



HOEKWIL

LAERSKOOL
PRIMARY SCHOOL.

KERKSTRAAT / CHURCH STREET, HOEKWIL
POSBUS / P. O. BOX 9, HOEKWIL 6538
E-MAIL: admin@hoekwilprimary.co.za

TEL.: (044) 850-1079
FAX.: (044) 850-1079

Dear Parents,

We have received various requests over the last while and just wanted to let you know how and why we were able to implement changes or not.

Firstly, I would like to mention that throughout the time from March to December 2020 the SGB and SMT (School Management Team) has really run through all possible scenarios that we could implement to make this situation more tolerable, more convenient, and more comfortable for all the families who form part of the Hoekwil Primary family. Our school demographic covers an incredibly wide spectrum for such a small school. All decisions that were made had to take ALL learners into consideration and this was most definitely a challenge! We were repeatedly faced with making choices that would only satisfy a section of parents and had to face and handle the disappointment of others.

Now in this new year we have re-looked all our options, taken in suggestions, made tweaks where we could, and have come to a model that will work for the foreseeable future. Please take this into consideration when you receive info from the school. Please also know that our Principal, SMT and the Teachers only have your children's best interest at heart and make all decisions based on that.

Here are some of the areas in which we received requests, and a reasoning behind decisions made:

Online Schooling:

Some parents have asked for us to make online schooling available to learners who are not comfortable attending physical school.

- As much as this would be a great solution, it would be highly unfair to those learners who do not have internet access at home or use of uncapped data. This would mean that only a section of our learners will receive work and the rest will be left by the wayside.
- As a sidenote, there are quite a few Zero-rated (no data costs) websites available online for Primary School learners should you be looking for some extra work to keep kids busy at home or to re-enforce what they are learning at school (do a Google check... you would be surprised at the list available)

Alternate Days vs Platooning:

Some parents requested for us to change to a platooning schedule (i.e., daily time slots of 3 hours each):

- Our teachers are receiving daily Zoom training from the Dept due to the changes in the National Curriculum, therefore teachers are unavailable from 2pm, which does not leave us with enough time in the day to fit in two groups of teaching with sanitizing of the whole school and screening in between...
- Even if the timing could somehow be worked out, our teachers will not be able to cover all the work, do assessments etc. in three hours a day, so we decided that this would not be in the best interest of our learners.

Alternating Fridays:

The suggestion was made to keep learners on set days i.e., English on Monday and Wednesday and Afrikaans on Tuesday and Thursday and then alternating Fridays.

- In theory it sounds easily done, however we do need to keep to a routine, we have all become accustomed to the 10-day cycle over the last 6 months and feel by alternating one day might cause confusion with transport etc. we would therefore rather keep it as it is. Do remember that we often have public holidays etc. on Fridays that can easily throw organization out the window if we are not prepared.

Changing the groups to alphabetical/random rather than English and Afrikaans:

Our children are very fortunate to be in a dual-medium school, in normal times receiving instruction in both English and Afrikaans in one class. They also end up having friends in the other language group and it has been particularly difficult for the kids to not see their friends and not have as much exposure to the language that is not their Home language.

- The learners now receive (according to Dept Regulations) 30 contact hours in every ten-day cycle. For teachers to effectively cover the syllabus and have enough time to ensure that all learners understand the work and receive sufficient attention a dual-medium class is not possible. With our current system the teachers give the entire lesson in the learners' home language and do not have to spend time translating... this save a lot of time, especially in a subject such as Math where there are great differences in English and Afrikaans terminology.

Homework vs Homeschooling:

At times last year parents felt that they had to cover new work with children at home on the off days which they were not able to as they are indeed not teachers.

- There should not be any need for parents to do 'homeschooling' rather than just overseeing homework (as per normal times) this year. The National Syllabus has been adjusted and the curriculum has been scheduled with the 10-cycle in mind, therefore work will be covered by the teachers on the school days and kids will only have regular homework to be completed before their next school day. We ask that if at any time you experience this to be different that you approach the class teacher as there might have been a misunderstanding.

Grade 7:

Grade 7 is a very important year for Primary School, it is the year in which learners prepare for High School and there is a larger load of work to be covered. It is also their last year with their peers before they disperse to various High Schools.

- This is absolutely supported by the school and we have therefore decided to turn our Hall into the Grade 7 classroom for the foreseeable future. There will be enough space with Social Distancing for all Grade 7's to attend school 5 days a week from the beginning of term 1.

Parents who are not able to arrange for childcare on alternate days:

There are parents who on certain days are not able to find childcare for their children on the alternate days when kids are not at school, it has been requested for the school to help if they can.

- We tried looking at a way to assist these families, however not possible due to capacity (we are only allowed to have 50% of our school body on the premises at any given time, this is already being stretched by having Grade 7 on campus every day). We have also enquired re using the Church Hall facilities, but these are already rented out permanently and due to COVID regulations cannot be made available to us in school hours.

Aftercare:

- We can accommodate 16 kids for aftercare daily 2 – 4pm in the Grade 6 class (Grade 6's will now be using the Grade 7 class). Please contact Antonett in the office (044) 850 1079 to book a space for your child. First Come First Served. R30 p/h paid in advance.

I do understand that the above will not be good news for everyone, but I do want to re assure you that everything is in place for the best possible outcome for your children.

This model will be used until such time as the Department of Education puts out new recommendations and changes in Social Distancing etc. can be made.

Kind Regards

Chrizelle Gill
Chairperson
Hoekwil Primary SGB