



FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS

1 WHAT IS A 'FULL-SERVICE SCHOOL'?

“ Full-service/inclusive schools are first and foremost mainstream education institutions that provide quality education to all learners by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner. They should strive to achieve access, equity, quality and social justice in education. ”

Guidelines for Full Service Schools, DBE, 2010

Inclusive Schools:

- are ordinary public schools and not a separate specialised category
- give access to all children living in the catchment area of the school, whatever their learning needs
- promote a welcoming and accepting environment which fosters a sense of belonging for both learners and their parents
- provide a wide range of support at the school to ensure ALL learners participate meaningfully in education
- commit to the development of inclusive teaching skills to accommodate diverse learner needs.

The goal of our inclusive education system is that all of the approximately 22,000 ordinary neighbourhood schools in South Africa will become full service/inclusive schools.

2 WHY DO WE HAVE FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS?

South African classrooms mirror the communities from which their learners are drawn. Learners are diverse in terms of language, culture, race, gender, learning ability and home circumstances. It is widely accepted that supporting all children in their local school rather than segregating children is mutually beneficial. Full Service Schools promote inclusion in schools, which ultimately leads to an inclusive society.

South Africa's constitution guarantees the right to basic education for ALL. This has been endorsed by a range of policy and legislative provisions, most notably Education White Paper 6, which introduced the concept of Full Service Schools to give effect to this right.

“ [A Full Service School] is a school with good leadership that sees itself as a beacon of the transformation process in education by developing cultures, policies and practices that celebrate diversity, respect difference and value innovation and problem-solving. ”

Guidelines for Full Service Schools, DBE, 2010

3 WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS?

3.1 TO PROVIDE SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

The essential feature of the Full Service School is the co-ordinated and structured provision of support to accommodate a wide range of learning needs. Together, the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Based Support Team (SBST) should:

- identify institutional, teacher and learner support needs
- develop strategies to address these needs
- draw in needed resources for support provision
- work collaboratively with educators to assess individual learners' support needs and the development of support plans for these learners
- co-ordinate involvement of parents in decision making and planning for support for their children
- liaise with the District Based Support Team (DBST) to strengthen the school's support provision.

3.2 TO OFFER SUPPORT TO NEIGHBOURING ORDINARY SCHOOLS

Full Service Schools have a responsibility to reach out to surrounding schools.

There should be an exchange of knowledge between the Full Service Schools, neighbouring schools and other service providers.

Various levels and forms of support could be provided to neighbouring schools, such as:

- sharing and exchanging resources (facilities, information), skills, technology
- advisory assistance to educators in the preparation of materials, training and capacity building
- sharing examples of good inclusive practice.

3.3 COLLABORATION WITH SPECIAL SCHOOL RESOURCE CENTRES (SSRC)

Full Service Schools can benefit from the expertise and available resources at special schools. This can take the form of an exchange of knowledge, information, skills and technology. Through this exchange, Full Service Schools are better equipped to support learners with specific learning needs.

SPECIAL SCHOOL RESOURCE CENTRES (SSRC)

- ▶ SSRC's were conceptualised in Education White Paper 6 to promote the concept of bringing support to the child in their local school, rather than segregated admission to a special school.
- ▶ SSRC's are a way of maximising the use of limited specialised expertise.
- ▶ SSRC's provide an outreach function to Full Service Schools.

THE FOCUS OF THE DISTRICT BASED SUPPORT TEAM IS TO:

- ▶ Develop the school's capacity to provide support
- ▶ Work with the SBST to identify and prioritise learning needs of the children in the school
- ▶ Facilitate support planning and management
- ▶ Support teachers and school management with curriculum adaptation and implementation.



The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have.

Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students ... through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities

Salamanca Framework for Action, 1994

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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