Setting the scene: Schooling in Khayelitsha

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Khayelitsha, the site for the school-based work reported on in this book, is a large, sprawling township located on the eastern edge of the Cape Town Metropole; a city which is characterised by both multi-cultural diversity and deep socioeconomic inequality, with a locked-in spatial structure that reflects its apartheid past. As such, Khayelitsha is testimony to the development imperatives of the late-apartheid era. And whilst it has its own unique history, politics and geography, in many respects Khayelitsha is no different to other urban (and peri-urban) townships elsewhere in the country. A uniformity of conditions prevails: poverty, high levels of unemployment and – critically – struggling schools.

Historical background

The township was conceived and founded in the violent and turbulent environment of the final decade of apartheid. By the early 1980s the government’s failure to effectively enforce influx control and Coloured Labour Preference Policies in the Western Cape had resulted in a growing number of black African people moving into Cape Town. In response, in March 1983 it was announced that a new township, Khayelitsha, was to be established east of the ‘coloured’ settlement of Mitchells Plain, bordered by False Bay to the south and the N2 highway to the north.

The first phase of township development commenced in May 1983. The initial projection was that Khayelitsha would become home to around 120 000 people but by 1985 already more than 5 000 homes had been built, and the population had grown to over 150 000. At the time, the movement of people into Khayelitsha from existing settlements took place against the backdrop of political and civil unrest that gripped the city.

Whereas many residents of Crossroads, Nyanga East and KTC continued to resist efforts to relocate them, a number of community leaders moved with their followers into sections of the township specifically set aside for their settlement. The political contestation and accompanying high levels of (often State-sponsored) violence spilled over into Khayelitsha; with fighting taking place between opposing political groupings and, more recently, between rival taxi associations.

Following the scrapping of the pass laws in 1986, Cape Town experienced a rapid in-migration of people, mainly from the Eastern Cape. Many people moved into Khayelitsha, and over the next ten years the township experienced a period of
sustained growth and large tracts of land were cleared to make way for ‘site and service’ plots and RDP7 houses.

**Geography**

The township currently covers an area in excess of 45 km². As is typical of urban development across the greater Metropole, there has been a continual extension of the township's surface area, with most housing comprising stand-alone single story dwellings and the highest level of densification found in the informal settlements. According to the 2011 Census, almost half (46.6%) of the dwellings are shacks.

Viewed from the top of Lookout Hill, the last remaining remnant of the extensive dune fields that once covered this part of the Cape Flats, Khayelitsha spreads out in all directions. The greatest growth in the years between the 2001 and 2011 Census has been in Wards 95 and 98 in the south of Khayelitsha, which contain the two large informal settlements of Enkanini and Endlovini respectively. Elsewhere, pockets of informal housing have taken root and grown, often wherever people have identified unused land. Such ‘land invasions’ (as they are commonly termed) frequently take place in a highly charged atmosphere of political contestation with the local authorities being the target, as excluded, marginalised people, the poorest of the poor, grapple for a toe-hold in the city with all the promises that it holds.

**Demographics**

Approximately 10% of Cape Town's overall population and 27% of the city's black African population live in Khayelitsha (Seekings 2013). The national Census conducted in October 2011 provides an estimate of the total population of Khayelitsha as 398 182. With the 2001 Census estimating the population at 329 013, this implies an average growth between 2001 and 2011 of just under 2%. Based on this, one can assume a population in 2017 of around 450 000.

According to the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), in December 2013 approximately 11 000 old-age pensions, 87 000 child grants and 10 000 disability grants were paid in that month in Khayelitsha. These figures are seen to be consistent with predictions drawn from the 2011 Census (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry 2014: 36–37).

Not surprisingly given the strong regulatory controls imposed under apartheid, the majority of older people living in Khayelitsha were born in the Eastern Cape. In contrast, the Census 2011 data revealed that most (78%) children and adolescents up to and including the age of 19 were born locally; only 18% were born in the Eastern Cape (and 4% elsewhere).

The extent of in-migration into the township has declined dramatically in recent years. It has been estimated that between 2001–2011 only 55 000 relocated from the
Eastern Cape (Seekings 2013). As noted elsewhere in the country, circular migration is also becoming less common as more and more households have broken from their communities of origin (Gelderblom 2006: 18).

**Social and economic conditions**

Given its geographical position, the township is dislocated from the city’s economic drivers, which include major concentrations of work. There are relatively few small businesses and most economic activity consists of informal trading based on narrow retail functions (such as the sale of fruit and vegetables). The official unemployment rate amongst 15–64 year olds was 38% in 2011 (City of Cape Town 2011a). Although, in common with other townships both locally and elsewhere in the country, youth unemployment rates are even higher. According to the official figures more than 50% of young men up to the age of 23 are unemployed (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry 2014).

Of the 118 809 households, 62% have access to piped water in their dwelling or inside their yard; 72% have access to a flush toilet connected to the public sewer system and 81% use electricity for lighting. Almost half (45%) of households are characterised as formal dwellings, and a significant number of residents are living in shacks with access to running water and electricity. In 2009, nearly two-thirds of black African children lived below the poverty line in the Western Cape; 40% have no working adult at home and a significant proportion of these children live in households where there is reported child hunger (City of Cape Town 2011b).

**Crime and violence**

While great strides have been made in recent years towards addressing infrastructural inadequacies and there has been a steady improvement in the provision of basic social services, the quality of life for many people living in Khayelitsha is marked not just by poverty, but also by high levels of crime and violence.

As noted by Seekings (2013), crime is a constant consideration in the lives of people living in Khayelitsha; it is a major constraint on moving around after dark and is a source of anxiety in many neighbourhoods even during daytime. Murder rates are the most reliable measure of crime and may be used as a ‘proxy’ for contact crime; for other than murder rates, crime rates are under-reported in Khayelitsha. Indeed the township has the highest reported number of murders in the country: 354 in the 2012/2013 year according to the official police statistics. It is not unusual, for example, for seven murders to be committed in a single weekend in Site B, a particularly violence-prone part of the township.

According to a recent survey undertaken for the specific purposes of the Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry, 41.3% of all respondents had personally been a victim of crime in the last year, including armed robbery, common robbery and what
was loosely referred to as gangsterism. The survey further suggested that only six out of every 10 crimes are reported to the police (hence confirming the under-reporting noted above).

There is increasing evidence that many youth are exposed to co-occurring forms of violence across multiple life domains, including school and community (Du Plessis et al. 2015). The effects this has on children has been reported on (see for example, Burton 2008; Burton & Loeschut 2013; Edwards et al. 2008; Ward et al. 2007) and is summed up in the following extract from Kaminer’s expert witness testimony to the Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry into Policing:

[They] are being incubated in violence … which means they are having to go through their … developmental process within a very violence-saturated environment that has very particular psychological impacts … (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry 2014: 134)

As Kaminer suggests, research shows that repeated exposure to violence results in the normalisation of violence as a socially and morally acceptable, appropriate and even honourable way of resolving conflicts and of achieving goals (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry 2014).

Health

Shalem and Hoadley’s (2009) research on the relationship between social class and learner performance locates the gap primarily in the physical conditions of the child’s health, and in the differences in the child-rearing practices between working- and middle-class families. Khayelitsha has one of the highest burdens of both HIV and tuberculosis (TB) in the country. In 2008, antenatal HIV prevalence was measured at 31.1%; the TB case-notification rate reached nearly 1 600 per 100 000 and the TB/HIV co-infection, close to 70% (Médecins Sans Frontières 2010).

The infant mortality rate (IMR) declined from 42 per 1 000 in 2003, to 32 per 1 000 births in 2006. This is mainly attributed to the successful implementation of the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) and antiretroviral therapy (ART) programmes rolled out in the township by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 1999. Despite this, HIV/AIDS has remained the leading cause of death among children 1–4 years of age. In the 14–19 year age group, homicide accounts for almost half (48.6%) of all deaths (Groenewald et al. 2008).

Socioeconomic status and academic achievement

Internationally, it is generally accepted that socioeconomic status (SES) is the biggest single determinant of academic achievement (Coleman et al. 1966; Ladd 2012; Rothstein 2004). Locally, in their study of achievement in the Western Cape, Van Der Berg and Burger (2002) found that approximately two-thirds of the variation in
achievement could be explained by SES. Elsewhere, Van Der Berg (2007) concluded that the harmful impact of low SES is established early in primary school and that no evidence can be found to suggest that primary schooling is able to reverse this.

High levels of poverty in any context result in considerable levels of disadvantage being experienced by many children. As Ravitch (2010), writing about the situation in the USA, reminds us: children who live in poverty have multiple disadvantages – ill health, poor nutrition, poor housing. And in many schools in the South African context too, parental involvement is limited through poverty, poor channels of communication and economic insecurity; all of which contribute to educational underachievement.

It is against this backdrop that over 60 000 children make their way daily to the 55 public ordinary schools, three LSEN and three independent schools that serve the educational needs of the Khayelitsha community.

**The educational context**

Before delving into specific details of schooling in the township, it is worth making the following general comment about education in South Africa. It may well be that the doors of (school) learning have swung wide open in the post-apartheid era, but the pervasiveness of basic education access has yet to translate into educational success for the majority of the country’s children (Shindler & Fleisch 2007). This is confirmed by assessment results from Grade 3 through to Matric, which reveal the huge achievement gaps between schools serving the middle class and those serving working-class communities. What has been characterised as bi-modal learner performance is evident at all levels in the system (Spaull 2012; Taylor 2011; Van Der Berg 2007), resulting in a ‘dual economy’ of schooling which is persistent and deeply entrenched in this country (Shalem & Hoadley 2009; Taylor & Yu 2009; Van Der Berg & Louw 2006).

Many schools, most noticeably those in townships such as Khayelitsha, struggle to make the most of what they have, in terms of the availability of physical and (critically) human resources. This is not to suggest that schools cannot succeed. As evidenced throughout the country (Christie et al. 2007), adverse schooling circumstances can be acted upon and overcome. As Taylor et al. (2003: 47) have noted, poor performance is not solely produced by external factors such as learner (and teacher) background and resources; schools that are otherwise comparable in terms of material and symbolic empowerments, can and do have a major impact on their learners.

Such concerns weigh heavily on any consideration of schooling in Khayelitsha. And whereas the educational circumstances in the Western Cape may well be mitigated by a high-functioning provincial education department; it is important to note that the gap between middle- and working-class schools as evidenced by the bimodality in Matric performance, is as great as anywhere in South Africa.
Khayelitsha falls into the Metropole East Education District (MEED), one of the four districts in the Cape Town Metropole. A significant number of the schools for which MEED is responsible are in the township: 35 primary, one intermediate and 20 secondary schools. In 2015 – as shown in Figure 2.1 – the total number of learners enrolled in the township’s schools amounted to 59 853; added to which a further 3 000-odd children are enrolled in community crèches, bringing the estimated total enrolment to 63 000.

The smaller enrolment in Grade R classes is not unexpected given the shortage of specialised classrooms in the primary schools. In most instances Grade Rs are accommodated in a self-contained block with their own toilets, set apart from the rest of the classrooms at the school. Typically, a school tends to have half as many Grade R classes as Grade 1s. Additionally, a further 1 162 learners are accommodated at one of the three Special Education Needs (LSEN) schools, and 642 children attend one of the three registered independent schools located in the township. With an undetermined number attending schools outside of the township, this brings the count of in-school learners in Khayelitsha to just under 65 000.

The enrolment profile confirms the generally accepted figure that only around 50% of learners who commence Grade 1 end up completing Matric. Of interest is how the profiles vary from one year to the next. Figure 2.2 illustrates the complex picture that emerges when comparing 2009 and 2015.
These figures represent the actual number enrolled in each grade in each year and as such cannot be interpreted directly to provide any information about throughput, grade retention or repetition rates, nor do they in any way provide information on the numbers of learners either exiting or entering the system.

Considering the fact that the dropout rate is minimal in the first eight years of school (Department of Education 2008), coupled with the rigorous implementation of policies to reduce high repetition rates (particularly above Grade 1), it is interesting to note that the Grade 2 enrolment of 4 647 in 2009, is very close to the 2015 Grade 8 enrolment of 4 427. This would suggest that the survival rate in the compulsory band of schooling is high in townships such as Khayelitsha.

However, the discrepancy that exists between census-predicted in-school figures and actual enrolments is puzzling. A calculation based on Census 2011 suggests that around 78 000 children can be anticipated to be enrolled in Grades R – 9.

In contrast, the above verified data from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) showed an enrolment in 2015 of only around 49 000 in the compulsory band of schooling at the 34 public ordinary primary, three LSEN and three independent schools. Furthermore, it is assumed that there are 3 000 Grade R enrolments at the
community crèches, at most 2 000 out-of-school and no more than 2 000 children attending school outside of the township. This in turn amounts to just over 56 000 compulsory school-going age children. Allowing for a level of inaccuracy in both determinations, there is a significant discrepancy in these two numbers, which raises some questions around the veracity of the Census data.

With regard to school migration, there does not appear to be a significant movement of learners on a daily basis to schools outside of Khayelitsha, nor are many commuting into the township. However there does appear to be a degree of enrolment flux – with learners moving between schools within the township, and it is this that accounts for the variations in school numbers from one year to the next, as discussed below.

**Primary school enrolments**

Between 2009 and 2015, overall primary school enrolments increased by 7.4% from 35 241 to 37 854. This amounts to an average of 1% per year, which is less than anticipated. The mean school size grew from 1 075 to 1 119 learners over the same period. While no new schools have been registered in Khayelitsha over the past seven years, this would also appear lower than expected. However, a possible explanation lies in the fact that additional capacity has been created in four intermediate schools, which have shed their Grade 8 and 9 classes over the past few years. This has allowed them to increase their primary numbers.

Schools also differ considerably in terms of number of learners. An interesting observation is that six schools now have enrolments of over 1 300 children, as opposed to only two in 2009. Whilst there is no apparent causal connection between school size and (for instance) learner achievements, the link between them is worth noting. What may often be overlooked in this regard is that in large township schools the school-level systems required to drive effective teaching and learning are much harder to establish, manage and maintain. Referred to as organisational capital (Hopkins & Jackson 2003), this is a commodity often in short supply in such circumstances.

The range in school size, from the smallest accommodating 707 learners to the largest with 1 534 learners, is not atypical of the profile found in neighbouring working-class communities. By way of comparison, the 46 primary schools in Mitchells Plain range in size from 529 to 1 652; although with a mean of 980 learners they are generally smaller than their counterparts in Khayelitsha. It is significant that in Mitchells Plain over a third (17/46) have less than 900 learners; whilst in Khayelitsha only five schools fall into this category.

**Secondary school enrolments**

Here a much more complex pattern emerges. Over the past seven years there has been a significant decline (just over 10%) in secondary school enrolments – from a
total of 24 552 in 2009, to 22 004 in 2015. There are a number of interrelated reasons as to why this may be the case.

Assuming (as will be argued below) that there has not been any substantial increase in the number of learners leaving the township to attend secondary schools elsewhere, this may not apply to the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, which are undergoing a significant expansion at present. However, there is no evidence to suggest that significant numbers of learners are dropping out of mainstream academic education to take up places at the colleges, either locally (at the Good Hope campus of False Bay TVET College) or elsewhere in the Metropole.

As evidenced by the reduction in Grade 10 learners relative to other grades in 2015, it may be the case that the impact of official national policies aimed to reduce the high repetition rates across the system is being felt here too. The tendency of many schools to hold back weaker learners at the end of either Grade 10 or 11 appears to be on the decline. But the overall drop in numbers, in the face of even relatively low levels of in-migration from the Eastern Cape, is a puzzle.

Year-on-year enrolments at an individual secondary school level show considerable variation often to a greater extent than in the primary schools. Figure 2.3 illustrates this for four schools that showed the greatest shifts in numbers between 2009 and 2015.
A variation in learner numbers from one year to the next reflects the dynamic of many township secondary schools. This has implications at a number of different levels. Firstly, as with their primary counterparts, most secondary schools are not able to afford more than one or two self-funded posts. With staff allocations based on enrolments, declining numbers will inevitably result in the loss of posts – which, given the subject specialisation of secondary school teachers, potentially places an enormous organisational burden on individual schools. Further, even where overall enrolment numbers may appear stable, this can mask what might be considerable within-school grade-level variation from one year to the next.

**Moving in and moving around: School migration in Khayelitsha**

There is a popular perception that sizeable numbers of township learners commute daily to schools located in other townships, or even further afield in the city. In the post-1994 period, school migration patterns have been the subject of substantial research (Msilu 2005; Nkomo et al. 2008; Soudien 2004). However, the extent to which the ‘exodus’ (Msilu 2005) from township schools evidenced in other parts of the country also applies to Khayelitsha is less apparent. Indeed, the opposite may be the case, for as Chisholm and Suje (2006) have pointed out, when compared with elsewhere in the country, Western Cape schools have integrated black African students the least. They report that only 3% of learners in previously House of Assembly (formerly ‘white’ schools) and 6% of learners in House of Representatives schools are black African. Furthermore, as Soudien (2004) noted in an earlier study, there has been no parallel movement towards former black African schools. This certainly appears to be reflective of the situation in Khayelitsha.

In Fataar’s (2007) extensive ethnographic study of Rustvale, a mixed African and coloured working-class community in Cape Town, a more nuanced picture emerges and one that distinguishes two components to migratory school attendance. In addition to children commuting to schools elsewhere in the city, there is substantial movement within the township with significant numbers of learners coming from other residential areas rather than those in which schools are located. In Rustvale at least, the attendance in the community’s schools is accompanied by a degree of what Fataar (2007) terms ‘enrolment flux’ – with up to 15% of learners switching between schools.

**Coming in from the Eastern Cape**

Learner migration into the Western Cape is carefully monitored by the WCED. Of the 122,378 school-age children that arrived in the province between 2010 and 2014, the overwhelming majority (80.2%) came from the Eastern Cape. The impact of the 19,857 new learners in 2014 was felt in both primary and secondary schools, with the majority entering the schooling system in Grade R, 1 and 10. Many arrive unexpectedly at the start of the school year seeking places in the very schools
that are least equipped to accommodate them (i.e. the township schools). Without specific numbers being given, Khayelitsha is cited as one of the areas that have seen significant levels of new enrolments from the Eastern Cape. Referring back to the 2015 grade enrolment profile on page 26, it is tempting to suggest that the spikes in enrolment in Grades 1 and 10 can be explained in part by this in-migration. While the school-level impact requires further investigation, it is predicted that, given the enrolment patterns argued above, this is localised to the schools servicing the communities most likely to be absorbing these newcomers – particularly the informal settlements in Enkanini to the far south of the township. It may be no coincidence then that two of the primary schools in the immediate area, now both have over 1 500 learners.

According to Clark, Khayelitsha (as with Langa) has ‘the capacity to enrol additional learners’ (2015b: 4), which further validates the official position that schooling (in terms of the availability of positions for learners at least) is not experiencing undue pressure in the township. A recent ‘throughput survey’ at one of the SII partner schools illustrates the movement of learners into a school. What is notable is that just over a third (35%) of the learners joined the school after Grade 1. This seems to confirm that there is indeed a significant movement of learners between some schools, particularly those that have some perceived status in the eyes of the local community.

A further possible indicator of the degree of enrolment flux is provided by variations in school numbers from one year to the next. As noted earlier, with regard to throughput and retention rates, primary and secondary schools manifest markedly different trends. In general (and reiterating that schools in the township are not subjected to significant in-migration) any significant variation in enrolments can be ascribed to movements between schools.

Fataar (2007) suggests that contrary to popular perception, many young people who attend township schools exercise agency in their school choices. In the context of Khayelitsha primary schooling where this could be more appropriately framed as a question of parental choice (rather than that of their children), there is no doubt that within the broader community, schools are judged and valued differently, which results in some of them having an elevated status relative to their neighbours which in turn translates into them becoming ‘schools of choice’.

As in Rustvale, how perceptions about the worth of Khayelitsha schools are produced, circulated and acted upon by parents is undoubtedly influenced by a variety of factors – from a school’s academic and community status, to the possibility of some personal connection (a family member may have attended the school for example). The issue of affordability – whether or not ‘school fees’ of some form are levied by the SGB, a school’s uniform policies and the cost of transport if the school is located at a distance from the home, are a few possible factors that influence parents’ decisions in this regard.
When it comes to choosing a secondary school, its success, or lack thereof in the Matric exams undoubtedly casts a long shadow, but perhaps not always to the extent that would be anticipated given the range in performance across the schools. It becomes apparent therefore that there is a deep complexity underlying issues of school choice and how parents (and their children) exercise their agency in this regard.

A survey of learners conducted by the SII in 2015 in all 20 secondary schools in the township revealed that just under two-thirds (65.4%) live in close proximity (within reasonable walking distance) of their respective schools. Whilst this survey provides no more than a snapshot of the situation, it does suggest that relatively few learners are commuting into the township on a daily basis. Only 15 (just over 5%) of the 265 respondents indicated that they lived outside of Khayelitsha. This corroborates another source of school-level data (Dornbrack & Clark 2014) that the influx of in-migrants from further afield (i.e. the Eastern Cape) may not be having as big an impact on Khayelitsha schooling as might be commonly believed. Only 39 (14.7%) learners surveyed at one of the secondary schools, indicated that they had attended a primary school in the Eastern Cape.

**Not in the public (ordinary) school domain**

The three non-public schools, two of which are faith-based and the third belonging to the South African Federation of Waldorf schools, can be categorised as low-fee independent schools. That there are only three such schools in a township the size of Khayelitsha is low given the rapid growth in recent years of this sector of the independent schooling market.

Whereas it is possible that there are children commuting to independent schools elsewhere in the city, given the household income profile of Khayelitsha one can assume that the numbers are small and more likely than not limited to the low-fee sector. In part this is due to the fact that the low-fee independent school market is limited in Cape Town.

Of the 150-odd independent schools registered with WCED in the Metropole, just over a third (57) receive some level of state subsidy and generally they are at the lower end of the market. Excluding the Muslim faith-based, Afrikaans medium and schools located geographically at a distance and off the main transportation routes, the choice is limited – perhaps no more than 25 to 30 schools at most.

There are no indications that in the immediate future there is to be any significant internal growth in the provision of low-fee independent schooling in Khayelitsha. On the one hand, there are unsubstantiated claims that local political groupings are opposed to attempts by outside interest groups (such as the new generation of edu-entrepreneurs active elsewhere in the country) to set up independent schools. On the other hand, perhaps the biggest and most critical obstacle given the high level...
of poverty, is that most residents simply do not have the financial means to invest in their children's education, and those that do are already sending them elsewhere.

Taking all this into account, it is apparent that, at the very most, 2,500–2,750 children, or less than 5% of the school-going population of Khayelitsha, is on the move to schools outside of the township. Taken together with the Khayelitsha in-school count of 64,000, the total school-going population of the township is estimated then to be in the region of 66,750 learners.

**Gender matters**

According to the 2011 Census, there are almost equal numbers of male and females living in Khayelitsha and in that year, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) figure for the Western Cape Province as a whole was 1.06 (DBE 2013). The latest (2015) enrolments by gender across the 55 public ordinary schools in Khayelitsha confirm that, as with the situation elsewhere in the country, there is little evidence to suggest that girls experience discrimination when measured by access to school (Hall & De Lannoy 2013).

**Figure 2.4** depicts the enrolment ratios across the different grades from R to 12.

As with the broader provincial and national pictures, there are marginal differences in the ratio of boys to girls enrolled at primary school level. However, the pattern shifts at the secondary school level, where girls are more likely than boys to attend school. As reflected in the figures, in Khayelitsha gender parity holds until near the

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**Source:** Data sourced from WCED's Central Education Management and Information System (CEMIS)
end of primary school (Grade 6), and remains reasonably constant, but slightly in favour of girls (52:48) through to the end of the compulsory band of schooling. After this it swings quite heavily towards girls, reaching a 60:40 split in Grades 11 and 12. This is quite high given that nationally, 54.6% of the 2014 Matric cohort was girls, and provincially the average between 2007 and 2014 was 53.6%. This figure varies quite considerably from school to school. At its extreme, girls outnumber boys by more than two to one at one school, and at three other schools the ratio is over 65:35 in favour of girls. In contrast, there are only two schools where there are marginally more boys than girls enrolled in matric.

One probable reason for this is the greater likelihood that boys will drop out of school for economic reasons – such as the necessity of having to find work to supplement family income. It is perhaps no surprise then that the school with the greatest imbalance in favour of girls is the school closest to the informal settlement of Enkanini in the south of the township.

Despite the fact that teenage pregnancy is often quoted as one of the main reasons behind the high school dropout rate in working-class communities, the Khayelitsha data confirms that this is not the primary cause (Hall & De Lannoy 2013). This is not to say that it isn’t a significant factor for girls, but they generally tend to stay in school longer than boys, and this is certainly the case in Khayelitsha.

**Academic versus vocational education: A very South African dilemma**

The post-primary environment in Khayelitsha is typical of that found in townships elsewhere in the country. Whereas there are sufficient secondary school places available, most schools provide no more than a standard suite of academic subjects, and there are only four schools that offer technical and vocational subjects. In addition, there is a TVET college located in what was originally a teacher training college.

The three designations: ‘arts and culture’, ‘business’ and ‘technology and engineering’ represent the different areas of vocational specialisation promoted as part of the (now discontinued) Provincial Focus School initiative. The Focus schools were launched in 2005 partly in response to the Western Cape Government’s Human Capital Development Strategy (HCDS). The introduction of the Focus schools represented a particular approach to vocationalism, and were meant to serve as an alternative to academic education and to complement initiatives like the national programme of Dinaledi schools (two of which are also in Khayelitsha), various SETA activities, and ‘world of work’ programmes. Khayelitsha was identified as one of the areas in which Focus schools should be established. Four schools were identified for conversion into focus schools, including an existing arts and culture school, and a technical school that was, incidentally, one of the first four secondary schools built in the township.
Larey (2012) offers an extensive critique of the initiative, suggesting that the enrolment of learners into dedicated vocationally-oriented streams of study has never been anything but partially successful. This is certainly borne out by the situation in the Khayelitsha schools where, at three of the (ex) Focus schools, less than half the 2014 matriculants were enrolled in such vocational streams. By and large it appears that learners have little inclination to study subjects other than those traditionally viewed as ‘academic’.

The reasons for learners’ choices in this regard can, in part, be explained by historical factors – both on a structural and attitudinal level. Under apartheid the curriculum in black African schooling was narrowly framed around the same three academic subject streams that dominate today (as discussed above) with agricultural science offered in virtually all rural schools. Technical education for African children only began to make its appearance during late apartheid. As noted above, one of the first four secondary schools built in Khayelitsha was a designated technical school.

The legacy of Bantu Education’s orientation towards ‘work and labour’ stigmatised vocationally-oriented education amongst black South Africans, and continues to haunt us to this day. It would certainly seem to be reflected in the low enrolments in the more intensive vocational subjects in areas such as engineering. In recent years there have, however, been attempts to break from the past in the form of significant expansion in the provision of TVET college places as attested by the growth of the local campus of False Bay TVET College. However, the extent to which the colleges are able to offer learners a viable and attractive alternative to mainstream academic schooling is debatable.

It is not only a question of quality and applicability. Pass rates in the National Certificate (Vocational) (NCV) remain very low. The intended goal, and anticipated inducement, for selecting this course of study is to advance from NCV Level 4 into technical universities, but the extent to which that actually occurs remains undisclosed. However, it seems to be very low. Further, anecdotal evidence suggests that very few learners choose to leave schools at the end of Grade 9 to attend a college. Instead, a significant number of NCV entries are matriculants, who either failed their Grade 12 exams, or who passed badly. This is reflected in the 2013 enrolments at the Good Hope campus of False Bay TVET College. In that year, there were 900 students in the various NCV programmes; 500 registered for National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) courses, and the remainder in skills-orientated Educare and Hospitality studies.

It can be argued that at this stage the TVET colleges are functioning as a kind of safety valve on the formal system, absorbing some of the potential NEETS (not in education, employment or training), and providing them with only marginally improved opportunities for continuing study or employability.

To sum up, of the 13 000 learners enrolled in the FET phase at the 20 secondary schools, only a relatively small number (around 1 000) are in a dedicated vocational
stream at one of the four (ex) Focus schools, and no more than 1 500 are studying at the local TVET college. The educational dice remain loaded at 4:1 in favour of conventional academic schooling.

**Subject choice**

A clear difference between many middle- and working-class secondary schools lies in the range of subjects on offer in each context. Unlike schools with a wealthier parent body, those located in townships are severely constrained in their ability to levy fees to employ additional teachers in governing body posts, which would in turn allow them to offer a broader range of subjects. Considering this reality (and discounting the different curriculum drivers in operation at the (ex) Focus and Dinaledi schools), it could be argued that subject choice functions as a proxy of advantage in the South African setting.

Elsewhere, Matric subject enrolments in the 20 Khayelitsha schools are considered alongside those in the seven CED schools in MEED (Clark 2015c). This data presents an interesting picture, which underscores some key points of difference between middle- and working-class schools. When it comes to access to subject choice, learners attending middle-class schools clearly have more options available to them. A case in point is in the arts, where one or more subjects such as visual arts, or music and drama, are available at all seven CED schools. In Khayelitsha, on the other hand, it is only at the dedicated arts and culture school that learners are able to access these subjects. And even this access is not without complexities. Learners with a talent for drawing, for example, can apply to enter the school at Grade 8, or even transfer across at a later stage. But, without any significant visual arts presence in the other 19 secondary schools, there is little incentive to nurture interest so the likelihood of learners moving across is small. In the seven CED schools, 80 learners (5%) have elected visual arts as a Matric subject, compared with 27 (1%) in the whole of Khayelitsha.

The situation in the case of music is more revealing of the essential differences in the form or substance of schooling. All seven middle-class schools either offer the subject directly or make arrangements for learners to take it as an extra-curricular subject, compared with only six learners in Khayelitsha who opt for music as a subject. The narrower range of curriculum offerings in township schools is also evidenced in the more recently introduced (i.e. post-1994) ‘soft vocational’ subjects – consumer studies and tourism. Enrolments in both subjects are relatively low (9% and 14% respectively) and they are both offered in only three schools. By comparison, five of the seven CED schools offer both, and enrolments of Grade 12s are significantly higher – 29% and 20% respectively.

Another key area of difference is in terms of access to information technology (IT), and its related subject, computer applications technology (CAT). Here, too, both subjects are offered at all seven CED schools, and indeed a sizeable portion (40%)

36
of matriculants is taking CAT, a subject that provides learners with a range of basic computer skills. In Khayelitsha, IT is limited to one school, and only five other schools offer learners the opportunity to study CAT up to Matric.

These are telling figures, particularly when set against the enormous investment the province placed in the Khanya project as a key element of its strategy to bridge the ‘IT-divide’. Although all Khayelitsha secondary schools have computer laboratories (and some have more than one facility), there is sufficient anecdotal evidence to suggest that, post-Khanya, their functionalities are low. This is no doubt a contributing factor to the low CAT enrolments – amounting to a mere 6% of the township’s matriculants – and this in a minority of its schools.

Overall subject-level enrolments are also illustrative of trends that have deep historical roots. For example, history and geography were ubiquitous in black African schools under apartheid. While geography remains well subscribed (47%), numbers in history have reduced in recent years. This is reflected in Khayelitsha, too, where less than a quarter of the Grade 12s in 2015 were enrolled in this subject. A similar trend is being experienced at the CED schools.

In township schools, economics has also always been popular and is often taken as an alternative to accounting by learners in the commerce stream. It is presently offered in 18 schools with just under a third of all matriculants (32%) taking the subject. In contrast, it is almost unknown in CED schools with only 26 learners enrolled at one school.

The issue of relative enrolment levels in mathematics and mathematical literacy form part of the broader discussion on Matric performance, which follows below.

Finally, perhaps the greatest break with our apartheid past is the fact that Afrikaans (first additional language) continues to be offered at only three schools in the township; with a mere 80 (3%) learners entered to write this subject in 2014. That it is the home language of many working-class coloured people speaks to the complexity of language politics in the Western Cape, as does the fact that close to 99% of all those schooled in Khayelitsha have isiXhosa as their home language from Grade R to Grade 12.

As evidenced in the figures, children attending middle-class schools have significantly more subject choice than their counterparts in working-class schools. The link between subject choice and school fees is clear – a broader subject choice is undoubtedly afforded through the appointment of additional governing body posts, which are afforded through higher school fees. When it comes to the seven CED schools considered here, 2015 fees average just under R13 000, ranging from the cheapest at R9 500, to the most expensive, which costs R20 898 per learner per year. This contrasts with Khayelitsha, where all the schools are no-fee schools.
On language

In common with all other black African townships in Cape Town, isiXhosa is the home language of the vast majority of people in Khayelitsha. The only other significant language group in the township is a relatively small community of Sesotho-speaking people; who typically send their children to the one remaining intermediate school in the township that offers Sesotho home language to the end of the senior phase (Grade 9). Thereafter, Sesotho-speaking children may go on to one of two secondary schools which offer the subject as a home language in Grades 10–12. Although a small number of residents indicated that English, or even Afrikaans, is their mother tongue, there is no school in Khayelitsha that offers either of these as home languages. In total then, less than 1.5% (just over 900 learners) receive tuition in a language other than isiXhosa.

Even though Khayelitsha is located in a cosmopolitan multilingual city, it is generally a tight-knit, cohesive, and essentially isolated monolingual community (Bloch et al. 2010). Most Site B residents speak neither English nor Afrikaans when they arrive, and thereafter do not have any need to use these languages in their community. Indeed, they only require these languages when they leave for work purposes or to conduct business outside of the township. Accordingly, the words used by De Klerk (2006: 612) to describe the isiXhosa-speaking informants in her study in the Eastern Cape, could equally apply here in Cape Town:

They have dense and multiple daily contacts that are likely to sustain Xhosa; they are in the numerical majority where they live, and therefore they are not vulnerable to language loss. Although access to well paid jobs and resources are undoubtedly linked to English (and in the context of the Western Cape, Afrikaans), increased exposure to the standard variety of the language and its speakers is problematic for them, and it is Xhosa that serves these bilinguals in most domains of their daily lives.

Whereas English becomes the official language of learning and teaching in all Khayelitsha schools from Grade 4, the extent to which learners acquire an adequate level of communicative competence in the language is a matter of some contention. The situation is exacerbated by the absence of contact with English first-language speakers, either in the school setting or outside of it. While there is little doubt that becoming proficient in English can provide social and economic advantages, the societal circumstances and the very boundedness of Khayelitsha as a separate linguistic community clearly militate against children readily acquiring these skills.

What is the impact of this on teaching and learning? The slew of difficulties and possible barriers to learning experienced by those being schooled in a second-language context (in this instance English) are well documented (Fleisch 2008; Murray 2002; Probyn 2001; Setati et al. 2002). The situation is exacerbated by the fact that many teachers themselves are not fluent in the language of instruction,
which further hinders learning (NEEDU 2013). The extent to which this impacts negatively on learning outcomes at the subject level has been acknowledged in the literature.\textsuperscript{57} Furthermore, until 2013, all Matric candidates whose first language was not English or Afrikaans were compensated in content subjects with an additional 5% added onto their exam scores. From 2014, this was reduced to 4%, and it will be progressively reduced over the next four years.\textsuperscript{58}

Whether this in anyway constituted fair compensation for the second language learners is a moot point: Taylor (2011) shows that the precise estimate of the causal impact of language proficiency on test scores is extremely difficult. However the levels of language disadvantage experienced by black African learners may go some way to explain the ‘performance ceilings’ that seem to characterise achievements in the various obligatory assessment regimes during the course of learners’ school careers. These include the provincial systemic tests, the annual national assessments (ANAs) and ultimately, the Matric exams.\textsuperscript{59}

**Schooling outcomes in the township: A view from the top**

As noted earlier, it is estimated that 27% of Cape Town’s black African population resides in Khayelitsha. It is not surprising therefore that a significant portion of black African schools in greater Cape Town are found in the township, although the percentage is declining as the locus of growth shifts. Fuelled in part by in-migration, the shift has been towards other townships – specifically to Philippi, Delft, Mfuleni, Kraaifontein on the northern boundary of the Metropole, Milnerton on the Western seaboard, and Lwandle/Strand in the Helderberg Basin.\textsuperscript{60}

In terms of Matric performance, Figure 2.5 compares the performance of Khayelitsha in relation to townships elsewhere in Cape Town,\textsuperscript{61} and illustrates the province-wide rural/peri-urban grouping of African secondary schools in 2014.
Relative to the two other large concentrations of African schools in Philippi and Gugulethu/Nyanga/Crossroads, the aggregate performance in terms of pass rate of the Khayelitsha schools is significantly higher. The under-performance of the Gugulethu/Nyanga/Crossroads and Langa clusters attests to deeply embedded problems that still plague many of the apartheid-era schools. The aggregate performance of the rural schools is lower than Khayelitsha, but compares favourably with the inner townships (Langa, Gugulethu, Philippi), which may be surprising given the socioeconomic circumstances of many of these communities, located as they are in the broader context of rural poverty.

How does this fit into the provincial and national context, post 1994? Data in this regard has been sourced from 1997 onwards, prior to which there were a number of years (notably 1994-1996) when school-level information was not made readily available.
**Historical trends in Matric pass rates**

In the period between 1997–2014, the number of Grade 12s writing Matric increased by only 22.4%, although the increase in pass rate from a low of 45.7% in 1997 to 75.0% in 2014 ensured that the number passing doubled over this period. How does this compare with the situation elsewhere?

A useful point of comparison is the annual Khayelitsha pass rates relative to the equivalent provincial and national ones, as shown in Figure 2.6.

It is important to view the Khayelitsha and provincial results in the context of what transpired at the national level. Dealing first with a comparison with the national results, the following trends emerge. In Khayelitsha there were initial gains in the immediate post-apartheid period (1997–2006), a decade which saw schools in the township perform close to, or at times above, the national average. This was followed by a period of decline (2007–2010) that led to a widening of the gap between Khayelitsha and national pass rates, which by 2010 had opened up to 17.5%. School results began improving from 2011 and, by 2014, they were on average only marginally lower (75.0%) than the national one (75.8%).

![Figure 2.6 Comparative Matric performance: 1997–2014](image_url)

*Source: Compiled by the author from multiple data sources*
Considering the provincial picture, Western Cape pass rates have always been higher than the aggregate performance of the 20 Khayelitsha schools. This is not surprising given the contribution to the overall results by the sizeable minority of (120-odd) generally high-performing ex-Model C schools. Elsewhere Clark (2013) has drawn attention to this feature of schooling in the province, employing the analogy that the ex-Model Cs are akin to the ‘icing on the performance cake' that not only enhances, but also tends to mask from view the weaker performance of the ex-HOR and ex-DET schools that make up around two-thirds of the total.

Much has been written about Matric pass rates, ranging from scholarly accounts (Grussendorf et al. 2010; Reddy 2006) and annual regulatory reports to concerns being raised in the public domain (Bloch 2009; Jansen 2012). There is no clear explanation as to why the township's secondary schools seemed to go into such a performance free-fall between 2006 and 2010. Perhaps this is illustrative of the extent to which the Department of Basic Education’s flawed attempts to implement the OBE-linked Curriculum 2005 impacted negatively on schooling outcomes, particularly in parts of the system that were more vulnerable to the vagaries of curriculum change. The carefully ‘managed' downward adjustment in national pass rates between 2003 and 2009 was experienced in a much more uneven way at the localised (i.e. township) level.

Significantly, on-aggregate school performance in Khayelitsha, as evidenced in Matric pass rates, has improved markedly year-on-year from the low point of 2010. While this should be welcomed, there is a caution: at the individual school level there is often a high degree of variability in pass rates. This points towards an essential difference between middle-class schools and those serving communities such as Khayelitsha; namely the degree of continuity and stability in learner performance from one year to the next.

As described earlier, schooling in this country can be characterised as essentially a tale of two systems – a story of continuity and change involving stable, high-functioning middle-class schools, and the majority of decidedly less stable working-class schools. In each of the two bi-modal systems, Matric performance is reflected in schools’ capacity to cope with the conflicting demands of change. On the one hand, middle-class schools have been able to ‘roll with the curriculum punches', absorbing whatever formulations are the order of the day. On the other, working-class schools in contexts such as Khayelitsha lack this resilience, and are anything but immune to the vicissitudes imposed by the State's post-1994 curriculum reform project.

This is the backdrop for the university–school partnerships that lie at the heart of the SII’s engagement, and the context for the collaborative research reported upon in the chapters that follow.
Notes
1 IsiXhosa for ‘new home’.
2 Khayelitsha is approximately the same size as Mamelodi (North East of Tshwane/Pretoria in Gauteng), but much smaller than Soweto, and is comparable with the Johannesburg township of Diepsloot in terms of its mix of formal housing and informal settlements (Seekings 2013).
3 The African population in June 1982 was estimated to be around 226 000 of whom two-thirds were legally resident in the area.
4 This is the colloquial term used to describe urban and peri-urban African settlements.
5 This culminated in June 1985 in a national state of emergency that lasted three months.
6 For instance, under the leadership of Mali Hoza, people from the Cathedral section of Crossroads settled in Site C. The numbers involved are significant, in this instance up to 42 000 according to news reports (see: Associated Press News Archive 6 April 1985).
7 The acronym for the Reconstruction and Development Programme, a national initiative that led to (among other things) the provision of large numbers of low-cost houses.
8 In terms of local government, Khayelitsha comprises 13 wards in sub-councils 9, 10 and 24.
9 Service-delivery protests, see for example: http://groundup.org.za/article/maggots-bodies-and-stench-what-khayelitsha-residents-say-about-their-toilets_2888
11 Around 69% according to Census 2011.
12 A formal dwelling is defined as a structure built according to approved plans, that is: a house on a separate stand, flat or apartment, townhouse, room in a backyard, or room or flatlet elsewhere. In contrast, an informal dwelling is a makeshift structure not approved by a local authority and not intended as a permanent dwelling. Typically built with found materials (corrugated iron, cardboard, plastic, etc.) and generally referred to as a ‘shack’.
13 Between 1996 and 2011 the number of households using flush or chemical toilets doubled and electricity use for lighting (whether connected legally or illegally) more than doubled (Seekings 2013).
14 For other studies that have concluded that educational achievement amongst South African children is strongly associated with SES, see Reddy et al. (2010); Taylor and Yu (2009); Van Der Berg (2008); Anderson et al. (2001).
15 The acronym stands for: Learners with Special Educational Needs – catering for children with physical and intellectual disabilities.
16 The 2011 Stats SA General Household Survey (GHS) shows that 98.8% of 7 to 15 year old children (the age of compulsory schooling) were attending educational institutions.
17 Intermediate schools are something of a relic in the system. These days there are far fewer than in the past. They are essentially primary schools that extend up to, and include, Grade 9. They tend to function as a way of absorbing demand for secondary school places in areas of rapid growth. However the one remaining intermediate school in Khayelitsha serves a particular language-specific need.

18 This data has been sourced from the WCED’s Central Education Management and Information System (CEMIS) at https://wcedemis.westerncape.gov.za/wced/findaschool.html. In addition to grade-level learner enrolments, for each secondary school, subject-level enrolment figures are provided for the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grades 10-12).

19 There are an undetermined number of registered/unregistered and informal crèches in the township. The figure of 3 000 is derived from taking an anticipated Grade 1 enrolment in 2016 of around 6 000. The assumption here is that Grade 1 enrolments are fairly constant from one year to the next.

20 Khayelitsha LSEN; Lathi-Tha School of Skills; and Noluthando School for the Deaf.

21 Eagles Wings, Zenzeleni and St Michaels.

22 The Ministerial Committee on Learner Retention in the South African Schooling System (Department of Education 2008) reflected a figure showing that 46% of the 1980 to 1984 birth cohort who started Grade 1 eventually reached Grade 12.

23 It is estimated that no more than 2 750 children are attending schools outside of Khayelitsha and that up to three-quarters of these children (i.e. 2 062) will be in the Grades R-9.

24 This matter is dealt with in some detail elsewhere (Clark 2015a).

25 Simkins’ submission to the Khayelitsha Commission (2014) assumes an annual population growth rate of 2%.

26 Between them, primary enrolment (i.e. Grades R–7) for the four schools increased from 2 446 to 3 650 between 2009 and 2015.

27 Examples that regulate the flow of work are: time management, curriculum planning, assessment, book procurement and retrieval, and teacher professional development.

28 The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector offers an alternative to academic schooling post-Grade 10. In 2014, the three TVET colleges in the Cape Town Metropole had a combined enrolment of over 50 000. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the Good Hope campus of False Bay TVET College, situated in the old teachers’ training college, accommodates many students from the local community but, no doubt, others commute to colleges outside of the township. However, in the absence of research to the contrary, it appears that a significant number of college enrolments comprise matriculants who have either failed Grade 12, or performed poorly in matric. The numbers of learners exiting the academic schooling system at the end of Grade 9 is by all accounts still quite limited.

29 The number of school governing body (SGB) appointments a school is able to afford is, in most instances, entirely dependent on the amount of money that can be raised from the parent body. Indeed, it could be argued that the number of SGB posts a school can afford is a proxy for advantage. Middle-class schools typically have more than half their teaching staff filling such positions, while working-class schools have none.
30 Under apartheid, white schools were administered by the House of Assembly (HOA); designated coloured schools by the House of Representatives (HOR); Indian schools by the House of Delegates (HOD) and African schools in the urban townships, by the Department of Education and Training (DET). It should be noted that there were a very small number of HOD schools in the city. For convenience, the acronyms are often still employed as signifiers of a school’s pre-1994 association. In the Western Cape, post-1994 schools are designated in official documentation as ‘WCED’ schools.

31 This is a pseudonym.

32 In the broader context of township schooling, Sekete et al. (2001) propose that just under half (45%) of children do not attend their neighbourhood school.

33 A media release from the office of the Minister of Education dated 6 February 2014 provides a comprehensive overview of the situation in this regard from 2010-2014 (www.wced.school.za/comms/press/2014/13_6feb.html)

34 Given the relative high levels of functionality in the system, most enrolments are finalised prior to the end of the previous school year.

35 Around 5 750 learners (29%) of the 2014 new enrolments from the Eastern Cape are indicated as being in Metro East (i.e. MEED). It is not known how many were in Khayelitsha schools, but other communities experiencing significant growth in the district are those in Lwandle/Strand.

36 That a further 16 joined in Grade 1 is not seen as significant because this school, as with others in the township, can only accommodate a limited number of learners in its reception (Grade R) year classes. Indeed, in many schools up to half of Grade 1 learners previously attended community créches.

37 All schools in Khayelitsha are nominally no-fee schools.

38 According to the WCED ‘Find a School’ website, their annual fees in 2015 range from R2 460 (St Michaels) to R6 000 (Eagle Wings Christian school).

39 For more information see CDE (2010).

40 According to the 2011 Census data, of the 117 363 households in Khayelitsha, only 4 743 have monthly incomes of over R12 801 and a mere 1 410, over R25 601.

41 With a combined (Grades R-12) total of around 15 000 learners.

42 Independent schools are eligible for government subsidies on a sliding scale depending on the fees each school charges and, by implication, the community it serves. Responsibility for paying these subsidies lies with the provincial education departments. The maximum subsidy amounts to 60% of the equivalent public school allocation per learner. All three independent schools in Khayelitsha receive such a subsidy.

43 Females (51.1%) and males (48.9%).

44 The GPI reflects girls’ level of access to education compared to that of boys. This is calculated for each school phase. A GPI of less than 1 indicates that there are fewer girls than boys in the formal education system in proportion to the appropriate school-age population. A GPI of more than 1 means that there are proportionately more girls than boys attending school. A score of 1 reflects equal enrolment rates for boys and girls.
Besides two compulsory languages, home and first additional, there are essentially three subject streams: 1) general academic: history and geography; 2) mathematics and the sciences (physical and life sciences); and 3) commerce: accounting, business studies and economics.

Dinaledi means ‘star’ in Sesotho. This project is a lynchpin of the Department of Basic Education’s National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education (NSMSTE), the main purpose of which is to improve performance and participation rates in mathematics, life and physical sciences. Over the years the project has grown to involve 500 secondary schools across the country. As designated Dinaledi schools, they are provided with additional teaching and learning resources, including (in some provinces) the allocation of an extra teaching post – generally intended to allow the school to appoint an additional mathematics teacher.

It is also offered in some township schools - a remnant subject offering (so to speak). Three Khayelitsha schools had, between them, 58 writing this subject in 2014.

Nationally, enrolments in the TVET college sector have doubled over the past five years.

According to the DHET 2013/2014 Annual Report the provisional academic performance indicates that Level 2, 3 and 4 candidates achieved certification rates of 32.8%, 30.2% and 37.1% respectively.

Pre-1994 white (i.e. ex-Model C) schools in the Western Cape were run by the Cape Education Department, hence the designation of such schools in the official databases as CED schools.

As noted by Larey (2012) the Focus schools were never intended to have an open admissions policy.

The Khanya project (2001–2011) was an ambitious e-learning initiative of the WCED.

In the MSEP project, the poor state of the computer laboratory facilities at Fynbos High was seen as evidence of the growing levels of dysfunctionality at the school.

Census 2011, 98.7% indicated that isiXhosa is their home language.

It is possible that a small number may move on to Fezeka, in Gugulethu, which also offers Sesotho, but given the distances involved no doubt their numbers are few.

Ironically, there were more in the late 1980s (see Clark & Linder 2006).

Taylor et al. (2003: 54) point out that the difficulties associated with studying in a language other than one’s home language are more pronounced in mathematics. Similar concerns have been raised in the sciences (see for example Rollnick 2000).

Introduced in 1999, the policy was seen as an interim measure only. The argument put forward for eliminating it was that language competency had improved.

The difficult question of learner performance in Khayelitsha and how best it should be judged will be considered later.

In 1994, the 14 secondary schools in Khayelitsha accounted for 42% of those in the City; by 2015, the 20 in the township represented 38% of the total. In education provision terms, Khayelitsha and Philippi appear to have reached a level of stability similar to that of the older, more established townships of Langa and Gugulethu/Nyang/Nyuanga/Crossroads. A similar trend is reflected among primary schools.

For convenience, the two outliers (in Mowbray and Noordhoek) have been grouped together.
Starting in 1997, there was a seven-year period in which steady gains were seen in Matric pass rates. At the time this was presented by the State as evidence of broader systems-improvement post 1994, and politically defended as such. However, growing scepticism about levels of school performance, accompanied by a change in political leadership and coupled with a switch to a modified curriculum, seemed to create the conditions for a period of downward adjustment. Over the next six years national pass rates dropped by 12.6% from a high of 73.2% in 2003, to 60.2% in 2009. Thereafter we once again entered a period of growth, with a minor ‘hiccup’ in 2014 when the fourth curriculum iteration reached Matric.


For further details of the complexities and challenges of Curriculum 2005 and the subsequent Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), see Engelbrecht and Harding (2008).

Jansen (1998), in a critique of OBE, argues that the schools least able to cope with the demands of the new curriculum would suffer the most.

This is pure conjecture. Any suggestion that Matric results are open to undue (i.e. purely politically motivated) manipulation at the national and/or provincial level is vigorously denied by both the DBE and Umalusi, the certifying authority.

This interpretation conforms closely to Van Der Berg’s (2008) observation that schools in this country can be categorised as operating under separate data-generating processes.

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