

INDEPENDENT QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

MENTOR'S REPORT

KGASWE SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

Kgaswe School, Botswana, undertook a Model B evaluation

On 6-9 October 2008

Under the leadership of Mr Pieter de Villiers

Mentored by Mrs Margaret Rudolph

RECEPTION AND TONE

I was made very welcome on arrival in Palapye and for the duration of the evaluation felt at home and comfortable with the staff. The pupils accepted my presence and I was regularly and politely greeted.

RIGOUR AND EFFICIENCY OF EVALUATION

The principal discussed the selection of the team with me in detail and a team representing two sections of the school was chosen. Both evaluators were experienced teachers. All team members and the principal attended a workshop and had a copy of "School in a mirror" so were familiar with the programme. The report was written by a team member who attended and minuted all meetings. The rest of the team had input.

Areas of operation

All possible areas of operation were evaluated

Opinion surveys

The IQAA surveys were distributed well in advance of the intensive evaluation and well controlled by the school. The results were discussed with me as much as was possible by telephone and email. The team, however, efficiently identified the areas of concern to be discussed in the focus groups.

ANALYSIS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Consultations

The team and I were unable to meet before the evaluation. There was frequent contact made per email and telephonically .

During the evaluation period there was a daily feedback session which was detailed and intense. All team members and the principal attended.

Attitudes of role players

The attitude of all the staff, once they overcame their initial concern, was positive and they entered into the spirit of the evaluation.

Means and methods

The following means and methods were used to evaluate the school

- Opinion surveys

The process of the distribution, return and submission to IQAA of the surveys, as well as communication, was well controlled. The results were analysed carefully and translated into points for discussion at the focus group meetings

- Class visits

The evaluation form for the class visits was drawn up in advance and made available to the staff. Each member of staff was visited once, and several twice, by the mentor and team. There was feedback with each teacher after the lesson. The evaluators were fair in their observations and accorded credit and criticisms where necessary.

- Focus Groups

Focus group discussions played an important role in this evaluation. Every point of concern was addressed by all stake holders-staff, pupils and parents. Most meetings were held before the evaluation but there were sufficient held during the intensive period for me to be able to confirm that the process was correctly followed. The concerns were limited and suggestions constructive. These have been accurately tabled in the internal report

- Interviews

The team conducted individual interviews with the service staff and note was taken of their comments-positive and negative. Staff were also interviewed individually.

ESTIMATION OF THE SUCCESS OF THE EVALUATION

- Compliance with ISASA conditions of service.

Policies and documentation necessary for the successful administration of the school are in place and comply with the ISASA conditions of membership.

- Strengths and areas of concern

The team have identified and celebrate the strengths of the school.

The areas of concern that were identified correspond with my observations and are realistic.

- The recommendations and time lines

These are comprehensive and detailed. However, they are not impossible to implement and some have already been implemented.

- The principal and the team were very positive about the evaluation. They were enthusiastic about the value of the evaluation.

Despite initial anxiety the rest of the staff soon relaxed and entered into the spirit of the evaluation. They also recognised the value of the evaluation

The successful implementation of the improvement plan, especially those aspects that fall under the control of the teachers- should be implemented without much difficulty. There is a commitment to do so.

GENERAL COMMENTS

There is a happy vibe in the school. The principal has set a positive tone and this is demonstrated by staff attitudes and the pride the pupils show for their school. They were polite and friendly throughout

The pupils attending Kgaswe School come from different backgrounds and cultures. The school acknowledges and respects this diversity and the programme is designed to accommodate all aspects.

- Many pupils travel considerable distances from home to school and activities have to be programmed to accommodate parents and children that live up to two hours driving away

- The school timetable includes a daily sport period which ensures that every child takes part in some type of sporting activity of own choice at least twice a week. Transport, most of which is public -taxis- is arranged accordingly.

- It was obvious that the Board supported and encouraged the principal and staff and were forward thinking in their planning. They have identified that there is no independent high school in Palapye and are building one which will offer high school education to the community and, in particular, to the Kgaswe pupils.

I was well cared for during my visit to Botswana and look forward to a continued relationship with Kgaswe.

ENDORSEMENT OF THE INTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluators were conscientious and critical in their evaluations identifying positive as well as negative aspects and the process was efficiently and honestly carried out, with care, bearing the needs of the pupils in mind.

I am pleased to be able to endorse the evaluation team's report and recommendations

CONCLUSION

It was a pleasure and a privilege to mentor Kgaswe School in their internal evaluation. I would like to thank and congratulate the principal, Mr Hess, and his Staff on the high standard of education they are offering their pupils.

I wish the Board, Principal, Staff, Pupils and Parents well in their endeavours to maintain these standards.

M J Rudolph
IQAA Mentor

19 November 2008