no instances of progressive discipline. A few staff members procure different types of resources according to the budget. Developmental needs identified by teachers' Personal Growth Plans (PGPs), are addressed at academic board meetings and SMT members provide guidance and support. The SMT acquires resources such as textbooks, teaching resources and other equipment that benefit the learners. They ensure that teachers are trained to optimally use resources such as the interactive whiteboard.

5. **Governance, parents and community**

5.1 The governing body fulfils its key responsibilities well

The Governing Body (GB) is well represented by all stakeholders and gives input when curricular, financial and behavioural challenges are discussed. When subject and grade changes are discussed, the GB supports decisions in favour of school improvement. The school is fully accredited with Umalusi and implements a range of policies under the guidance of policy managers. These policies are reviewed at regular intervals. GB members, who are on the SMT, are responsible for the setting of

criteria, selection and appointment of new staff members. Teacher performance and learner achievement are discussed and monitored regularly.

5.2 The governing body fulfils its functions with regard to the school's finances within its legal mandate

Members of the financial board effectively implement financial practices as reflected in its Finance Policy. A financial manager and financial assistant practise sound procedures for income and expenditure. Board members discuss and approve purchases and financial reports are drawn up for presentation at GB meetings. The proposed budget for 2017 addresses the school's needs and reflects estimated income and expenditure. Financial statements for 2015 were prepared and audited by the external auditor. All the required documentation was made available for scrutiny.

5.3 The school engages effectively with all stakeholders

Senior Phase learners are representative members on the GB and are elected as prefects and class monitors. Learner members of the GB are allowed to attend some meetings and present their views. Prefects and monitors assist with learner discipline on the playground. Learner surveys are also conducted. The school communicates with parents at meetings via newsletters, notices, letters with reply slips and the communication pages in learners' homework files. A school website and social media page also provide relevant information. Most parents attend meetings and assist their children with homework. Individual interviews and telephone conversations are conducted with parents about learners' progress or behaviour. The school receives support from speech therapists, the local police, fire department, NGOs and relevant WCED offices.