Accountability, capacity and trust to improve learning outcomes in South Africa

Comparative case study report

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1. Introduction

South Africa has a long history of oppression and apartheid that has led to great inequalities. Despite its classification as an upper-middle income country, learning outcomes are generally poor. Only the top 16% of South African Grade 3 children are performing at an appropriate Grade 3 level, while the learning gap between the poorest 60% of students and the wealthiest 20% of students is approximately three Grade-levels in Grade 3, growing to four Grade-levels by Grade 9 (World Bank, 2008; Spaull and Kotze, 2015). Almost three decades after the fall of apartheid, the systematic racial segregation practiced under apartheid, in conjunction with an overtly white supremacist ideology still has a profound impact on South Africa's society as well as its education system (Spaull, 2012). Resources and capital are distributed unevenly across schools, according to Van der Berg (2011), Spaull (2012), and Finn et all (2014), and unequal resourcing contributes to a dualistic education system with large performance gaps related to wealth, socio-economic status, geographic location and language of students.

Accountability and trust play a key role in this divide and in whether and how key stakeholders address failure and inequalities. Spaull (2001) for example, explains how the national, provincial and local levels of government are not held accountable for their use of public resources, and how there are few (if any) tangible consequences for non-performance. The systematic review by Eddy Spicer, Ehren et al (2016) also describes a gap in accountability relationships between principals, school governing bodies and provincial authorities in South Africa: principals are part of school governing bodies which have acquired significant powers since decentralisation in 1996, but they are not held accountable for their performance by other members of these bodies (parents and teachers), nor by provincial authorities. Due to the fact that provincial authorities have no power to appoint or dismiss principals, there are limited incentives in place to improve school leadership (Nusche et al, 2013). Several authors (e.g. Spaull, 2015; Nusche et al, 2013) also report limited teacher accountability as, for example, school-based registers of teachers' attendance are not checked and national government fails to sanction teachers who are often absent.

The overall lack of trust in South Africa's education system seems to prevent the development and implementation of constructive accountability as teachers and principals are wary of any kind of control or monitoring. This is, according to Heystek (2006) felt acutely both within governance arrangements for schools and more broadly through the lack of trust between principals, teachers, governing bodies and the district and area office. This lack of trust is also reflected in the actions of strong teacher unions who have historically resisted the implementation of imposed accountability mechanisms (Spaull, 2014), due to their association with an ideologically imposed apartheid curriculum.

The relation between trust and control is the objective of much debate, particularly in the wieder field of organisational management. There, trust and control are described as two distinct ways to organize transactions between two contractual partners. Ostrom (2010) and Näslund and Hallström (2017) for example argue that monitoring by an external authority is unnecessary and costly when there is a setting of high trust and clear goal commitment ('*substitution perspective*'); trust and control are seen as parallel concepts and two different solutions to the same problem of organizing transactions and enhance exchange and coordinated action between two partners.

An alternative '*complementary perspective*' is described by Six and Verhoest (2017), Mills and Rubinstein Reiss (2017, p.39) and Barrera et al (2015, p.253) who say that control many strengthen trust and vice versa, if certain conditions are met. A complementary perspective posits a positive relationship between trust and control, where formal control can build trust by providing objective measures and rules that lead to a track record of compliance to be used in future trust evaluations (Mills and Rubinstein Reiss, 2017, p.39). Barrera et al (2015, p.253) further point out how monitoring can build trust as trust of a trustor increases with her/his possibility of informing other trustors about the behaviour of the trustee, or with the expected duration of a series of interactions between the trustor and trustee in the future.

In a third '*inverse perspective*', control is seen to violate the underpinning principle of trust and that you cannot control someone you trust. Gundlach and Cannon, 2010; Williamson; 1991) for example argue that control stems from a position of distrust (Macaulay, 1963): if one is not trusted, one trusts less, leading to a lower level of trust in the relationship. In a school context, a teacher who is evaluated and observed by his/her head teacher might feel that he/she is not trusted to do his/her job, particularly when other teachers are not undergoing the same type of evaluation.

The specific interaction between control and trust seems to depend on how those who are held to account initially perceive the external monitoring and control. As Näslund and Hallström (2017) explain, formal control may promote trust when those being regulated perceive the monitoring and sanction / reward process as a sign of good intentions and benevolence on the part of the regulator and when they interpret the monitoring as a signal of interest and credible concern. Control may also positively affect trust between partners in a transaction when they have to collaborate in response to the external monitoring. When control is however implemented in a distrustful relationship it can also lead to an escalation of distrust, according to these authors.

As of yet, there is little evidence of how trust and control interact in an educational environment where relations, such as between students and teachers, or teachers and head teachers, are typically not just transactional but have a high degree of co-creation. In an education context there isn't always an option to opt-out of a relationship and the interaction between various actors are typically not regulated through a set of independent buyer-supplier relations, but rather through hierarchical state control (e.g. a standardized national curriculum or legislation on compulsory school age). Quality of teaching and schooling also requires a level of professionalism that cannot easily be captured or coordinated through a mechanism of price, supply and demand and a set of contractual arrangements. As a result, the interaction between trust and control is likely to operate differently in an educational context compared to the type of transactional relations from which the three perspectives originate. The case studies presented here aim to provide a better understanding of how trust and accountability interact, or fail to interact to improve learning outcomes.

The section below presents our initial framework before describing the methodology of, and the findings from the case studies. We start with a brief description of the South African education system.

2. South Africa: the context

Apartheid was the system of government in South Africa, up until 1994. Under apartheid, people were separated on the basis of four racial groups: White, Black, Indian and Coloureds (or people of mixed race, or non-Whites who did not fit into the other non-White categories). Black people had to live in 'Homelands' (areas to which the majority of the Blacks population was moved to prevent them from living in the White urban areas of South Africa) and a separate school system was created for each of the four racial groups. Each of these systems had its own administration with large inequalities in teacher qualifications, teacher-pupil ratios, per capita funding, buildings, equipment, facilities, books, stationery, and also in the proportions and levels of certificates awarded[1]. White' schools were far better resourced and supported than any of the others. Under apartheid, education was one of the main means to oppress people, such as through the prescription of an impoverished curriculum of rote learning and examination criteria and procedures which were instrumental in promoting the political perspectives of those in power. Teachers were allowed very little latitude to determine standards or to interpret the work of their students. A network of inspectors and subject advisors on the one hand, and their poor qualifications on the other hand ensured their subjugation to White ruling. White teachers were, on the other hand, consulted on the design and implementation of curricula and had a large degree of autonomy in their work with mostly professional control (Spaull, 2013; Wills, 2016).

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[1] http://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-5/apartheid-education

After the abolishment of the apartheid regime in 1994 and the constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996, the schooling system was considered to be one of the key reform areas and one of the main building blocks towards a well-functioning democracy. The South African Schools Act of 1996 for example aimed to establish a uniform system for the governance and funding of schools, recognizing that a new national system for schools was needed to redress past injustices, supporting the rights of learners, educators and parents and setting out the duties and responsibilities of the State[2]. The Act and other post-Apartheid reforms and policies, such as the introduction of one national curriculum and devolving power to school governing bodies, aimed to address these deep historical inequalities, but neither policy –nor implementation - managed to do so successfully, according to Moloi (2014). To this date, South Africa has one of the most unequal education systems in the world, where the former system of homelands still largely determines the current geographic configuration of the country with unequal access to high quality schooling in many areas, particularly affecting black children. Former white schools generally achieve the best results in the system, while former African 'homeland' schools still, in general suffer the worst results.

Post-apartheid
Several authors refer to two differently functioning sub-systems (Fleisch, 2008, Van der Berg, 2008, Taylor and Yu, 2009; Spaull, 2013) where the majority of, mainly black and coloured students are located in the historically disadvantaged system in schools in quintile 1-3 (particularly in rural areas and townships in Limpopo, the North West and). While a second sub-system of schools that historically served white children produces educational achievements closer to the norms of developed countries (schools in quintile 4 and 5, particularly in the Western Cape and Gauteng). The effects of socio-economic status in maintaining such high inequalities are, according to Taylor and Yu (2009) and Smith (2011) intensified through schools as disadvantaged students not only have to contend with poorer schooling conditions (e.g. higher teacher-pupil ratios, lack of materials and less qualified teachers), but also with a lack of general well-being (e.g. malnutrition, insecure living environment), which is reinforced by peers who face similar conditions.

Subsequent governments after Apartheid have aimed to address high inequalities through national development planning which can be characterized by the following phases:
1994: the Reconstruction and Development Program (RSA,1994[3]) under Mandela, aimed at achieving poverty alleviation and a stronger economy was more redistributive than subsequent plans.
1996: the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (RSA,1996b[4]) macro-economic framework under Mbeki oriented towards a more neo-liberal paradigm, and
2012: the National Development Plan; a vision for 2030[5], influenced by the concept of the developmental state that was inaugurated under the Zuma administration with limited implementation against a backdrop of limited economic growth and deepening social and economic inequality.

Across these phases, the schooling system was considered to be one of the key reform areas and one of the main building blocks towards a well-functioning democracy. The South African Schools Act of 1996 for example aimed to establish one new national system for schools to redress past injustices; a national curriculum and set of assessments for all schools was one of the key reforms to address the deep historical inequalities[6]. Curriculum policy in the new democratic state aimed to set out the subjects, the knowledge content and the methodology of teaching and learning, thereby ensuring an equal knowledge base and cultural canon shared by all learners. The national curriculum also included

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[2]

https://ossafrica.com/esst/index.php?title=Summary_of_the_South_African_Schools_Act%2C_no._84_of_1996
[3] Republic of South Africa (RSA). 1994. RDP White Paper: Discussion Document, Cape Town, CTP Book Printers
[4] Republic of South Africa (RSA). 1996b. Growth, Employment and Redistribution, A Macroeconomic Strategy. Pretoria, Government Printer, June
[5] National Planning Commission, 2011: National Development Plan: Vision for 2030. Pretoria: National Planning Commission.
[6]

https://ossafrica.com/esst/index.php?title=Summary_of_the_South_African_Schools_Act%2C_no._84_of_1996

the types of assessment designed for teachers to learn about students' mastery of the curriculum. It was expected to structure the expectations and demand of teachers and as such had a major impact on teacher's working lives and the extent to which they have agency over their profession.

The present context bears the historical influence of past national plans and their levels of implementation, as well as of the past Apartheid regime and ongoing effects of globalisation and neo-liberalism on the South African economy. An understanding of this broader context of reform of South Africa's society is important as interactions between role players in education are framed by the country's constitution, shaped by successive national development plans and impacted by the political exigencies of the day. Below we will further detail the present state of the education system, starting with a description of the main actors in South Africa's education system: the National Department of Education, the Provincial Districts of Education, District offices, School Governing bodies, School Management teams, teachers (and their teacher unions), learners and parents.

2.1 Roles and responsibilities of main actors

Døssing et al (2011, p.17-24) explain how the Department of Education is responsible for determining policies, implementing education strategies and monitoring and evaluating the delivery of education by the nine provincial departments of education. The South African Schools Act 1996 states that the department is also responsible for defining the norms and standards for education planning, provision, governance monitoring and evaluation, which are implemented by provincial departments. These departments are required to allocate part of their funding to meet national policy, but have discretion over deciding on the proportion of their budgets they will spend on national or more local priorities. Provincial departments redistribute funding to districts, based on the number of schools and students in their area. Provinces are also responsible for teacher allocation and redeployment; each province has its own formula for calculating the quota of teachers to which each school is entitled; teachers above the quota are placed on a redeployment list. In some cases, school governing bodies appoint teachers and pay them out of their own school budget (particularly in wealthy schools) (Lemon, 2004).

Decision-making powers of provincial departments of education are further devolved to district and regional offices and to elected school governing bodies responsible for school governance. District offices are primarily responsible for the administrative, professional and managerial support of schools (Padayachee et al, 2015). For this purpose, district subject advisors are expected to visit schools to monitor and support schools in complying with (national and provincial) policy and in their curriculum provision. According to Van der Berg et al (2011), districts however tend to fulfil almost exclusively a monitoring role and are often ineffective at providing support to schools.

School governing bodies were introduced as a result of the South African Schools Act in 1996[7] with the purpose of spreading democracy in schools and into the wider society (Adams and Waghid, 2003; Mncube, 2007). The mandate of the school governing body is to determine the admission policy, appoint staff and determine the school budget and fees. In primary schools, schools governing bodies are comprised of representative educators, non-teaching staff and parents. The school principal is an ex-officio member and does not have voting rights; parents should constitute the highest number of members. School governing bodies can also include additional external members who advise the board on specific areas of expertise. School governing bodies are (within restrictions set by national legislation) in charge of the school's admission policy, the language policy of the school, issuing rules for conducing religious observances at the school, adopting a code of conduct for students, recommending the appointment of school staff to provincial departments, deciding on school fees (in schools in quintile 4 and 5), and preparing the annual budget (Beckman, 2002).

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[7] Jenni Karlsson (2002) The Role of Democratic Governing Bodies in South African Schools Comparative Education Vol. 38, No. 3, Special Number (25): Democracy and Authoritarianism in Education (Aug., 2002), pp. 327-336; Tony Bush & Jan Heystek (2003) School Governance in the New South Africa Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education Volume 33, 2003 - Issue 2

School governing bodies delegate the overall management of the school to the school management team which has the formal responsibility for organising and administering all learning and teaching activities, including managing staff, planning the curriculum, and assessing the performance of learners and educators. School management teams usually comprise heads of departments, the deputy principal and the principal, where the principal of the school is entrusted with day-to-day management (e.g. implementing educational programmes and curriculum activities, management of staff and learning and teaching support materials, and safe-keeping records). According to Van der Berg et al (2011), principals however often do not spend the majority of their time on aspects of instructional leadership but rather on administrative duties and learner discipline.

2.2 Educational accountability in South Africa

Accountability relations and provisions for the monitoring and evaluation of schools post-Apartheid are specified in the South African Schools Act (SASA), the South African Council for Educators Act (No. 31 of 2000), ELRC (Education Labour and Relations Council) resolutions, the Employment of Education Act, and the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit Bill (2011[8]). Key elements are:

o   Annual reporting to the province
o   Integrated quality management system (IQMS, including developmental appraisal, performance measurement, and whole school evaluation)
o   Annual National Assessments in grades 1, 6 and 9 (ANA)
o   South African Council of Educators (SACE)
o   NEEDU

Principal's annual report to the province
Accountability relations between provincial departments of education and schools are specified in the South African Schools Act (SASA), where section 16A requires school principals to submit an annual report on school performance to the provincial head of department. If the school is deemed to be underperforming, the principal must discuss an improvement plan with the school's governing body and submit the plan to the province. Provincial heads of department are, under section 58 of the SASA, required to identify underperforming schools, demand a plan, and take all reasonable steps to assist underperforming schools to improve (NEEDU, 2013).

Integrated quality management system
The IQMS was introduced in 2005 (Resolution 8 of Education Labour Relations Council, 2003) and consists of three programmes, aimed at enhancing and monitoring performance: developmental appraisal, performance measurement, and whole school evaluation. Levy (2016) describes how the IQMS integrates existing programmes on quality management in education (particularly the whole school evaluation), into a comprehensive package of appraisal and evaluation. This new system was described as a bargained 'compromise' between the state and unions, which combined aspects of previous systems and which was premised on the principle that 'development had to take place before any summative evaluation' (Levy, 2016).
Part of the IQMS is a developmental appraisal (DA) of individual teachers, which teachers in preparation of their Personal Growth Plan (PGP), in being observed while teaching lessons, and in completing the assessment process together with his/her Developmental Support Group (DSG) that includes his/her supervisor and a peer. The IQMS rules specify that the peer may not be selected on the basis of friendship.

A DSG must keep a record of proceedings including pre- and post- evaluation meetings. In terms of internal support, principals seldom have the time to see every teacher in order to provide feedback to support of the teacher and her DSG colleagues (Whitley,2016,42) in which case there is limited consultation or sharing outside of the three person DSG.

According to Levy (2016), the purpose of developmental appraisal (DA) is to appraise individual educators in a transparent manner, with a view to determining areas of strength and weakness, and to draw up programmes for individual development. The appraisal is also used to decide on individual teachers' salary progression, grade progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards and incentives.

The, second elements of the IQMS - the whole school evaluation (WSE)- evaluates the overall effectiveness of a school, as well as the quality of teaching and learning.

Ramnarain (2008:V) proposes that the effectiveness of IQMS implementation can be gauged through how three discourses are articulated by participants: compliance discourse, the discourse of accountability, and the discourse of development. The developmental purpose of teacher appraisal assumes that in theory teachers trust one another and want to improve their performance by reflecting together as professionals on their development needs. (Bartlett, 2000 in Monyatsi et al., 2006,p.11)

ANA

The first measure of learners' performance in primary education was the Annual National Assessment (ANA) in grades 1, 6 and 9, implemented from 2010 onwards. The Annual National Assessments (ANA) are standardised national assessments for languages and mathematics; question papers and marking memoranda (exemplars) are supplied by the national Department of Basic Education and the schools manage the conduct of the tests as well as the marking and internal moderation. The scores are collated provincially and nationally and the Department of Education has set targets of at least 60% of learners achieving acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy by 2014 and 90% by 2024. The goals of the ANA are partly to expose teachers to better assessment practices, partly to serve as a systemic measure of performance and partly as an accountability measure for principals and teachers (DBE, 2010). The widespread implementation of the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) was an important milestone on the road to improving educational quality in South Africa according to Spaull (2014). These assessments enabled a nationally comparable (standardised) exam at the primary school level, where schools could be compared across provinces or districts, or over time. The assessments allowed policy-makers and parents to determine if a primary school was underperforming and target support where it is needed most.

SACE

The South African Council of Educators (SACE) is the professional council for educators and responsible for promoting professionalism amongst all educators in South Africa, by developing professional standards for teaching, a Code of Professional Ethics, and by overseeing the teaching profession (Van Onselen, 2012). The council can caution or reprimand educators, impose a fine and remove the name of an educator from its register, either for a specified period or indefinitely (or subject to other specific conditions).

According to Van Onselen (2012), the dode of professional ethics is structured to regulate various educator relationships. The requirement for an educator to 'refrain from any form of sexual harassment of learners' for example regulates the relationship between the educator and the learner; the relationship between educators and their profession is regulated through the requirement that an educator must 'keep abreast of educational trends and developments' and 'behave in a way that enhances the dignity and status of the teaching profession and that does not bring the profession into disrepute'. Furthermore, the requirement for educators to accept that 'certain responsibilities and authorities are vested in the employer through legislation' and that they 'serve his or her employer to the best of his or her ability' regulates the relationship between an educator and their employer.

NEEDU

The National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) was established in 2009 as an evaluation and development institution, independent of the administration of schools. NEEDU was set up to provide the Minister of Education with an authoritative, analytical and accurate account on the state of schools in South Africa and, in particular, on the status of teaching and learning. The Government Gazette (17 April 2009, No 32133) explains its remit as 'to review all existing policies, mechanisms, structures, processes and tools that evaluate and develop schools and teachers'. NEEDU

uses an evaluative approach to school assessment (explaining why the school performs as it does and how it could improve), rather than to undertake monitoring of schools (and assessing how good the school is).

All NEEDU's reporting includes a confidential school-specific report to each of the visited schools, allowing schools to respond within two weeks. An aggregate report is then send to the Ministry of Education to report on the state of education in specific areas. The report issued by NEEDU in 2012 assessed the Foundational Phase in urban areas, whereas the 2013 assessed the Intermediate Phase in rural areas. Both reports found that basic literacy and numeracy skills of South African learners are well below curriculum specifications, particularly in rural, less resourced and more remote, schools. The 2013 report has however not officially been released.

2.3 Trust in South Africa

Trust in South Africa is generally low. According to the 2018, Edelman barometer[9], the ruling ANC political party continually fails to capture the trust of a country in which only 14 percent of the general population trust the government. In South Africa, from 2017 to 2018 among the general population, trust in government dropped from 15 to 14 percent; in media from 39 to 35 percent; in business from 56 to 53 percent; and in NGOs from 58 to 50 percent. The OECD's 2017 better life index however indicates that In South Africa, 88% of people believe that they know someone they could rely on in a time of need, broadly in line with the OECD where the average of 89%[10]. In the World Values Survey of 2013 however, 76.2% of respondents said they needed to be careful in dealing with others.

3. Conceptual framework

Accountability and trust are considered beneficial for schools and systems to have, or to build the capacity for change, but both can be at odds with one another: the direction of the relationship between trust and accountability is complex and bi-directional; high stakes accountability often destroys trust or would be implemented in contexts where there is a pre-existing lack of trust in schools and teachers. But, on the other hand, accountability may also improve trust when locking partners into a sustainable collaboration. And to add to the complexity; capacity may serve as an outcome of both trust and accountability, such as when someone who has expert knowledge in a certain area is trusted to do his/her job well.

Both accountability and trust are constructs which have been studied extensively and conceptualized in various ways. A large body of work on trust for example aims to understand trust in (dyadic) interpersonal and intra-organizational relations, looking at economic transactions between buyer and supplier, or interactions between employer-employee, or regulator-regulatee (Six and Verhoest, 2017; Bachmann and Zaheer, 2006). Lyon, Mőllering and Saunders (2015) and Le Gall and Langley (2015) provide a framework to describe trust when categorizing different *forms* of trust, *antecedents* of trust, (elements fostering the creation of trust; institutional versus relational), *elements* (or modalities) enhancing trust (institutional versus relational), trust develops over *time (*the dynamics of trust), and how it is *context-dependent* and needs to be studied in a referent and at a level., and within a specified context.

The context we are interested in is of primary schools in South Africa, where trust can be conceptualized as constructs on the system level (general trust in society and public trust in the educational system and schools in general), the school level (organisational trust or collective trust in schools), as well as in interpersonal relations between learners and teachers, between staff in schools and between school staff and external stakeholders. The degree of trust between these actors or groups of actors on the microlevel is influenced and constraint by their school context, such as when there are institutional safeguards for building trust or when familiarity of roles in which people operate and

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[9] https://www.edelman.com/post/south-africa-trust-falls-business-expected-to-lead

[10] http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/south-africa/

interact breed trust (Lyon et al, 2015, p.6). These are, in turn also embedded in a district, provincial or national system of education and larger societal structure and the political, legal and economic framework, and informal rules which structure the organizational context of schools. Various authors summarize these interactions as the *social, temporal, structural, institutional embeddedness of trust*, specifying how surrounding phenomena or temporal conditions directly influence lower-level phenomena, condition relations between one or more variables at different levels of analysis, or are influenced by the phenomena nested within them (e.g. Lyon et al, 2015, p.7; Sitkin and Roth 1993; Coleman 1990; Barrera et al, 2015, p.252; Priem and Weibel, 2015, p.275, cf Bamberger, 2008, p.841).

A similar framework can be used to describe accountability: as a system of monitoring and evaluation and a culture of transparency and ethical values which prevent corruption and allow for a proper functioning of the rule of law. These would shape the evaluation and monitoring of educational quality on the school level, including a culture of internal accountability, the implementation of self-evaluation and peer review to improve learning outcomes and performance management to improve school staff's performance. These school-level systems and cultures will in turn affect accountability relations between staff and whether/how they interact and collaborate.

Trust and accountability will operate in tandem on each of these levels, such as where low levels of interpersonal trust in schools will see teachers working in silos without any accountability to peers or their head teacher, while a strong professional culture will allow staff to hold each other accountable for high learning outcomes and discuss ways for improvement in an open and transparent manner. The wider (accountability) system in which they work, as well as the general trust in the profession will have an effect on such interactions. Here we are particularly interested in trust and accountability on the school level; how school staff understand trust and accountability and how both trust and accountability interact to allow for high learning outcomes. Table 1 summarizes our framework with further detail below.

Table 1. Accountability and trust conceptualized

Trust	• Understanding of trust by school staff • Organisational and collective trust
Accountability	• Understanding and culture of accountability • Formal organisation of accountability (quality assurance and decision-making in the school, functioning of the school governing body, district monitoring and teacher unions)
Three perspectives on the interaction between trust and accountability	• Complementary perspective: trust and control can build on, or reinforce one another, such as when control confirms initial (positive) assumptions of someone's (perceived) trustworthiness. • Substitution perspective: control is positioned as a substitute for trust, saying that, in the presence of trust, control mechanisms are redundant and inefficient and resources for surveillance and monitoring can be put to better use. • Inverse perspective: control reduces trust between partners when collaborative actions or competent/benevolent/integer behaviours are attributed to the existence of these measures (when these incentivize and enforce collaborative behaviour), instead of a partner's innate trustworthiness.

3.1 Trust: understanding of trust and organisational/collective trust

Investigations of trust in interpersonal relations have traditionally been grounded in the work of economists, sociologists and psychologists, examining, for example, economic transactions between buyer and supplier, interactions between employer-employee, or between regulator-regulatee (Six and Verhoest, 2017; Bachmann and Zaheer, 2006). These fields have aimed to understand trust in various ways, such as a rational and calculated processes and how trust is shaped as a result of purposeful

decisions and choices available in a given context (economists and sociologists), or as the result of less explicit, routinized, intuitive and habitual actions where trust constitutes a set of beliefs, emotions, intentions and expectations (Lyon et al, 2015, p.8; Le Gall and Langley, 2015, p.38).

A common definition of trust across these studies is 'a trustor's willingness to take risk, based on assessments of a trustee's competence, benevolence and integrity' (Mayer et al's, 1995; cited in Addison, 2015, p.156). These three dimensions are further described by Oomsels and Bouckaert (2017, p.82-88) as:
- Competence: the perceived ability, or expectation that the other party has competence to successfully complete its task. Parents will for example trust teachers whom they feel are competent to teach specific subjects, or will trust a principal who is competent to lead a school. A person who means well but does not have the competence cannot be trusted, especially in the case of dependency and the involvement of some level of skill in the fulfilment of an expectation (Cerna, 2014). The roles people fulfil and the expectations and responsibilities that come with that role underpin an assessment of someone's competence. The example Seashore Louis (2007) provides of someone who was highly trusted as a principal but instantly distrusted when promoted to superintendent is a case in point. Professional standards look to instil trust in particular professions in such a way as to make their values and ethics transparent and to enhance professional accountability (Frowe, 2005).
- Benevolence: the expectation that the other party cares about the trustor's interests and needs. Teachers will for example trust their principal when (s)he looks out for them and has their best interest at heart when planning their timetable or managing their performance. Equally, parents will trust teachers who they feel act in the best interest of their child.
- Integrity: the expectation that the other party will act in a just and fair way, such as when a school principal treats all teachers in the same way, or when a teacher supports all children equally. Integrity in ethos or aims or mission of the school looks to create trust in a school's ability to care for students and staff.

Trust is not static but evolves over the course of relationships, according to Colquitt et al (2007) and Six and Verhoest (2017). When multiple exchanges among school staff evolve over time, they become somewhat stable properties of a school. Forsyth et al (2011) refer to 'collective trust', whereas Carless (2009) talks about 'organisational trust' when discussing the type of social exchanges that underpin social capital in a school. Both types of trust exist within and between various role groups in a school (e.g. the collective trust of the teaching staff as experienced by parents) and are formed on the basis of roles, relationships and interdependencies. According to Forsyth et al (2011), collective trust depends on congruence between group expectations (i.e., social norms) and actual behaviour. A pattern of behaviour inconsistent with socially accepted role expectations is likely to diminish collective trust. If, for example, a norm requiring teachers to report student performance to parents has not been institutionalized, parents are less likely to base judgments of teacher trustworthiness on this behaviour.

Forsyth et al (2011) further explain how teachers' trust in parents emerges through the multiple social exchanges that teachers have with each other. Teachers share their first, and second-hand evidence about parental behaviour. These exchanges take place in the shadow of existing, shared perceptions and norms governing 'how teachers talk about parents in this school', 'how teachers feel about parents in this school', and so on. Over time, as parent behaviour is discussed and evaluated against the expectations teachers have for parent behaviour and against criteria of trustworthiness, teachers socially construct a common set of beliefs about the trustworthiness of parents, and this becomes a stable property of the school.

Such collective or organisational trust in turn also influences interpersonal relations and trust as it sets the norms, values and rules that guide or even determine the behaviour of members of an organisation, according to Näslund and Tamm Hallström (2017). A shared set of collective beliefs, norms and values is thus an important condition for collaboration and collective trust. Here we are particularly interested in the norms and values that underpin the trust relation itself. Is school

performance related to whether school staff have a shared understanding of why they would trust someone?

Muethel (2015) and Welter and Alex (2015) studies of employees' and entrepreneurs' understanding of trust in 42 countries provide an insight into how people from different countries and cultures understand trust differently. They for example find that honesty would be a universal value through which people come to trust others, but how people from different cultures vary in how they understand honesty. In some countries, honesty is viewed as an independent value and truth that is not bound to any contextual influence, while in other countries it is shaped by the social relation in which one trusts someone else. This is well exemplified by Muethel (2015) who describes how her respondents from Germany and China varied in how they rank order values that can be used to describe trust, such as credibility, morality, benevolence, carefulness, goodwill, competence, expertness, reliability, responsiveness, predictability, dependability, openness, shared understanding, dynamism, and personal attraction (see also Mayer et al, 1995). In Germany, a cognitive assessment of someone's competence for example dominated over Chinese preferences for more affective aspects of trust. Similar variations might apply to how teachers and principals in schools understand trust and how this affects their collaboration.

3.2 Accountability: formal systems and understanding and culture of accountability

Anderson (2005), describes how educators work mostly within three types of accountability systems, often simultaneously. In the first (compliance-oriented) system, they are held accountable for adherence to rules and accountable to the bureaucracy. The second (professional accountability) system is based upon adherence to professional norms where educators are held accountable by their peers, such as through peer review, whereas in the third (performance-based accountability), educators are accountable for student learning and outcomes to the general public. The various concepts reflect different types of relations in terms of who holds whom to account, the types of measures and evaluations to inform these relations, the judgements and decisions from these evaluations and the resulting consequences.

These 'accountability relations' feature in Klijn and Koppenjan's (2014, p.264) definition of accountability as 'the extent to which actors (accounters: those rendering accounts) are held accountable for their behaviour and performance by other actors (accountees: those to whom account is rendered)'. Accountability refers, according to Bovens (2005), to a specific set of social relations in which an actor feels an obligation to explain and to justify their conduct to some significant other. The actor in our context can be a teacher, a headteacher or a school. The significant other, called the 'accountability forum' by Bovens, can be the general public, central government or the parents of the children in the school.

The accountability relationships in South Africa's education system are predominantly vertical and situated in a compliance-oriented system where teachers are accountable to their principal and school management team. Schools are held accountable by their school governing body, and districts monitor the quality of schools and teachers. Further up the hierarchy, provincial departments of education are accountable to the national Department of Basic Education through a set of performance targets and measures.

The accountability across these vertical relationships is regulated by the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) which includes teachers preparation of their personal growth plan, being observed while teaching lessons and completing the assessment process with his/her developmental support group which includes the teacher's line manager and a peer. The peer should have appropriate phase/learning area and subject expertise. The IQMS rules specify that the peer may not be selected on the basis of friendship. The Developmental Support Group is supposed to conduct its work so that the capability of the teaching staff and the school gain from the appraisal process and at the same time, the teacher being appraised is expected to make gains in terms of her personal and professional development.

Accountability is also introduced through regular monitoring of teachers work responsibilities throughout the year, paying attention to teacher's and their supervisor's observance of these activities (e.g. weekly planning, lesson preparation, marking learner workbooks) and also to how teachers conduct learner assessments as forms of accountability in practice.

External to these vertical accountability relations, we find the South African Council of Educators (SACE), a body responsible for the registration, management of professional development and inculcation of a code of ethics for all educators. They uphold the professional accountability of teachers by developing teaching standards and dealing with complaints over teacher (mis)conduct. External monitoring also includes the evaluation and monitoring of schools by the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU), and (up to 2015) the Annual National Assessment (ANA), developed by the Department for Basic Education and monitored by the South African Qualifications Authority (Van der Berg et al, 2011). NEEDU's scheduled evaluations for 2017-2021 include system-wide monitoring of a sample of schools on the use of workbooks and allocation of tuition time to inform policy. The ANA was administered and marked by schools (with verification of scores and moderating procedures in a national sample) and there are no consequences for outcomes; the ANA introduced an element of performance-based accountability although the test was halted in 2015 after strong opposition from teacher unions. (South Africa yearbook 16/17).

The term 'accountability' often also used to refer to wider notions of transparency (e.g. in decision-making), taking responsibility for high quality performance and outcomes and answerability to stakeholders and the wider public. Such responsibilities and answerability can be showcased through other structures, processes and activities than the monitoring and evaluation of schools such as when parents have a representative on the governing body of a school, or when a student council discusses ongoing issues with their school's management team.

The core purposes of the South African IQMS as part of the quality management system are: to determine competence, to assess strengths and areas for future development, to ensure continued growth, to promote accountability and to monitor the overall effectiveness of an institution. (Hariparsad *et al.*, 2006:1). Ramnarain (2008:V) proposes that the effectiveness of IQMS implementation can be gauged through how three discourses are articulated by participants: compliance discourse, the discourse of accountability, and the discourse of development. The developmental purpose of teacher appraisal assumes that in theory teachers trust one another and want to improve their performance by reflecting together as professionals on their development needs. (Bartlett, 2000 in Monyatsi *et al.*, 2006,p.11)

In our case studies we asked respondents to explain their understanding of 'accountability' and describe both the formal structure for quality evaluation and improvement (including the decision-making structure underpinning these and the role of the school governing body, district and teacher union), and the informal culture, practice and norms to evaluation and improvement.

3.3 Three perspectives on trust and control

Six discusses the relationship between trust and control in (Ehren and Baxter, 2021) in a school context and whether these can meaningfully be part of one and the same relation. She positions accountability as a form of control, saying that both accountability and control are about setting standards, gathering information and making judgements, possibly followed by interventions. 'Control', according to Six, is usually defined from the perspective of the controller, while accountability takes the position of the account-giver. In our framework we use the two somewhat interchangeably as they both can be seen as an attempt by partners in an exchange relation to address the vulnerabilities inherent in trust by producing relevant information on someone else's competencies and intentions.

Given the lack of work in an education context, we build on research from the field of organisational management to position potential interactions between trust and control. In this literature, the relationship between trust and control is studied in manager-subordinate relationships, business alliances and supplier-customer relationships, according to Six and Verhoest (2017). Authors from these fields look at trust and control in exchange relationships and how both lead to high performance, either separately or combined; control is conceptualized as 'producing information about a partner's performance and intentions, such as through formal modes of governance and overt monitoring (Gundlach and Cannon, 2010). Below we further describe the three perspectives on how trust and control interact.

Complementary perspective

The first complementary perspective positions trust and control as complements which can reinforce one another and lead to better, and a broader set of performance outcomes (Barrera et al, 2015; Mills and Rubinstein Reiss, 2017; Näslund and Hallström, 2017). This perspective contends that governance of exchange relations may be crafted with multiple mechanisms that address different governance problems. In this perspective, the information gathered on someone's performance may for example confirm initial (positive) assumptions of someone's (perceived) trustworthiness and enhance the collaboration and trust between partners. Monitoring and control can also provide information that both partners can use to improve their exchange. In this case, control and monitoring and being accountable to someone else will (when implemented and enacted in a fair and just way and introduced in a collaborative setting) ensure that trust becomes a social reality, or an established feature of the relationship. As Näslund and Hallström (2017) explain, formal control may promote trust when those being regulated perceive the monitoring and sanction / reward process as a sign of good intentions and benevolence on the part of the regulator and when they interpret the monitoring as a signal of interest and credible concern.

In a school setting, a head teacher who performance manages his/her teachers would come to trust these teachers when these performance reviews confirm that teachers are doing a good job and are trying to teach well. Teachers would equally come to trust their head teacher when they feel they are treated fairly and just and understand the performance management to be implemented in an attempt to help them improve their work. In this case, the control and monitoring by the head teacher and teachers being accountable to their head teacher can promote trust and ensure that it becomes an established feature of the relationship. Formal control may thus promote trust when those being regulated perceive the monitoring and sanction / reward process as a sign of good intentions and benevolence on the part of the regulator and when they interpret the monitoring as a signal of interest and credible concern.

Substitution perspective

The second substitution perspective positions trust and control as two separate governance mechanisms: you either transact on the basis of trust, or on the basis of contractual agreements and verification. In this view, control mechanisms are viewed as redundant and inefficient when there is trust between partners. The higher transaction cost of control and monitoring are seen to lower performance, particularly when measured in terms of efficiency (Williamson 1991; Granovetter, 1985).

The argument was initially developed in the context of economic transactions where buyers either trust their supplier to deliver good quality goods, or control suppliers to work according to contractual specifications. In an education context a similar logic however applies when we position teachers or head teachers as the suppliers of education, where parents and students (or a central state on their behalf) are 'buying' the education. When there is a high level of trust in the relationship, the need for effortful monitoring and frequent reanalysis of a situation or relationship is reduced as it enables people to make intuitive judgements and evaluations on the basis a few simpler rules or cues (Lewicki and Brinsfield, 2015; Ostrom, 2010). In a context of high trust where partners in the relationship share

the same set of goals and are committed to meeting these goals, intensive monitoring is seen to be unnecessary and costly.

In a school context, we would expect a head teacher not to performance manage his/her staff through a formal process of annual reviews. Trust would allow him/her to regularly observe his/her teachers, offer feedback on the quality of lessons and monitor in a more informal manner. More formal monitoring, in a substitution perspective would be viewed as pointless, adding no extra value, and possibly detracting from the trust relationship already established between parties, particularly when there is clear goal commitment from both partners in the relationship.

Inverse perspective

The use of monitoring and control can however also crowd out trust in the sense that the level of trust in the relationship is eroded when control and monitoring are introduced. Control is thought to reduce the level of trust in the relationship when partners in a relationship attribute the collaborative behaviour to the existence of control and monitoring, instead of innate behaviours and values on which trust would be based. In our previous example of performance management in a school, the head teacher would believe that teachers are only doing a good job because they are performance managed instead of out of intrinsic interest and concern for students' learning and the quality of the school.

Those who argue for this inverse perspective (Gundlach and Cannon, 2010; Williamson; 1991) would state that control violates the underpinning principle of trust and that you cannot control someone you trust. These colleagues would argue that control stems from a position of distrust (Macaulay, 1963). If one is not trusted, one trusts less, leading to a lower level of trust in the relationship (Enzle & Anderson, 1993).

4. Methodology

Our methodology consists of case studies of 8 schools: 4 low performing and 4 high performing schools, located in Gauteng (urban decentralized province) and) and KwaZulu-Natal (urban centralized), where schools also vary according to poverty quintile. Schools in quintile 1 cater for the poorest 20% of learners, while schools in quintile 5 have the wealthiest 20% of learners, although the distinction is made on relatively crude measures (aerial photography of an area, instead of pupil-level census data). In these schools we interviewed school staff, their district representative and asked them to complete a trust exercise. We also analysed school documents.

4.1 Selection of cases and respondents

We used the following datasets to sample our 8 schools:
2014 South African Annual National Assessments (ANAs) (DBE 2014),
2014 Schools by Settlement Type (Wilson 2014),
2017 South African Annual Snap Survey for Ordinary Schools (DBE 2017a)
2017 South African Schools Masterlist (DBE 2017b).

The datasets were tidied by removing any inconsistencies, standardizing common variables across the datasets and merging the datasets into one set. The following steps were taken to sample schools:
1. Using the national schools masterlist, we looked at the distribution of schools by quintile. The quintile classification is a proxy for the socio-economic status of the school. Just over three quarters of all the schools fall into quintiles 1 to 3, which represent the poorest schools. The remaining are either independent or least poor schools. There is provincial variations of quintiles by province.
2. We used the 2017 SNAP survey to get learner enrolments for all the schools. In particular, we were interested in learner enrolments for all primary school grades. We only included schools in the snap survey that have all grades 1 to 6 (about two thirds of all schools)

3. For the purposes of this research study, we then classified schools as rural if they are located in a traditional residential setting, small holdings and farms. Otherwise, we classified the schools as urban.
4. We derived a performance variable using ANA data. The performance variable was developed to have five "quintiles" of performance, with each quintile having approximately the same number of schools. Performance "quintile" 1 has approximately 20% of the lowest performing schools, while Performance "quintile" 5 has approximately 20% of the highest performing schools by subject. This should not be confused with the national school quintiles discussed earlier (which are based on socio-economic status). The performance "quintiles" were made to be province, grade and subject specific.
5. Mathematics is the only subject that is common across all the schools in the ANA data. As such, performance in mathematics was used to classify low and high performing schools. In order, for a school to be classified as low performing it had to be in performance "quintile" 1 for both Grades 3 and 6 assessments. Similarly, a school was classified as high performing if was in performance "quintile" 5 for both Grade 3 and Grade 6 assessments. Schools not meeting the two criteria were excluded from the sampling frame. The weakness of the criteria is that schools whose learners are struggling with languages might be at worse disadvantage.

Table 2 shows the number of schools in the final sampling frame by province, performance, urban/rural and national schools quintile.

Table 2. Sampling frame

				1	2	3	4	5	NA
GT	High Performing	RURAL		0	0	0	1	1	0
		URBAN		1	1	5	12	135	3
	Low Performing	RURAL		1	2	0	0	0	0
		URBAN		16	18	14	31	3	3
KZN	High Performing	RURAL		72	56	25	5	3	0
		URBAN		2	7	5	31	70	2
	Low Performing	RURAL		104	109	30	1	1	8
		URBAN		3	4	11	10	4	34

From this sampling frame, a total of 8 schools, 4 from Gauteng and 4 from KwaZulu-Natal Provinces were randomly sampled. The sampling requirement was to have 50% of schools to be low performing, 50% had to be from rural areas and 50% from the two provinces, as far as was possible. There was an adjustment to the sample for KZN as there was a request to exclude Pinetown district as there is another intervention actively doing research there and also to exclude schools whose enrolments were less than the average provincial enrolment.

In each school we asked the following staff members to participate:
1. Head teacher
2. All heads of department (according to phase)
3. Math and language teachers in grade 3 and 6 (foundation and intermediate phase, 4 teachers)
4. Teacher union representative (shop steward/organizer/union rep)
5. Chair and member of the current School Governing Body (SGB).
6. District subject advisor for that school

Table 3 shows that eight schools participated in the study, four in the category low performing and four in the category high performing. The total number of respondents from the low performing schools (N = 84) was smaller compared to the number of respondents (N = 129) from the high performing schools.

Table 3: Case study sample

High performing N = 129 (all poverty quintile 5)			Low performing N = 84 (all poverty quintile 1)		
School	*Teachers*	*Others*	*School*	*Teachers*	*Others*
School 1 (Gauteng)	43	5 Hod 2 deputy principal 1 principal 2 'missing value' 1 IDSO (Institutional Development Support Officer)	School 3 (Gauteng)	11	3 HoD 1 Circuit manager
School 2 (Gauteng)	18	3 HoD 1 Deputy principal 1 Principal 1 Circuit manager	School 4 (Gauteng)	32	5 HoD 2 Deputy principal 1 Principal Circuit manager
School 5 (KZN)	20	3 Hod 1 Principal 1 Circuit manager	School 7 (KZN)	14	2 HoD 1 Circuit manager
School 6 (KZN)	23	3 HoD 1 Deputy principal 1 Principal 1 'missing value' 1 Circuit manager and Chief (CES) Subject advisor	School 8 (KZN)	11	2 HoD 1 Principal 1 Circuit manager

Table 4. Background characteristics of (all) staff in case study schools

High performing *N* = 129					
	Gender	Population group	Home Language	Teaching qualification	Average number of years in the school
School 1 (Gauteng)	13 Male 40 Female	53 White	52 Afrikaans	41 yes 11 no	8,04
School 2 (Gauteng)	8 Male 15 Female	23 White	23 Afrikaans	18 yes 5 no	7,52
School 5 (KZN)	1 Male 23 Female	1 Black African 1 Coloured 9 Indian/Asian 13 White	1 Afrikaans 22 English	24 yes	6
School 6 (KZN)		3 Black African 2 Indian/Asian 24 White	3 Afrikaans 23 English 3 isiZulu	26 yes 2 no	6,48

Low performing *N* = 84					
	Gender	Population group	Home Language	Teaching qualification	Average number of years in the school
School 3 (Gauteng)	3 Male 10 Female	13 Black African	1 Afrikaans 1 Tshivenda 1 other 1 isiXosa 9 Setswana	13 yes	12,77
School 4 (Gauteng)	9 Male 31 Female	39 Black African	1 Tshivenda 1 Xitsonga 10 isiXosa 11 isiZulu 1 Sepedi 7 Sesotho 9 Setswana	38 yes	7,97
School 7 (KZN)	3 Male 13 Female	16 Black African	1 English 15 isiZulu	15 yes 1 no	5,83
School 8 (KZN)	5 Male 9 Female	13 Black African	14 isiZulu	12 yes 2 no	10,69

4.2 Data collection and analysis

Our data collection included interviews with school staff and a representative from the district, a trust exercise and an analysis of school documents.

The interviews with school staff, the school governing body and a district representative (see table 3) included questions on their role in the school, relations with colleagues (trust and accountability), the capacity of the school to provide a good quality education and understanding and practices of

accountability, school self-evaluation and external monitoring. The template for the interviews is included in appendix 1.

The first activity in the interviews included a trust exercise where respondents were asked to rank order 10 words according to the extent in which they capture trust. The exercise is an adaptation to the cross cultural exercise developed by Mayer et al 1995 (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995) and used as part of research in cross cultural settings by (Meuthel, 2015):

Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academy of management review, 20*(3), 709-734.

Meuthel, M. (2015). Mixed methods appication in trust reserach : simultaneous hybrid data collection in cross cultural settings using the board game method In F. Lyon, G. Mollering, & M. N. K. Saunders (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods on trust*. Cheltenham Edward Elgar. .

Respondents were asked to rank the statements in their order of importance in how well they describe their understanding of trust. where '1' is the phrase which captures trust most, and '10' the least

I will trust someone who:
-   Doesn't lie
-   Good at his job
-   Means well and tries to do the right thing
-   Not deceive me
-   Thinks that the same things are important as I do
-   Is reliable
-   Is fair
-   Has a good reputation with colleagues
-   Is caring
-   Will return a favour

Finally, our data collection included an analysis of the following school documents:
-   attendance registers (teacher/learner absence, learner/teacher ratio, school size)
-   visitors' log (when was the last whole school evaluation, when did district advisors visit in the last year)
-   minutes of the SGB meetings (if available) and AGM minutes with parents of the last 3 years
-   any strategy/improvement plans
-   whole-school evaluation report
-   website: finances and priorities, communication between school and parents

Table 5 provides a summary overview of our data collection.

Table 5. Case study data collection

	Interviews with school staff	Trust exercise	Document analysis
Interpersonal trust	x		
Understanding of trust	x	x	
Interpersonal trust	x		
Understanding of accountability	x		
School internal evaluation: practices and culture	x		x
District monitoring	x		x
Capacity for high quality teaching (resources, curriculum and lesson planning, behavioural/language and school fee policy)	x		x

Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed and analysed using AtlasTi according to the codebook in appendix 2. A case study report was written for each school and a summary for each school presented in the next section. We then compared the case study reports of high versus low performing schools to understand variations in trust and accountability in relation to school quality, and how trust and accountability in these two types of schools interact in a complementary, substitute or inverse manner.

The scores on the trust exercise were analysed for agreement between respondents in each school. For each school, the agreement in the ordering of the statements was tabulated, based on Kendall's coefficient of concordance. Kendall's coefficient of concordance is an index of interrater reliability of ordinal data. Kendall's W ranges from 0 (no agreement between raters) to 1 (complete agreement between raters). Complete agreement suggests that school staff have a similar understanding of trust and who to trust, whereas no agreement indicates varying viewpoints within the school.

5. Findings Case study reports of eight schools

This section presents the findings from our case studies with detailed descriptions for each school of how staff understand trust (including the results of the trust exercise), the trust relations in the school, how staff understand accountability and the systems in place for internal and external accountability and the capacity of schools to provide high quality teaching. In presenting the findings we distinguish between low and high performing schools to understand how trust and accountability might vary according to performance.

HP1. High-performing school 1

School 1 is a high-performing school which has a vision and strong professional code of conduct; apart from academic achievement, the school focuses on sports (in particular, cricket) and on turning out good citizens. School staff have a purposeful approach towards the planning of curriculum delivery and instruction, based on assessment outcomes where learners are only allowed to progress once they have mastered the content of their present grade. Teachers plan their lessons as a team and discuss learner problems and how to remedy these (including through after-school or out-of-class remedial teaching). CAPS, however, creates pressure to deliver the curriculum, and teachers say that the emphasis on quantity comprises their ability to deliver real/deep learning. They report that this is exacerbated by the large class sizes (40 to 46 a class) which sometimes also leads to teacher absence. There is a high absenteeism among learners in the winter due to lack of electrical heating in the classrooms, and due to illness.

School 1 serves a poor community but, according to staff, 80% are supportive of the school. However, students vary in the extent to which they behave appropriately in school and to which they are supported by parents with their homework and with their efforts to do well in school. The community has a high unemployment rate and some illiteracy, and many children are raised by their grandparents. However, there seems to be strong inner-group trust across the school and community, underpinned by a shared background (Christian faith, language, race) and shared values/professional code of conduct.

The school charges fees, but many parents are unable to pay and the school struggles financially. The SMT/SGB and the community work together with local business to raise money and food (e.g. parents working for McCain donating food). The school has a debt collection policy in place, but encourages parents to discuss problems paying fees early on.

The language of instruction in the school is Afrikaans, with English and Norther Sotho as a first additional language (NS only grade 1-3), a decision made by the SMT and SGB. The 5% of Black learners who attend the school, but do not speak Afrikaans are obliged to do so.

Understanding of trust

Two-thirds of respondents talk about trusted family members, sharing secrets and confiding in them. Two other respondents refer to colleagues when describing trust, and they talk about the principal and HOD who have the children's interests at heart and give straight answers. Similarity in background (black/white, language) is an important condition for trust. The trust exercise indicates that 'does not lie', 'doesn't deceive me' and 'is reliable' are the most important conditions for trusting someone in this school.

Trust exercise:

percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3

Does not lie	Good at his job	Means well and tries to do the right thing	Does not deceive me	Thinks that the same things are important as I do	Is reliable	Is fair	Has a good reputation with colleagues	Is caring	Will return a favour
86%	14%	0%	57%	14%	43%	0%	0%	0%	14%

Organisational trust

Within the school, trust is enhanced by having clear lines of communication and decision-making, reinforced by communication of a clear vision (those who cannot buy-in to it go to a different school) and choice of language (teachers/learners –often Black people– who do not speak Afrikaans go to a different school).

The school has a tight-knit community with a high level of trust which comes from most people having the same background (religion, race, language), having grown up in this community and going to church together. Trust is actively built within the school through regular and structured meetings where problems are discussed, joint lesson planning by teachers, clear lines of responsibility and decision-making procedures in which staff are consulted. Ultimately, SMT makes (and communicates) decisions, but all staff are treated in the same, fair way. Trust is also built by honouring commitments given.

A shared professional code of conduct, ensuring that actions are in the best interests of children, is what binds staff and the community. Acting in the best interests of children and the community promotes trust in the individuals concerned. Examples include teachers picking up children at home when they are late for school or do not show up, the principal who organising morning drop-off of children to allow for informal chats with parents, the principal who visits all classrooms in the morning to check for problems, has an open-door policy and waives his salary increment to increase the school budget. The principal also teaches and this ensures that (s)he better understands teachers' concerns.

Trust is broken when staff or parents do not act in the best interests of the children (e.g. parents not paying school fees, but spending their money on a BMW), when staff or parents gossip about someone behind their back, or when they scale up problems without discussing them with the person involved first (e.g. parents logging a complaint with the district before discussing it with the teacher or principal). Furthermore, those who come from a different background are often referred to as 'difficult'.

Respect (and trust) comes from the religious profile of the community where teachers (similar to preachers) are afforded a special status.

Understanding and culture of accountability

This school has a very high level of accountability (both formal and informal).

Understanding: this is an Afrikaans-speaking school where the word 'accountability' does not have a literal translation in Afrikaans. Respondents ask for an explanation from the interviewer and respond to it in their descriptions: being able to count on someone and proud to be someone you can count on, not wanting to disappoint others, being able to provide evidence and proof, that someone can trust you to do the work, practice what you preach. Accountability is about transparency and doing your job, about engaging with people who are not doing their job, keeping track of what was agreed on and actions points, and then following up on these in a structured and coordinated manner. A circuit manager explains how accountability is perceived as bullying and threatening, depending on how (s)he 'puts it', particularly when the person in question does not feel that something is their responsibility.

Informal practice and social norms: the principal is seen as the primary holder of accountability who implements 'accountability'; teachers would look to colleagues and how they are behaving, to check whether they are working as hard as they are; the principal visits all classrooms in the morning to check whether all teachers are in class and to check for problems.

Formal organisation of accountability

Formal organisation of accountability: clear structure for decision-making (majority rule in general) with extensive consultation and communication: SMT meets every morning; the principal checks all teachers' admin (where they have logged assessments and marking); grade monitoring system in which grade leaders choose 6 assessments from each class, monitor them and send a monitoring document to the HOD, who uses it to evaluate performance and advise teachers on how to improve (including offering help). The principal meets weekly with the SGB chair to discuss ongoing issues; a structured workplan of class visits of HODs by the department principal, of teachers by HODs from September to November; grade leaders discuss all learners with teachers by grade (including a question analysis to understand where learners are failing to meet CAPS and why); IQMS (including induction of new teachers); HODs/grade leaders carry out book and file verifications to check that teachers have set and marked all assignments and to find out whether interventions have been put in place and signed off by parents; assessment data is logged in the 'principal primary' system and then uploaded onto the district system; teachers and the principal have access to each other's data.

District and unions: the 'department' asks for 'many forms' to be filled in multiple times, is disorganised and often cancels meetings at the last minute (when HODs are already at the district office). Constant changes in reporting is costly as schools' internal systems need to be adapted; many forms are 'black holes': they just get filed and not filled in.
According to the circuit manager, unions block accountability in this school; when circuit managers ask questions to school staff ('why didn't you do this?'), they would go to the union, who would then blame the circuit manager for 'bullying'. However, there is little union involvement according to staff (SADTU and NAPTOSA), as staff are focused on work; there is no participation in strikes as that would take away learning time. Unions become involved when employment issues arise.

HP2. High-performing school 2

The school is a former model C school with an average class size of 1:31. The school has an image of having a high level of discipline and serving a rich population ('high society'), but this is not accurate according to the principal and teachers. The community experiences high unemployment, and children come to school unfed. Staff also talk about alcohol abuse amongst parents, who tend to disrespect teachers.

Staff turn-over is low and most staff are from the school's own community.

Teachers talk about having to rush through the curriculum and activities, and cannot repeat or practice skills. This is problematic given the high level of learner absenteeism. It creates pressure as teachers have to make sure learners sit all the assessments and have to keep them in during break time to do so. There are no remedial teachers to provide support. Teachers explain how they have to teach at the level of the average child, which means that some learners are left behind and not ready for the grade they are in (even failing to master the basics in maths: reasoning, multiples and times tables), while more talented learners get bored.

School primarily turns to SAOU (teachers' union) for support and professional development; staff characterise the district as unsupportive with workshops not having any value. Only a few known individuals at the district authority are seen as offering valuable support and advice to the school and these are sought out in case of problems.

Afrikaans is the first language of teaching and this also reflects a homogenous school population; most learners speak Afrikaans at home (and are White Christian).

Even though the school is a former model C (fee-paying) school, many parents are unable to pay the fees and the school has to rely on fundraising. Parents can go through a formal process with the department for fee exemption. The principal explains how (s)he starts with a gentle approach to ensure that parents comply with the school fee policy, starting with individual agreements, before moving towards the legal route. Fundraising and fees are used to pay for extra SGB teachers, a food scheme and for maintenance and infrastructure.

Understanding of trust

Only two respondents answered questions about their understanding of trust; in their answers, they refer to either their husband or HOD. In their descriptions, they refer to trust being earned over time and based on affinity, impartiality, confidentiality and particularly experience ('grey hair') and expertise. The trust exercise indicates that the most important conditions for gaining someone's trust in this school are: 'is reliable' and 'means well and tries to do the right thing'.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	Good at his job	Means well and tries to do the right thing	Does not deceive me	Thinks that the same things are important as I do	Is reliable	Is fair	Has a good reputation with colleagues	Is caring	Will return a favour
20%	10%	50%	30%	27%	80%	40%	30%	20%	0%

Organisational trust

Most staff have been in the school for over 5 years; turnover is low. The school is described as being for the 'high society', with parents who look down on teachers and are demanding in terms of both academic and extra-mural performance (always wanting their child on the A-team). This sometimes creates friction when they go behind a teacher's back to complain to the principal or make demands. Consistency in the teaching approach/curriculum and assessment is important for trust from parents; when they see varying practices across grades they question teachers' competence. Trust from parents is important to get them involved in school activities and help out.

The choice for Afrikaans as the language of instruction ensures a homogenous population of white learners and teachers from a Christian background. Those who are Christian and Afrikaans are described as 'fitting in', while those who do not fit in would go to another school.

Parents and staff will normally go to the principal when there are problems because it is part of traditional Afrikaans culture to turn to the leader when problems arise.

School staff describe the SGB as being supportive of the school.

The SMT starts the day with a briefing and timeline to discuss issues, and, according to the principal and HOD, there is further ongoing informal communication throughout the day to address any problems that come up, such as learner behavioural problems. School staff refer to constant communication by the school's management team and a high level of transparency in decision-making (sharing minutes with staff) and explain that this openness fosters trust. Decisions are made by the SMT who maintain a professional distance from staff/parents (not going to barbeques or being overly friendly with staff and parents: 'doing maatje maatje'); according to the (deputy) principal, this created tension at first, but has now resulted in him/her being respected by the community. The

(deputy) principal has an 'open door policy', and when teachers do not agree with a decision, they are asked to come up with a possible solution of their own.

School staff generally trust each other, particularly the most experienced staff, who are able to give good advice on how to deal with challenging situations and who know 'how to handle the curriculum and assessment'. One of the HODs is not trusted, as 'she has not made her mark'. Younger grade heads report that older teachers do not listen to them because of their lack of experience. In addition to competence, capacity and experience, other reasons to trust a colleague is when that person deals with a problem by ''tackling it head-on', discusses it to find a good solution based on expertise, and does not sweep things under the carpet.

There seems to be a high level of trust between the principal and the union rep, who discusses sensitive issues in confidence.

School staff have little organisational trust in the district in general; they reported that they only had interpersonal trust in specific people (institutional development and support official (IDSO) and circuit manager) who are called upon personally to provide support or answer questions. These district officials are trusted because of their background and because they would never expose a principal's wrongdoings to anyone outside the school.

The union (SAOU) is particularly relevant for state-paid teachers (not those employed by the SGB), and trust is placed in the union to sort out salary issues where the state cannot be trusted (e.g. when years spent teaching in a private school are not counted towards experience and pay grade). The union is also a trusted partner to offer valuable professional development opportunities, while district workshops are considered useless: e.g. slides are simply read out and knowhow is based on 'book knowledge'. According to teachers, the district does not understand the circumstances in which they teach and issues edicts that are untenable. The union rep is described by teachers and the principal as a trusted colleague who shares all information from the union with staff and the principal.

Understanding and culture of accountability

Understanding: knowing someone does her or his work well and is accountable for decisions at the school (i.e. that person can be trusted), they take responsibility for being a good teacher, they do not disappoint colleagues and are proud of themselves professionally, doing their job, doing the right thing for learners, they value transparency when there are changes or decisions are made, they have a strong sense of professionalism and honour their agreements. The principal is seen as the one who enacts the accountability of the school. According to the district, schools perceive accountability as bullying. Only when support is offered, and there is reciprocity and trust in the relationship does accountability become non-threatening.

Informal practice and social norms: the HOD of the foundation phase wasn't managing her department well and the principal put grade leaders and a co-HOD in place. The latter is now taking over as teachers see the difference in competence and prefer to turn to the co-HOD. The SGB chair does not get involved in the management of the school because teachers have to report to the principal (not to the SGB) and crossed lines would dilute the authority of the principal. The SGB works with the SMT to support the school. A culture of quality is promoted by encouraging teachers to find solutions to challenges and to refrain from top-down decision-making.

Formal organisation of accountability

The school was slightly disorganised, with teachers planning their lessons differently (using different planning books). The principal reorganised and aligned all the planning (with family help) at the start of the year. There is now a 'system of management' with regular subject meetings to discuss lesson planning, including short morning meetings to plan for the day and reflect on activities of the day before with the entire staff as well as bi-weekly SMT meetings. The HOD collects teachers' files

every second Monday and checks the planning, preparation and assessment marks. All moderation of assessments needs to be signed off by the HOD or by the grade/subject head.

The Principal and the HOD perform classroom visits based on an observation form (part of the district curriculum management framework) on which feedback is provided. The principal is observed by the IDSO.

Clear communication of decisions by the SMT and SGB, and these are supported by staff. Clear protocol for addressing problems to ensure parents and staff follow the chain of command (parents go to teachers first, then grade head, then HOD, then deputy principal and then principal). The principal will contact the district if he or she is unable to resolve the problem.

IQMS, particularly for department-employed teachers: class visits by the district to moderate learner files (grades 1, 2 and 3), exam papers in grades 3 and 6, and learners' books to ensure they are 'on the same page', sending in planning and assessment marks.

Visits of subject advisors (announced 7 days in advance) to evaluate quality of teaching and learning: comparing learners' books with the ATPs to check whether requirements are met and what percentage has been covered in each subject.

The circuit manager plans visits more frequently (once a week compared to once a term) depending on their performance, using data-driven districts' (analysis of data from the SA-SAMS), which offer reports of teacher attendance, learner attendance and failure rates in the various subjects.

The principal has trained the district IDSO, who used to be an administrator, and had much less experience.

The formal process to select and promote individuals into posts is explained below (staff hate 'hidden agendas' and believe that the best people get promoted).

Teachers now moderate each other's assessments (as required by the district) – analysing questions, answers and the marks awarded). They fill in forms for the district (providing proof that all assessment tasks have been completed), but these are not collected. Moderation was seen as valuable for comparison purposes, but the reporting to the district is meaningless. Moderation and assessment practice (and filling in district reports) was disjointed with experienced teachers opposing the practice, and younger teachers adhering to district requirements. Following an intervention by the grade leader, everyone now adheres to the same practice to prevent parental complaints, particularly those with children in different classes who see inconsistencies across the school.

The district authority is disorganised: they do not collect forms, they cancel meetings at the last minute and they do not honour agreements. This creates distrust and sets a bad example.

Teachers are required by the district to assess learners who are never in school. This demotivates both learners (who then continue to be absent) and teachers alike. Teachers are required by the district to assess learners, even where they have not been in class at all, and they also use their assessment as ammunition against parents.

The majority of teachers are members of the SAOU for professional reasons and because 'everyone is a member'. For Afrikaners who teach, SAOU is the most obvious choice of union. Relations between union reps and SMT are supportive. When the union organises a strike, teachers sign papers to say that they have joined the strike, but instead they continue teaching so as not to disrupt school. Union reps in the school receive all reports from lesson observations from the SMT and mediate in cases of conflict.

HP5. High-performing school 5

High-performing school, chosen by parents for its academic performance and extramural activities. The school tracks the performance of learners from primary to high school.

Some learners from poor backgrounds (e.g. staying with grandparents, not getting breakfast) impact on the performance of the school.

The curriculum and ATP present a challenge due to the amount that needs to be covered. This hampers meaningful engagement of learners and overload is stressful, resulting in no time for testing or remedial learning.

The curriculum is confusing as assessments do not cover all content and the school uses CAPS and Mfundo which have different curriculum structures.

Infrastructure is good; small class size (17-30)

Good learner discipline. Professional development primarily through teacher unions (NAPTOSA).

English is the language of instruction in grades 4 to 7; Afrikaans and isiZulu are also taught; isiZulu is the home language and the language of instruction in grades 1-3. Afrikaans is the students' third language, they learn it alongside English. If they haven't mastered Afrikaans by grade 3, they will do less well in reading.

Students have a variety of home languages and come from different countries, which is why the school (supported by parents) has chosen English as the language of instruction. English is viewed by parents as necessary for the job market. There is some confusion over who decided on teaching isiZulu (department or parents).

The school raises fees which help fund extra teachers as well as school buildings and facilities. Parents can apply for concessions and many do so.

Understanding of trust

Respondents reference both trusted friends and family members, learners, school staff and SGB, with some describing integrity, longevity of the relationship, respect, having an honourable character and not undermining one another. According to the trust exercise, 'does not lie' and 'does not deceive me' are important conditions for trust in this school.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	*Good at his job*	*Means well and tries to do the right thing*	*Does not deceive me*	*Thinks that the same things are important as I do*	*Is reliable*	*Is fair*	*Has a good reputation with colleagues*	*Is caring*	*Will return a favour*
80%	10%	50%	60%	20%	30%	40%	0%	0%	0%

Organisational trust

Trust is built over time through regular meetings and collaboration, and is based on experiences with people who have proven they can get the job done, set in an overall culture of respect (there was also one mention of confidentiality). It is difficult to trust someone you do not know.

Accountability and trust are strongly related, as accountability is framed as taking responsibility: you cannot trust someone who is not accountable.

There is a supportive community which is involved in the school. Staff turnover is low and many teachers have themselves been students of the school.

There is a culture of respect and a high level of trust among staff and between staff and learners. People acknowledge each other's culture or home background or religion, and diversity is actively celebrated. Trust is informed by protocol (e.g. who you need to talk to in case of a problem?) and someone's conduct (whether they have experience and you can rely on them).

The principal has an 'open-door' policy and staff feel comfortable enough to share problems. Good working relations are valued as is and sharing problems directly with those concerned (instead of via 5 or 6 other people). Approachability and serious efforts to solve a problem (rather than merely answering for the sake of answering) are important. The principal also stated that staff are his/her first

'point of trust', then SGB and then the Department of Education. Trust is framed as meaning good collaborative relationships and having these develop over time (i.e. trust is earned). Trust from staff is needed to implement the school's goals and is required for teachers to be able to do their work without fear or obstruction (walking on egg shells).

Trust between learners and teachers ensures they feel safe and happy and are engaged in learning.

There are clear lines of communication between teachers and the SGB, which promotes trust; teachers are asked by the SGB what they want improved and SGB acts on it; there is reciprocity of communication.

Parents mostly trust experienced teachers, but sometimes become too involved and try to second-guess teachers. Overall they are supportive, however.

There is a high level of suspicion between school staff and the circuit manager, although the principal talks about a good relationship (as the circuit manager is his immediate supervisor, has expertise and gives good guidance) and this helps to improve the school as it allows for a conversation about the curriculum and ongoing issues (not just checking that they are in order). The circuit manager feels that the relationship varies according to his or her decisions (if its not in their favour, they would dislike him or her) and there is never enough frequency of communication to develop trust. This is also in part true because he or she can get called away for emergencies when in the middle of working with the school.

There are two union reps (from NAPTOSA and SADTU) who both collaborate well.

Understanding and culture of accountability

Understanding:
Accountability is described as being about having a task and performing it diligently (accountability as responsibility). It is also described from the viewpoint of trust: being able to delegate tasks and knowing that you can rely on someone, because they will complete the task and take responsibility for it. It is also thought to be about being transparent and sharing information, and convincing people through a narrative when making decisions.

Informal practice and social norms:
Decision-making is based on open communication and shared decision-making. The principal says he is accountable to the community and the SGB on an ongoing basis verbally. He likens it to going for 'an interview at the school every day'. There is a strong culture of accountability/responsibility in the school, where the principal also acknowledges good performance, which teachers find motivating. There is also a strong sense that feedback should be used to make improvements (without taking it as personal criticism). Promotion and selection follow procedures, where everyone has to apply and appointments are made on merit (unions are not involved), including the elections of union reps.

Formal organisation of accountability

There is a protocol describing how parents should communicate with the school in case of problems (starting with addressing the teacher directly, then HOD and then the principal). This is followed by most parents.

The SGB is relatively new, but is working actively with the SMT to improve the school, asking in-depth questions when requests are made by the SMT. The SGB has high expectations of teachers and high learning standards. Regular meetings are held to discuss what is happening in the school.

Teachers have meetings with subject or grade leaders to discuss assessments results, including an item analysis, identifying learner problems that need to be addressed. Teachers also moderate 10% of each other's assessments. There is a process for the checking of teachers' books in multiple stages according to a set of criteria (regular marking, stickers to help child improve and encourage, children completed work that was set, and had teacher tried to ensure children covered concepts)where feedback is given to teachers: the grade leader checks books weekly or at their own discretion, the HOD checks the book checking of the grade leader and this is then also checked by the principal. The HODs perform class visits as part of the IQMS.

The circuit uses curriculum tracking in every subject to monitor the progress in covering the curriculum during school term. They also ask the school to submit financial statements, teacher

timesheets to monitor attendance and SA SAMS and Data Driven Districts for (online) monitoring of performance (based on logging of assessment results) and management. This information is supplemented by monthly reporting on financial indicators, as well as quarterly financial statements of income and expenditure.

Monitoring also take place through yearly completion of the IQMS tool (whole-school evaluation?) by which the department rates the school and generates an overview of challenges or weaknesses that the school needs to work on. This is described by the school as being mostly about 'paperwork' and not enough about learner achievement or staff development. A school can obtain a high score simply for having all the documentation in good order (filing system, policies).

The district authority visits the school, observes lessons, checks lesson plans and leaves behind a report showing how the performance of the school has been scored along with detailed feedback for teachers.

The circuit manager uses the school logbook to record that he/she has visited the school for monitoring purposes; this can then also be checked by his/her supervisor.

External monitoring is described as stressful and very time-consuming. It is organised according to a top-down approach where 'someone puts pressure on the district director, who then puts pressure on principals, who then puts pressure on teachers' (e.g. to fill in forms or report on performance).

The circuit and school do not seem to have a good relationship, which affects the external monitoring of the school; the circuit is also thought to have vested interests in the appointment of particular persons.

There is little union involvement in the school (they trust the school), and staff also rarely attend meetings. Most staff are members of NAPTOSA, although the principal is a member of SDATU. Staff mostly become involved in the union for professional development reasons. Union reps will ask members of staff to first speak to the principal or SGB before he/she intervenes.

HP6. High-performing school 6

School 6 is a high-performing (as measured by the last ANA in mathematics for grades 3 and 6 in 2014), quintile 5 (fee-paying) school, located in a formal residential, urban area.

The school is well-resourced (with whiteboards and Vimeo boards in every classroom, and a media centre) and well-organised, according to the acting principal and grade 3 teacher. The school does not allow facilities to become degraded and, for example, ensures that any broken taps are fixed, according the SGB finance member. Learners have access to various after-school activities, particularly sports (e.g. cricket and swimming).

Most school staff have been working in this school for many years and started here after their qualification. According to the acting principal, 'Only seven of the 40 teachers have been here for less than five years'. However, the last five years have seen more changes, including five younger teachers who left quickly according to the HOD intermediate phase, as younger staff tend to leave for 'greener pastures' (for instance, in the private sector or abroad). Of the 40 teachers, only 19 are paid by the state and 21 are SGB-funded (according to the acting principal and school documents). The SGB-appointed teachers (75% of the school budget) are all specialist teachers, according to the HOD intermediate phase ; they teach 'physical education, art and computers'. Each grade has approximately four teachers and the acting principal tries to ensure that each teacher has an intern as an assistant teacher; the school now has six interns, one for each grade (four according to school documents).

The school has 673 learners on the roll (340 female, 333 male) and class sizes between 24 and 30; the school policy is to have a maximum of 30 learners in a class.

According to the SGB chair and SGB finance member, the number of people in the local community is growing, which means that the school cannot accommodate all the children in the area and is currently oversubscribed.

Most staff describe the school as a close community (a family) with dedicated and high-quality staff. The culture, according to the grade 3 teacher, is 'one of wishing to succeed in everything that we do'.

According to the acting principal, 'staff really go above and beyond what is expected of them' and 'they will give extra lessons to children at no charge. They support kids, they do sports twice a week late into the afternoons, and they work over the weekend'.

The language of instruction in the school is English as the school is a former model C school. In the past, the school was 'dual medium' with instruction in English and Afrikaans. However, the SGB changed the language of instruction to English following a change in learner population. According to the grade 3 teacher, there is now 'a small class of Afrikaans' and the school also offers both isiZulu and Afrikaans as an additional language up to grade 3, given that English cannot be the additional language, despite the fact that most learners speak English at home. Learners have to choose either isiZulu or Afrikaans from grade 3 onwards. Most teachers are English-speaking, except for two teachers who have isiZulu as their home language, and five teachers who speak Afrikaans.
Many parents would opt for IsiZulu as an additional language as 'some of the universities won't take students unless they actually have IsiZulu as one of their components' (grade 3 teacher).

The subject advisor explains how the district has overruled some schools in townships who wanted to teach in English as a way to attract more learners, and has forced them to teach in Zulu as a second language because the school would otherwise disadvantage black learners.

The school is fee-paying and parents have to sign an agreement undertaking to pay the fees. The fees for 2019 were communicated to parents (no. 38, 29 November 2018) and vary depending on grade and whether learners are boarding or not. The school implements national provisions for exemptions from or a reduction in school fees; parents can apply for an exemption or reduction, and these are granted depending on their income.

Understanding of trust
One-third of respondents refer to family members; others mostly trust the principal/acting principal and the HOD. Trust was also reported as relating to integrity, compassion and honesty, considerate to one's viewpoints and reliable. Confidentiality, shared values, a long track record in the school, acting in the best interests of learners, being truthful and not lying, providing good advice, transparency and fairness in the decision-making, clear communication and listening to and respecting everyone's voice are also mentioned as underpinning principles of high-trust relationships. According to the trust exercise, 'does not lie' is an important condition for almost all of the school staff, with 'does not deceive me' and 'is reliable' also featuring in the top 3 of the majority of respondents.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	Good at his job	Means well and tries to do the right thing	Not deceive me	Thinks that the same things are important as I do	Is reliable	Is fair	Has a good reputation with colleagues	Is caring	Will return a favour
90%	20%	30%	60%	10%	60%	50%	0%	20%	0%

Organisational trust
Teachers feel they can confide in the acting principal as she would keep sensitive matters confidential. It was also felt that she showed respect and appreciation for teachers, for instance by explaining difficult decisions to them and allowing them to come up with alternative solutions to solve difficult problems that affect them (e.g. when they have to relocate to other classrooms). Confidentiality is also mentioned by teachers (grades 3 and 6) as a condition for the trust of learners in teachers, particularly when learners come to them to talk about problems at home.

How school staff trust their acting principal (and others in leadership positions) also seems an inherent part of these leadership roles, as teachers expect someone to only be appointed/promoted to such role (by the district, following due process) if they can be trusted.

The recent grievance amongst teachers in the school over how two current acting HODs were promoted into these roles without formal process or formal communication potentially undermines such trust, particularly as the district has not yet addressed this grievance, and the acting principal has not explained why these colleagues were selected for these acting positions nor formally announced the promotion. Teachers only found out about this 'on the grapevine' via parents who had been in touch with SGB members, or when seeing these colleagues sign formal reports that can only be signed by HODs.

There is an expectation about the values, experience and types of behaviour of people in leadership positions. The various references to many years of experience in the acting principal's school (including as a teacher), for example, indicate that trust in leadership roles (i.e. the acting principal) grows over time, and that staff particularly trust leaders and/or colleagues they know well. Shared values, particularly where someone behaves in the best interests of learners and provides good advice when discussing problems, are also mentioned as important conditions for trust leaders (i.e. the acting principal and HOD), while transparency and fairness in decision-making and clear communication about important decisions (such as promotions) are important to prevent conflict. Demonstrating respect for teachers, acknowledging their views and creating buy-in for decisions are also considered important. Such lines of decision-making have to be constantly enforced, particularly when parents try to circumvent these when lodging complaints about teachers directly to the principal instead of discussing things first with the teacher.

Examples of where this went well in the school is in a dispute between learners over stolen glasses. This was resolved by the HOD of senior phase hearing everyone involved as equals, and the acting principal explaining 'the bigger picture' when teachers had to move into less attractive classrooms in an annex to make room for new classes, and how the HOD foundation phase tries to set an example in treating teachers respectfully. The SGB similarly follows due process when mediating in conflicts between the school and parents, by organising a discussion between those involved to help resolve the issue.

Acting in the best interests of learners is also mentioned by teachers as an important condition for why parents would trust them. Trust in parents, on the other hand, is broken when they 'gossip in the car park'. The grade 6 math teacher, for instance, is particularly cautious with parents who sit on the SGB and have learners in her class. Acting in the best interests of learners, for example, means that conflicts should be dealt with outside of the classroom so that these do not affect children.

A high-trust climate is supported by termly meetings between school staff within each phase, as well as regular meetings between the HOD and individual teachers to discuss learner problems, share good practice, and various opportunities for informal communication (e.g. open door policy of the acting principal, frequent interactions between the SGB and parents on the school grounds during sports events, and the HOD of the senior phase always being in school 40 minutes before the start of lessons). These measures mean that any concerns can be discussed before they turn into a conflict. These meetings also ensure that 'no one is working on their own' (HOD of the senior phase).

A social media policy in which parents are asked to discuss concerns face-to-face rather than sharing these with other parents via WhatsApp or Facebook, also ensures a continuation of good relations. A clear and structured process for decision-making where there is a 'chain of command' (teacher, grade leader, HOD, acting principal) and clarity over roles and responsibilities also prevents conflict and supports high-trust relations, particularly when those in leadership positions (acting principal and HODs) ensure that staff are listened to before a decision is made. The clarity over roles and responsibilities also applies to the relationship between the acting principal and the SGB, who have a clear understanding that the former deals with the academic side and management of the school, while the latter supports (particularly in terms of resourcing the school) and 'walks with the school'.

Good advice or competent behaviour feature in various references in relation to why someone might be trusted, e.g. in how teachers refer to trusted colleagues or when the NAPTOSA union rep talks about trust in the union which delivers high-quality professional development. A similarity in approach to teaching and handling of learners is mentioned by one teacher (grade 3) as an important aspect of who you would confide in. And also that you have to trust yourself first before others can trust you, according to the HOD of the foundation phase.

The HOD of the foundation phase and a grade 3 teacher stated that trust is also a condition for being able to do your job. They explained how you would not be 100% in what you are doing if you are not trusted and how, as a teacher, you would not be happy in your job if you were not trusted. Without trust, you would not be able to teach to your full capability, and this would in turn reflect on learners.

As described earlier, trust in the school is enhanced when there are clear, transparent and fair structures for decision-making in which roles and responsibilities are respected. School staff also refer to these management structures when they talk about accountability, where someone will only be capable of being accountable and of taking responsibility if he or she is trusted. Teachers explain how they would be discouraged if management were to constantly check up on them (such as was the case with the previous principal, who was reportedly guilty of micromanaging) and how they would not be able to 'just get on with the job', share their concerns or talk to colleagues and management openly. An example is provided by the grade 3 teacher, who explains that staff would agree on which concepts to cover in a given week in joint planning sessions, where each teacher can decide on the specifics of when and how to teach these.

Understanding and culture of accountability

Understanding:
Accountability is related to trust: you would only trust someone who is accountable, as it means that person fulfils his or her role and takes responsibility, and that you can then rely on that person. Trust also ensures that you can tell someone when they 'haven't achieved the bar' and that others do care that someone is performing well and that the person in question also cares enough to take any feedback on board (and are therefore being accountable). Other concepts mentioned were doing the right thing and not just what everybody tells you to do (particularly in a leadership position), being open to feedback, and being responsible. Taking responsibility also means admitting mistakes and taking responsibility for when things go wrong (this is also a condition for trust), being proactive in producing learners who can pass, and supporting learners with their overall well-being.
Accountability is also about 'producing things' (HOD), and you need personal strength to hold senior management to account.

Informal practice and social norms:
Accountability and doing a good job makes you feel good about yourself. Not delivering a high standard has consequences, i.e. being reprimanded.
Observing teachers in their classroom is viewed as obtrusive by the HOD (and by some staff) and is only done because they are required to under the IQMS; it is considered to be encroaching on the teachers' space. Others, however, speak about a culture of teachers sharing work books, and the senior team having an open relationship with teachers to come into their classroom to align things and identify areas for improvement. Senior teachers feel they do not need monitoring because they know where improvements are needed on account of their experience.

Formal organisation of accountability
A system of checks: grade heads to HOD, to principal, to SGB and then to the department. The department has 'monthly printable meetings where principals are given their latest orders'. Monitoring is considered unorganised, with forms often becoming lost in the department and then needing to be filled in again, the result being excessive paperwork.

Collaborative relationship between the SGB and the principal: frequent consultation, close working relationship, the SGB chair also discusses staff performance with the principal. The principal is responsible for the academic side of the school, while the SGB is responsible for resourcing, without interference. Parents support the SGB.

IQMS: 1) School self-evaluation and development of a school improvement plan (SIP). the SIP is monitored by the district to enable them to schedule support. The HOD visits and monitors classrooms according to an annual schedule two or three times a year, checking books (teacher's day book, mark book, file: assessment and planning books) for marking and against the criteria of the Department of Education. Teachers are given comments on learner progress to highlight where learners need more support. 3) Informal peer observations. 4) Senior team sits in class and checks whether teachers are covering the curriculum.

Teachers meet weekly for an hour per grade to share the progression of learners. Teachers also moderate each other's assessments, and this needs to go on file (for external accountability). This is only considered helpful when it is used to collaborate and share, rather than merely logging.

The circuit manager visits schools (principals) each term to ensure schools are operating properly and to assist principals in their management of the school. Frequent communication is also maintained through WhatsApp. The school reports quarterly to the circuit manager on results and curriculum coverage; the circuit manager reports to his/her line manager on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis (but no feedback is received on the reports).

Subject advisors checks schools' ATP and takes phone photos of learner activity books, and also checks whether these have been signed off by the principal, the HOD and parent. This 'evidence' is then sent to the DPE. The subject advisor prioritises schools that participate in Jika Mfundo, as required by the DPE.

Implementing CAPS and ATP causes stress and reduces not just the joy of learning, but also the extent to which learner's needs are met. The focus is on getting through the curriculum. Deadlines for curriculum delivery are not considered to have any added value because the school is already committed to teaching and learning.
The acting principal only enters marks into SA SAMS, but does not give them to learners. They do not want to communicate that this is what they are worth, there is too much testing. A grade 3 teacher retested learners when results from SA SAMS came back, and she made some questions easier for her learners.

In general, there is an understanding that the best people should get the job, but there are several instances where teachers say that the formal process has not been followed (appointment of SGB-funded teachers being appointed to a state-funded position in the school, or teachers taking on acting HOD positions) and where this was not clearly communicated in the school. Teachers have written to the unions to complain. The SMT and circuit manager, however, say that due process was followed, so the issue seems to be one of a lack of transparency and lack of communication.

Teachers are member of NAPTOSA, with only two members and hostel staff being members of SADTU. NAPTOSA is seen to offer the best accredited professional development options, although staff complain that it does not provide support on problems relating to salary, benefits and working conditions. The general feeling is that you need to be a member of SADTU if you have an employment issue that needs sorting out or in cases where employers are misusing their power. The two union reps collaborate well with each other and with the SMT; there is no need to hold senior management to account, according to the union reps, because the school is behind any union activities, actions and suggestions. The collaboration between the unions however does not go beyond the school gate which is evidenced in reported tension (to some extent also racially oriented) with other schools who are more SADTU-oriented. As a result of these tensions there is a lack of collaboration between schools with different union memberships and one of the consequences being

that this school cannot organize in-house professional development by their union as they do not have the minimum number of staff members for an in-house course; another neighbouring school would need to join to have a large enough group.

LP3. Low-performing school 2

Fractured community covering a wide area, children are bused in and often live (illegally) in informal settlements. Some are from other countries and many are orphans or from single or child-headed families. Many parents drink to excess over the weekend and children then do not come in to school on Monday. There is a high level of neglect, with children sometimes having to stay at home to look after siblings. It is a transient community with a lot of behavioural and learner problems (in part also due to foetal alcohol syndrome), lack of parental support for homework and many parents see the school merely as a 'parenting' organisation to look after children during the day. There is a lack of heating, which means cold classrooms in the winter.

Some teachers see their role only as providing a safe place for children to stay during the day, not necessarily to learn, and describe the quality of teaching in terms of being present in the classroom. There is much emphasis on filling in paperwork instead of teaching and covering the ATPs.

Class sizes are large, varying from 30 to 46 learners.

There is also an emphasis on delivery of the curriculum, as this is monitored ('policed') by the HODs on a weekly basis. Learners are promoted to the next grade regardless of whether they have mastered the content of the previous grade.

The language of instruction is Setswana (although many learners and teachers do not speak it), while English is taught as a subject. English becomes the language of instruction from grade 4 onwards.

The schools are non-fee-paying and parents do not generally want to contribute or pay for anything.

Understanding of trust

All respondents talk about either the principal/SMT or a colleague; one also mentions a family member. Honesty, no backstabbing, and confidentiality are all mentioned. According to the trust exercise, 'does not lie' is an important condition for almost all of the school staff.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	Good at his/her job	Means well and tries to do the right thing	Does not deceive me	Thinks that the same things are important as I do	Is reliable	Is fair	Has a good reputation with colleagues	Is caring	Will return a favour
86%	29%	43%	43%	29%	14%	43%	0%	14%	0%

Organisational trust

Trust is impeded by a lack of basic health & safety conditions and poor and communication. It is informed by whoever has or assumes power. The situation is exacerbated by a lack of shared responsibility: hardship in the community means that everyone is fending for themselves.

The community is fractured with many learners living in informal settlements. Many come from other countries and are living in South Africa illegally. The languages of instruction are Setswana and English, although many parents and teachers do not speak Setswana and are unable to communicate with one another well.

There are many health and safety issues, such as fighting, sexual misconduct, knives being brought into school and alcohol abuse.

There is a lack of trust between the principal and staff, with the principal being said to favour certain staff members above others and engage in nepotism. Teachers go directly to the district for support and professional development opportunities (and not to their HOD or principal).

There is a lack of trust between parents and teachers, but this also varies according to whether parents care for their child or not. Some parents only come in to complain about finances or when their child is punished (and will then often circumvent the teacher and go straight to the principal). Other parents are scared to talk to teachers.

Parents do not trust the SGB and suspect its members of misappropriating school funds.
There is a high level of trust between the principal and the SGB, as the principal directs the SGB and its members do as they are told.

There is a high level of trust between teachers and the union/union rep.
Levels of trust between learners and teachers vary. Incidents such as fighting in class and male students sexually assaulting female teachers were reported.

The circuit manager refers to a situation where parents, teachers and learners held the district director hostage when promises of a bricks and mortar school building for them were not fulfilled.

Understanding and culture of accountability
Understanding:
Some respondents do not understand the meaning of the word 'accountability'. When they talk about accountability, they refer to responsibility or to doing what you have been instructed to do (i.e. formal role responsibility), and if you are responsible for a task or project, knowing exactly what is happening and being able to explain how the task or project is being implemented, being responsible for the decision you take, even where they have an unfavourable outcome.

The district circuit manager emphasises curriculum delivery and that the role of the principal is to put pressure on teachers to deliver the curriculum.

Informal practice and social norms:
The school has refused to provide data on numbers of learners or learning outcomes, and the information is also not available on their website (perhaps because many learners live in informal settlements and are in South Africa illegally).
Examples are cited of the principal engaging in nepotism and favouring certain members of staff. The SGB has been accused by parents of misappropriating money gained from fundraising (e.g. funds were used to buy a new car).
The SGB does not challenge the SMT in any way, and the principal is leader of the SGB and is regarded by the SGB as being in charge. Some parents are scared to come to the school; they only come to complain (about financial issues or when their child has been punished). Teachers do not stand up to the principal, feel unsafe and therefore also do not participate in social events.
The circuit manager and principal argue about whose responsibility it is to ensure that teachers cover the curriculum. The circuit manager sees her role as supporting, while the principal should police the curriculum delivery. The principal, however, argues that this is not his/her problem as the district 'caused the problem' (e.g. asking for exams during June, when teachers are on holiday).

The circuit manager is also the institutional development and support official (IDSO) and explains that appointments to this role are not made on a skills basis.

Formal organisation of accountability
There is no clear line of communication/decision-making; teachers go straight to the district with questions or complaints (rather than to the principal), while parents go to the principal to complain about teachers, and only want to communicate with the school to complain.

All staff are members of SADTU and the union rep sees the union (and his/her role) as part of the established authority and to promote department guidelines (e.g. by providing information on policy). Accountability by the district depends on the particular person in the role: the previous district official 'was on your neck and in your face' and told people 'you have to do this'. This is in contrast to the current district official, who has a management plan with clear expectations for schools and teachers. The current postholder is more supportive and understanding of the school, and more inclusive in their framing (not talking about an 'Afrikaans school' or 'English school', or 'Afrikaans' versus 'English' learners).

The SGB receives monthly reports from the SMT on learning and teaching performance, but these are not discussed. The SGB is unaware of how many teachers have been in post for how long, and view their role as caring for learners, such as by preparing food for them.

The district IDSO visits once a year to monitor the curriculum. When there are issues, they follow up with training or further monitoring of gaps. The district authority also evaluates school documentation: policies, teachers' files, SGB minutes (and other unspecified documents). The district is only allowed to visit with advance notice, otherwise the school will call in the union as teachers should be given time to prepare.

The HOD monitors teachers once a week to check curriculum coverage and moderation of assessments: pre and post-evaluation and exercise book marking; they have to submit six books on a weekly basis and this is checked against CAPS.

LP4. Low-performing school 4

The community is poor and seems to see the school as a site to burglarise. Some community members have refused to attend with resulting high levels of illiteracy. Discipline of learners is a problem in the upper grades (intermediate phase and upwards) as learners know their rights (e.g. not having to repeat a grade, corporal punishment is not allowed), but do not have a corresponding sense of responsibility or value the education. This is reinforced by the community and by their parents who would sign off blank pages in their workbooks, allowing their child to get away with not doing their homework. They relish being expelled from class as they would 'bunker' outside. According to teachers, specialised subject teaching in the upper grades (where learners have multiple teachers) is exacerbating the problem as they cannot establish a good relationship with learners.

Classes are overcrowded (sometimes over 50 learners) with teachers unable to walk between desks. When learners are expelled from class (particularly in the upper grades), they are often absent for extended period of times with no learning taking place. In grade 1, 44 of the 216 learners should be held back (as they cannot form letters), but the district only allows the school to retain 10-20% of learners.

There is a lack of motivation among learners in upper grades (grade 6) who cannot be held back as they have already repeated a grade in that phase.
Teacher lesson plans are provided by the province.
The teaching staff is stable and includes many teachers from outside of the local community. Between 70% and 80% have been employed at the school for longer than five years. Infrastructure is poor with no electricity.

Four languages are offered in addition to English: isiZulu, Setswana, Sesotho, and isiXhosa (in order of predominance). However, many learners have parents who speak other languages and having to communicate in and being taught in different languages causes confusion and creates problems when one of the parents is unable to provide homework support. The transition to English in grade 4 is also

problematic and in practice causes a number of teachers to use English as the language of instruction earlier.

The school is non-fee-paying, but is in need of resources to repair infrastructure. Parents, however, do not contribute; the wider community is also poor.

Understanding of trust

Half of the respondents refer to family members, while others refer to the principal, deputy, employer, union leaders or learners. Two specifically say that they only trust themselves. Some made a reference to betrayal and support. Admitting mistakes and confidentiality were reported as underpinning trust. According to the trust exercise, 'does not lie' is an important condition for almost all of the school staff. However, there is little agreement on other trust-related values.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	*Good at his/her job*	*Means well and tries to do the right thing*	*Does not deceive me*	*Thinks that the same things are important as I do*	*Is reliable*	*Is fair*	*Has a good reputation with colleagues*	*Is caring*	*Will return a favour*
70%	50%	60%	50%	20%	30%	20%	20%	10%	0%

Organisational trust

The staff are from more distant, outlying areas, and generally not from the immediate area in which the school is located. This seems to present occasional problems for the community relationship with the school or the SGB, with a politicised community expecting local institutions to create work for the local population. There is a lack of community cohesion, and a sense of 'mind your own business, everyone for himself, God for us all'. The school is not regarded as a community asset to be protected, but rather a source of burgled loot for individual benefit. Much vandalism and violence takes place (e.g. a teacher in a nearby school was shot).

Teachers have a high status and are (because of their higher level of education) trusted to have the capacity to teach, particularly among older members of the local community. Parents would address problems to the principal directly, rather than going behind his back to the district.

Trust among school staff seems relatively high. Apart from some reservations, staff are able to raise disagreements with each other and resolve them to some level of satisfaction. However, teachers in particular would confide in peers when there are problems rather than in their HOD (who would likely point to consequences and their own role in the problem). There is also a high level of trust between teachers and learners, particularly in the foundation phase, but less so in the upper grades.
There is a high level of trust in the relationship between the school and the district, based on a long and supportive working relationship, where district staff are seen to have experience and knowledge.

Understanding and culture of accountability

Understanding:
Accountability was described in terms of being answerable for the responsibilities that you have been entrusted with, being open and not concealing anything, doing something for the benefit of others, being able to report back on actions embarked upon, and taking responsibility for actions and decisions and the consequences thereof. Accountability was considered to include taking charge and having no option to say 'I do not know' or to blame others. Those in leadership positions need to be able to account for everyone, and this entails 'knowing what is going on'. Accountability was, according to one member of the SMT, also described as setting 'smart goals' that enable specific and

measurable accounting, that can be followed up and rectified if not producing the intended results. Two teachers also referred to accountability in terms of following departmental policy.

Informal practice and social norms:
Appointment processes include open advertisements, short-listing and interviewing, with no reservations in favour of local residents. The circuit manager was of the opinion that the teachers at the school were very capable and committed. However, the principal thought that his staff were unlikely to mention difficulties with the curriculum for which they needed professional development, except for a minority who might raise the issue with their HODs. He suggested this was based on teachers' fears that mentioning their shortcomings might undermine their seniors' trust in their capacity. Furthermore, there was a concern that this could become a matter of record. Nevertheless, the SGB chair considered that teachers would take their difficulties to subject facilitators in the district or to the educators' council, which they perceived perhaps as safer options than taking the matter up through an HOD.

Following formal policy in evaluating is important (HOD) to prevent individual preferences being given undue precedence, and trust in evaluations is underpinned by the capacity, soundness and relevance of advice provided by those who perform the monitoring (i.e. those 'who know what they are doing').

Formal organisation of accountability
The circuit manager oversees monitoring and support of the school (as provided by the subject advisor and IDSO) and convenes cluster meetings of 11-12 schools and visits each school once a week. The subject advisor supports educators and learners, and an institutional development and support official (IDSO) who supports the principals and school management teams with their management activities (including infrastructure) and the curriculum. They ask the school to differentiate learners into those performing at 80% to 100% level, those achieving between 45% to 79%, and the remainder. Schools are also asked to perform an item analysis after each assessment session to understand where learners need additional support.

IDSOs and the subject advisors submit reports on their school visits and related issues to the circuit manager on a weekly basis, as well as work plans for the following week, and are therefore a key link in the accountability process. Subject advisors email reports of issues needing external intervention to the relevant IDSO, with a copy sent to the circuit manager to ensure good communication and follow-up. The circuit manager is available for consultation and support, including joint visits to the schools. The circuit manager has also formed message groups (WhatsApp) to facilitate communication, with principals grouped according to the level of performance of the schools.

The IDSO is in charge of the school and visits almost every day, while district subject advisors visited each term, observing teachers in class, giving feedback and making suggestions for improvement to teachers and to the principal. The principal is monitored and evaluated formally through the IQMS, while HODs are monitored by the principal, deputy principal and the district. Feedback is considered relevant and is further discussed in subject meetings with teachers. District subject advisors check on teachers' preparation files, exercises and marking, as well as compliance with the annual teaching programme for the different subjects. Feedback and advice given to individual teachers was found to be 'very useful'.

The school uses SA SAMS reporting templates to report each quarter on 'completion', learner performance (numbers of learners failing and passing, test results), learner and teacher absenteeism. The results are used by the district in discussions with the principal and HODs. An analysis of SA SAMS will elicit immediate visits from district staff if indicators are 'red', but formal indications of developmental needs through the system do not necessarily result in a departmental response.

The circuit manager, IDSO and subject advisor log their visits and recommendations to the school in the school's logbook and these are checked on each visit by the circuit manager.

The HOD prepares assessment and moderation plans for the year. The grade subject heads pre-moderate their colleagues' work and post-moderate learners' assessments. Records were kept of everything, and nobody was found to have moderated their own results. The HOD's work is monitored by the deputy principal in the same way that teachers' work was monitored by the HOD.

Internal evaluations are aligned with external accountability requirements. HODs monitor teachers' preparation files and their work, including the fact that they were assessing and giving learners support and giving parents the reports. Individual teachers reported finding the feedback very useful, both that from the subject facilitators and that from their HODs, who they consulted when needing assistance.

Moderation of assessments and analysis of results is generally conducted on a quarterly basis, and used to inform a strategy and plan of action for remedial activities, to improve results and to support learners. Learners receive reports each term: in March, June and September The principal reports the school's overall results to the teachers in the staffroom, providing a briefing per grade, reporting levels of achievement for each subject, which amounts to reports on individual teacher's performance. Following the meeting in which this report is made, the various phases meet separately to have a more detailed discussion and analysis.

Accountability was also reported as including compliance with formalised school processes, particularly following the chain of command to report problems (teacher to head of department, then to deputy principal, then to principal). Some teachers try to fast-track the matter by going straight to the principal, who would refer them back. This signals a lack of trust in the head of department.

About 80% of staff are SADTU members (including the circuit manager), and there are good relations with the union which offers workshops and other forms of support. Furthermore, staff do not engage in strikes, nor does the union have any involvement in promotion and selection.

The SGB offers particular support with resourcing the school or enhancing learner discipline with parents (through home visits).

LP7. Low-performing school 7

A lack of infrastructure and capacity all contribute to low learning outcomes. Basic functionalities and understandings of a functioning school (staff starting on time, honouring the instructional timetable, proper infrastructure including electricity and sanitation) are absent. Teachers describe parents as uneducated and lacking an understanding of the value of education.
The antagonism between parent groups, between staff and the SGB, and between staff and the SMT creates an unsafe environment with a lack of care, high staff turnover and a climate that is not conducive to learning.

The poor infrastructure also causes conflict, reduces trust and destabilises the school, especially when (particularly good) teachers leave the school within a year, resulting in a high level of turnover. Teachers talk about having to make short-cuts in delivering the curriculum when prescribed activities, for example, require electricity or when they and/or learners are ill, have to sit in the mud and when requests for improvements go unanswered while they are still measured against the same standards as well-equipped schools.

School staff frequently talk about a lack of discipline and motivation of learners, violence and fighting between learners, and how they feel disempowered to address this. The policy of promotion and retention (where learners can only be held back once per phase), the barring of corporal punishment,

free access to schools, the availability of grants (and perception thereof) that will support unemployed people until age 18 or 21 provide no incentives for learners to do well in school. It also results in teachers feeling that they are unable to motivate learners. Teachers feel that 'government has sold them out' and that some 'introspection' is needed.

The school's language of teaching in Zulu up to grade 4. Parents would rather want their children to be educated in English throughout the school grades as fluency in English would enable them to 'escape the area' and move into town. According to the school, however, the departmental policy requires the school to have Zulu as the first language of instruction. According to the circuit manager, this is to ensure Black children are not excluded.

The school is non-fee-paying and the school provides parents with all the materials, including textbooks (stated by the deputy principal).

Understanding of trust

Only half of the respondents described trust in reference to a family member, while two made references to the principal, his/her management skills and honesty. According to the trust exercise, 'does not lie' is an important condition for almost all of the school staff; however, there was little agreement on other trust-related values.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	*Good at his job*	*Means well and tries to do the right thing*	*Does not deceive me*	*Thinks that the same things are important as I do*	*Is reliable*	*Is fair*	*Has a good reputation with colleagues*	*Is caring*	*Will return a favour*
71%	43%	29%	14%	14%	71%	14%	29%	57%	0%

Organisational trust

School 7 is a low-performing school with a lack of trust and conflict between school staff, the SMT, the SGB and parents. A high level of distrust causes frequent conflict and acts as a barrier to change. School staff talk about in-fighting among staff, the SGB and parents. All but one of the HODs are recruited from outside of the school, yet suspicion towards outsiders takes a long time to be overcome and these new HODs have to win teachers' confidence to be able to make changes and improve the school. According to one of the teachers, staff would essentially mistreat external leaders out of suspicion.

Suspicion also features in how staff talk about their motivation to join a union and their perceptions of their site representatives as only doing the job to further their own careers. Teachers feel they need a union to protect them from abuse that is common in their community (also in family relations) and from the principal. Ultimately, they feel that everyone has to fend for themselves. An example comes from a teacher who talks about the principal as 'a father', but often an abusive one; you therefore need a powerful union to protect you from the abuse.

The highly politicised SGB, which is chaired by the (very powerful) mayor of the town, seems to further fracture relations in the school community, as the SGB would make decisions that are not supported by the school and end up pitting parents against teachers.

The community of parents is comprised of various groups which vary according to language, ethnic and religious backgrounds; these groups tend not to mix. The relations between parents in general and school staff are antagonistic, and the school has put policy in place that prohibits parents from

speaking to teachers directly about problems or concerns they have. This is to protect teachers from verbal or physical abuse if they are confronted in their classroom while alone.

Understanding and culture of accountability

Understanding:
'Accountability' is interpreted by school staff as having to implement the national curriculum, their implementation activities being monitored and having to explain themselves implementation is not possible. They talk about 'being submissive', 'taking responsibility', 'not shifting blame' and 'doing what you are supposed to do', and they understand the indicators in the whole-school evaluation and grading scale as prescriptions of 'how things need to be done'. Grade '5' means that you are doing things correctly.

Informal practice and social norms:
The IQMS and whole-school evaluation are interpreted and enacted as filling in, monitoring and signing off tracker sheets by the HODs; they are required to do this by the department. However, there is little or no follow-up support for areas that require improvement, no connection to school improvement planning and a general sense that the entire exercise is merely done for checking purposes. The circuit manager explains the lack of improvement and learning by the absence of any incentive for improvement caused by a recruitment process where people just have 'talk well' and are not selected for their experience, security of teaching jobs and ease of teacher training. These conditions, particularly where teachers and principals are not able to do their job, will also lead to people not being accountable and taking responsibility. Furthermore, the district would not be able to hold them accountable as they themselves lack the capacity to help and offer support. The examples and how they are described indicate how accountability is situated in a context of assigning blame instead of working together for improvement.

Formal organisation of accountability
The IQMS and how school staff are monitored by the district and subsequently by the SMT in the school seems to lock the school into further dysfunctionality. Staff talk about how the curriculum is seen as something that 'needs to be done', which (particularly in a context of large classes, high absenteeism of learners who cannot catch up and multigrade teaching) would 'leave children unattended for the sake of covering' the curriculum, and involves time-consuming paperwork. This is particularly true when teachers have to divert from the curriculum and the prescribed set of weekly activities that are included and prescribed in the Jika Mfundo textbooks and tracker sheets, and have to explain why. These scripts are both welcomed for their ease of use where teachers can just follow 'what to do for the week', but also criticise the trackers for the tight time frames in which activities have to be covered. These are unsuitable for large classes where many learners are left behind for the sake of covering the curriculum. Teachers feel they have no choice because explaining on the tracker sheet why they have diverged would be interpreted as them 'not being serious', and they have been told by the HOD (who was in turn told off by the union) to stick to the curriculum. They feel there is little concern for the conditions in which they have to do their work. Having to rush through the paperwork to show that activities have been completed while knowing that learners have not mastered the material makes them 'unhappy' and takes the joy out of teaching.

However, curriculum coverage is an important target for the district, according to the circuit manager, but many schools only use the tracker sheets for compliance purposes. The circuit manager explains that past changes in initial teacher training where 'teacher colleges were killed' have led to a situation where teachers are no longer motivated for the role, but only choose teaching for reasons of job security) and do not actually know how to teach. The high level of unionism in the school inhibits improvement according to one of the HODs as they cannot, for example, require teachers to teach more hours to help struggling learners can catch up.

The school has occasional phase meetings where teachers and their HODs discuss learner issues, but the small size of the school and lack of leadership seem to prevent more structured and regular

meetings between staff and the SMT. There do not seem to be regular discussions about learner progress, quality of instruction or how to address wider issues that affect school quality and learning outcomes (such as lack of support and involvement of parents), and this seems to exacerbate conflict caused by misunderstandings or divergence of interests. School staff feel the principal does not care about them, they have to work in difficult conditions with classrooms that have no electricity and are either too hot or too cold, and parents who can be violent and are often verbally abusive. The principal simply tells teachers when new departmental policy needs to be implemented without proper planning or prior notice, and 'only stops by when paperwork needs to be completed' and teachers need to be monitored.

The two union representatives (SADTU and NADTU) often act as an intermediaries between or on behalf of the SMT and teachers in communicating directives to staff, checking teachers' assessments (via their HOD) and enforcing the implementation of departmental policy and monitoring. They also help resolve conflicts between teachers, share staff's concerns with the SMT and protect teachers from the local community. They have filled a leadership vacuum in the school which seems to have been caused by past conflict, where one of the HODs/deputy principals was chased away by the local community and resulted in the current principal being off sick. Their motivation for this informal leadership is to prevent conflicts from becoming formal grievances outside of the school (e.g. with the department), although other staff seem to think that they are only managing the school for reasons of personal benefit in an attempt to improve their chances of promotion to district level (i.e. better paid) posts.

LP8. Low-performing school 8

In 2019, the school enrolment was 376 learners (163 female and 213 male). The teaching staff includes ten teachers, two HODs and the principal. Barring one new teacher with less than six months service, teacher years of service range from 31 years to six years, of whom none teachers had ten or more years of experience while three had between nine and six years of experience.

The school is located in a rural area about 40 kilometres from the nearest small town (population 12,500) by road. About two-thirds of this journey is on a tarred road with the rest on a poorly surfaced dirt/gravel road.

School facilities are undeveloped and poorly maintained by the provincial department. The school infrastructure in general is old and needs renovation. The quality of the toilet facilities is particularly appalling. Virtually all forms of services or supplies to the school by the department are delivered erratically. This includes delivery of basic infrastructure (toilets), payment of teacher salaries and administration of teacher appointments or transfers. The school lacks workbooks, ink and often electricity and even toilet paper.

As the government (province) does not provide these basic necessities, this is perceived as a lack of respect and creates distrust.

The school has been impacted over some years by slowly declining learner numbers. A community that had previously enrolled its children in School 8 then resided in an area without an electricity supply. When electricity infrastructure was installed in a different neighbourhood, they moved there and also chose to enrol their children in schools in their new locality. Declining learner numbers at School 8 are attributed this movement. School 8 and its two neighbouring schools have also been affected, and the three schools are now competing with each other to attract learners. The department implemented procedures that downsize teacher numbers in accordance with decline in learner enrolment. The teachers remaining in School 8 have to 'make do' with the resources they have to cover the classes of the departing teacher.

The Christian background of teachers seems to ensure a morale of hard work, where teaching is a calling which is viewed as ensuring a functional school where teaching is taking place (but not necessarily an emphasis on outcomes/learning).

Emphasis in the school is on learner discipline and behaviour, rather than outcomes; there is little use of assessments to understand student understanding, and planning of the curriculum follows CAPS (with strict monitoring and compliance). The automatic progression of learners (which is considered unfair) means staff in the foundation phase have reduced syllabus coverage in classes where learners are lagging behind and do not see the value in assessments.

The school's language policy is IsiZulu with English as the first additional language, despite the fact that parents wanted English as the home language. The department overruled the SGB decision and the dispute was brought to Court where the department's position was upheld.
This has caused parents to take their children out of school as they want them to be taught in English, given that this is seen to provide them with better opportunities in life and access to university.

School finances are limited to the income allocated by the department of education according to the 'no fee' school regulations.

Understanding of trust

Most respondents refer to family members; there is only one mention of the principal and anyone in general. References are also made to love, respect, shared experience and loyalty. In the interviews, staff talk about attentiveness, listening, giving good advice, discretion, openness and support. All respondents have 'does not lie' in their top 3 to describe trust in the trust exercise, with 'does not deceive me' also scoring high.

Trust exercise: percentage of respondents who rate the following words in their top 3									
Does not lie	Good at his job	Means well and tries to do the right thing	Does not deceive me	Thinks that the same things are important as I do	Is reliable	Is fair	Has a good reputation with colleagues	Is caring	Will return a favour
100%	14%	14%	71%	14%	43%	43%	0%	0%	0%

Organisational trust

There are sound interpersonal trust relationships between the principal and his staff. This is underpinned by good collaboration (not pulling rank, but interacting on a collegial basis), mutual trust, attentiveness, listening, giving advice, discretion, openness, but also confidentiality and only discussing issues with the principal when permitted to by staff members.

The majority of teachers and parents share the same Christian faith (although not all go to the same church) and this seems to explain the morale of accepting authority and not causing conflict. However, this does not necessarily create trust: teachers feel a lack of trust from parents who gossip about them behind their back and who blame them for low performance of their children, parents seem fearful of talking to teachers directly and will only do so when there are issues of discipline (teachers shouting at students).

Amongst teachers, there is an understanding of insiders (teachers who grew up in the local community) and teachers coming from 'outside'. The latter are not confided in by parents or by local teachers.

The school is small, so the hierarchy of foundation and intermediate departments each with an HOD does not impose barriers to interaction. Staff are free to consult with whomever they feel can give them good advice (no need to follow rank) and there is frequent informal discussion with staff to ask their views on upcoming decisions in addition to formal department meetings. There is a sense of shared decision-making, but also a clear process to escalate issues when these are not solved through the first point of contact.

The SMT of three can easily convene as and when needed, and department meetings whether convened formal or informally are held regularly. For the most part, teachers experience positive trust relationships with each other. This is reinforced by a predominantly Christian faith orientation existing across different denominations. This common Christian framework also contributes to a consensual mind-set that informs a degree of conservatism on school-related issues. Relationships within the SGB and between the SGB, the school staff, teacher trade unions, and the parent community have not been impacted by high conflict levels.

A critical matter of concern is the relationship between parents and teaching staff. There is a tendency for teachers and parents to blame each other where learners do not meet performance goals. Teachers portray parents as lacking an understanding of how schooling works or of reneging on their responsibilities, while parents are said to blame teachers for treating children unfairly or for lacking competence.

Understanding and culture of accountability
Understanding:
The mindset of the circuit manager and his principals is to achieve and sustain minimum conditions in schools where teachers are teaching and learners are learning in the classroom. The principal is viewed as the person who ultimately holds the school to account, and teachers feel accountable to him/her, which means that they need to be in class and come prepared to teach. Trust is seen as an underpinning condition of accountability: it ensures a mutual obligation of accountability and ensures that 'you have something to deliver or tell'.

Accountability is about transparency and being able to give another person evidence; commitment, honesty and openness and talking about performance of staff with the principal without fear or favour (HOD). Teachers see accountability as being a role model, not doing the wrong things and upholding the trust of learners and the community; this would also impact on the reputation of the profession.
Religion plays a big role in staff understanding of accountability as teaching is viewed as a 'calling' and members of the Shembe church are not allowed to engage in political activities, and are expected to accept authority. Local preachers come to school for prayer with learners in the morning before school and this is promoted by the school. Parents do not question teachers, the SMT or the SGB (although they do not necessarily trust them).

Informal practice and social norms:
At the SGB level, parents are difficult to recruit into activity. Parents that do participate in the meetings convened by the SGB are quite passive. A coherent support base of parents has not emerged and this affects the confidence of the SGB chairperson. The SGB chairperson and the principal have a strong, accountable relationship. The chairperson is somewhat dependent on the principal for his higher education skills and experience in formal written communications.

Formal organisation of accountability
In School 8, the compliance of teachers has been successfully achieved and is strictly monitored at least on a weekly basis. This refers to their attendance at school, evidence of lesson planning, presence in the classroom, assigning students work, and reading and assessing learner workbooks. Also, HODs and the principal visit teachers in the classroom and make frank comments on teacher's performance while teaching lessons, such as on discipline of learners.

Teachers must sign the log every morning upon entering the school to register attendance and the principal checks that they are actually in class. They must submit lesson plans to the HOD which are checked against the CAPS document. The principal meets with HODs weekly to check teachers' lesson plans, exercise books and the timetable against what was planned the previous week. Teachers are called into the principal's office if they have not done what they are supposed to be doing. The teacher will sign a sheet to confirm that his or her files have been checked by the principal.

The HODs have phase meetings twice a month and subsequent subject meetings to discuss progress and learning problems, scheduling and completion of learner homework. Feedback to teachers from HODs tends to be forthright and this sometimes creates tensions with teachers where some teachers resist the need for development.

The SGB and the principal have a good relationship. Staff see the principal as making all the decisions, while the SGB is seen to have a ceremonial function, such as in farewells. SGB members have little time to be actively involved with the school. Parents are generally passive and do not oppose any SGB or school decision; most never come to meetings.

Data from assessment results are captured on a single computer and uploaded to the district but not used for lesson or school improvement planning. Assessment of learners is also limited and mostly conducted through observation and verbal questions and answers, offering low quality of data about learner performance.

The school is visited by subject advisors and the circuit manager who have different authorities and responsibilities. According to the principal and circuit manager, advisors are only allowed to check on teachers and specific subjects, whereas the circuit manager is responsible for everything in the school and for general management and has more authority.
The school is located in a rural area and is difficult to reach. Subject advisors make few sporadic visits (twice a year) to check files and discuss things with teachers. They seem to lack familiarity with staff and only visit the intermediate phase (not the foundation phase). The circuit manager has his hands full with other struggling schools which are barely functional and considers this one well-performing. He/she visits the school once a year at the beginning of term 'to check the work', which refers to certain performance areas (e.g. 1 to 4) in the IQMS (or whole-school evaluation). These are communicated to the school before the visit and the school prepares files accordingly, which are then checked. This check also compares the results with what is happening in the classroom (e.g. whether the records/lesson plans match actual practice). There is no feedback to teachers from these visits.
The circuit manager has monthly meetings with principals, who also provide monthly meeting reports. If these are found to be in order, the circuit manager will visit the school less frequently. In general, he works closely with the SGBs to ensure high-quality principals are selected when there is a vacancy, as this is crucial for good quality and the SGBs cannot be trusted to do this alone.

The principal also values selection based on merit and has explained this to the community when making appointments to security and cleaning posts, but the community wanted someone local. No grievances were logged with the union and there were few internal promotions.
Most staff are members of SADTU, with some being members of NATU (National African Teacher's Union). Relations between the two unions in the school are cordial, and there is no participation in strikes.

6. Comparing trust in low and high performing schools
In our case studies, we asked respondents to describe trust and then rank order words which define trust best. In their descriptions and rank ordering, respondents where probed to take in mind someone they would trust. Their descriptions of trust suggest that most will have answered these questions with a relative or friend in mind, although respondents in some school only refer to work-related relations (and have been probed to answer questions for professional relations).

All respondents, regardless of whether they work in a low or high performing school have 'doesn't lie' as one of the most important conditions for trusting someone. 'Not deceive me' scores particularly high in high performing schools where respondents in both types of low and high performing schools also value 'reliability' and 'means well and tries to do the right thing'. 'Having a good reputation' or 'returning a favour' seems to matter less in all schools.

The table below provides an overview of Kendall's coefficient of concordance for each school; the average coefficient value per performance category does not suggest a significant difference between low and high performing schools in the extent to which school staff agree in their rating of trust. There are however significant differences between schools across the performance categories, with school 3 scoring very low in staff agreeing on what constitutes trust, and school 8 scoring high; both are low performing schools. An important caveat for the interpretation of the results is that the trust exercise was not administered consistently, were some respondents have answered the question in reference to a personal relation (e.g. family member or friend), whereas others were specifically asked to answer the question for colleagues/professional relations.

Table 7. Results trust exercise

Performance	School	# Raters	Kendalls' coefficient of concordance	Average coefficient value per performance category
Low	School 3	8	0.252	
Low	School 4	9	0.430	
Low	School 7	7	0.422	
Low	School 8	7	0.640	
				0.436
High	School 5	10	0.549	
High	School 2	10	0.404	
High	School 6	10	0.528	
High	School 1	6	0.343	
				0.456

7. Conclusion and discussion

Trust and accountability are often positioned as opposites, the argument being that accountability is based on distrust and correction of identified deficiencies. Yet, trust is also important in order for accountability to lead to improvement; only when teachers and principals are open about the quality of their teaching and their school can there be a meaningful discussion about change. This report presented findings from eight case studies of high and low performing primary schools in South Africa to better understand how school staff understand trust and accountability and the extent to which organisational trust and formal and informal systems and cultures of accountability vary across both types of schools.

7.1 Understanding of trust in low and high performing schools

We adapted an existing cross-cultural trust exercise for the South African context and administered it to school staff in four low performing and four high performing schools. School staff were first asked to describe trust and where then presented with 10 statements which they had to rank order according to which statement captured their trust mostly.

Interestingly, our study provides no evidence of a shared understanding of who to trust as a condition for high learning outcomes. Respondents in both high and low performing schools have similar understandings of trust with no significant differences between low and high performing schools in agreement in trust ratings. In both types of schools 'doesn't lie' and 'means well and 'tries to do the right thing' score high, while 'reputation' and 'returning a favour' are considered less important. These findings suggest that, across schools and regardless of the level of performance, integrity is of key importance in how school staff come to trust someone else, more so than competence or benevolence; two other elements of our commonly used trust definition.

The congruence in terms of understandings of trust across both high and low performing schools can be interpreted as a positive element for the education system as a whole: it illustrates that there are some universally agreed principles in terms of unacceptable behaviours: lying and deception are the least likely to promote trust, whilst good intent is universally (as far as this sample is concerned) appreciated as a core element in a trusting relationship. However, the fact that competence was ranked low in terms of understandings of trust across both low and high performing schools raises some important questions around potential levers for improvement of schools. The findings indicates that competence is not a reason to trust someone and suggests that incompetent people can also be trusted.

Personal relations and family metaphor

An important caveat for the interpretation of the results is that a number of participants seem to have interpreted the trust exercise for personal relations, referring in their general description to a personal relation (e.g. family member or friend), whereas others answered the question for colleagues/professional relations. This finding in itself however also provides interesting insights into trust cultures in South African schools. The fact that many respondents, even thought they were interviewed in school, chose to use personal relationships upon which to base their trust analysis exercise may indicate that trust is easier to conceptualise in relation to personal relationships, rather than work ones.

The reference to personal relations to describe trust in a school context may also suggest that schools are metaphorically associated with families because they have similar age based structures, and also similar roles are adopted in both institutions by adults and children. Therefore the authority structure of families and schools are analogous. Our interview findings in some of the schools underpin such views where staff used the family metaphor to refer to the school staff, sometimes to the internal school family of teachers and children, and sometimes even to refer to the whole school community as a family. The family metaphor is particularly prevalent where professional and personal relations converge, such as in one of the case study schools where the principal's wife was a HoD and his son was a teacher in the same school.

The idea of a family can evoke different understandings of trust, such as where the metaphor of 'a family' is used to convey the idea that a group shares common goal or that the group shares common threats or difficulties. Alternatively reference to the family can imply that membership of the family involves sharing similar views on a particular matter and further would be prepared to share resources amongst the members to support members in difficulty. Or reminding individuals they are family members may be used to place pressure on them to conform to family consensus on a topic of contention. Members might be reluctant to go against a prevailing family consensus to avoid being labelled as a disloyal.

Probably, references to the family metaphor are relatively commonly used in to imply members of a group are bound together. The western concept of the nuclear family as a socio-legal system is also an economic unit associated with the reproduction of capitalism and gender roles. In traditional societies the extended family is bound by ties that include the ethic of shared reciprocity and obligation. A further significant traditional characteristic of families is of fraternal piety not only to treat elders with respect and kindness, but also to preserve the good standing of parents and of ancestors.

Families will have specific relations of power and authority and these could apply in a similar manner in a school context; e.g. teachers having authority over learners – in loco parentis, or the principal can invoke his or her authority in a patriarchal manner to staff members. Such relations of power and authority can also be dysfunctional to different degrees, where unequal power relations can be abused and junior family members, or members with lower seniority can be subject to manipulation and forms of abuse. These types of relationships are commonly legitimised by the perpetrators through reference to their assumed authority of seniority that can cause the victim to doubt themselves and to question their own rights to fair and respectful treatment. In the staffroom and in the classroom these situations are in some of our case studies, played out in such a way that forms of violence and abuse are normalised in schools as institutions in as much as such treatment is normalised in many households and homes in South Africa. Especially in poor communities, high proportions of family social units exhibit forms of dysfunctionality, where unemployment, poverty, incomplete education attainment among young adults, broken parental relationships, and substance abuse contribute to deprivation and forms of neglect among children.

Similar dysfunctionality can be observed in some extreme cases where school leaders or teachers claim rights to behave in certain ways merely on the basis of their position of authority including the illegitimate use of corporal punishment by teachers, the sexual abuse of female learners by male teachers, and bullying of children by teachers. These practices are legitimized by reference to family structures. From one of the case studies comes the example of a teacher "who talks about the principal as 'a father', but often an abusive one; you therefore need a powerful union to protect you from the abuse."
These practices, once embedded can impact trust relationships between learners and teachers especially. The challenge become to understand how standards of teacher professionalism and levels of accountability seem not to be able to convincingly withstand abuses that are legitimated through reference to familial authority and which do not include the kindness and beneficence hoped for by the victim.

7.2 Organisational trust in low and high performing schools
Trust is considered to be a key driver for high learning outcomes and good quality education. Various studies find that trust between individuals in a school is key for learning to occur and how trust as a feature of a school's organisation and culture enhances collective action and its capacity to improve (Bryk and Schneider, 2002; Hu et al, 2015). A high level of trust allows for effective collaboration, information sharing and better coordination of work in a school, such as when teachers from subsequent grades align their teaching and curriculum. This type of collaborative planning is known to contribute to high learning outcomes and is particularly effective when a school's network has

relations across the whole team rather than small scale one-on-one relationships that carry the risk of damaging trust by highly closed reciprocal relationships, according to Moolenaar et al (2014). A shared understanding of why to trust someone else might contribute to such high trust culture and performance of the school and this question underpinned our study.

In the interviews we asked respondents to describe the school community and school culture and whether/how they feel cared for, and respected by colleagues (including heads/principal) and who they would trust in case of a problem and why. Our findings indicate that the level of trust varies greatly between high and low performing schools, where particularly the high performing schools seem to have high trust relationships amongst school staff and between teachers and parents. In the low-performing schools, a low level of organisational trust seems to go hand in hand with socio-economic deprivation where the latter produces a culture where poor behaviour and sometimes violence and abuse are endemic, caused (at least partly) by hardship and having to fend for oneself. The school community sometimes views the school as a site for burglary and progressing one's individual interests through a position on the school's governing body. In these schools, teachers talk about how they have to protect themselves from abuse or harm by the district, the principal or the school community through union membership. The only exception is the low performing school 8 which seems to have relatively high levels of trust,. These seem to be particularly informed by the fact that the school staff and community share a Christian faith which comes with a set of moral principles and values on how to engage with others, and a sense of authority and consensual mind-set.

7.3 Understanding and culture of accountability in low and high performing schools

School staff in high performing schools understand accountability as taking (pro-active) responsibility for one's work and role, particularly to ensure student learning and well-being, being transparent and open about mistakes towards colleagues and the school management team, practicing what you preach and doing what you promised to do. The understanding of accountability in these schools is clearly linked to a sense of professionalism where staff feel agentive in determining the quality of their school. This in contrast to how staff in low performing schools tend to describe accountability, for example with reference to compliance, subjugation and implementation of specific tasks and activities as directed by those in line management positions, and/or external policy (including CAPS). The only exception is school 8 where religion seems to inform a more professional understanding of accountability as bound up with values relating to the spiritual.

7.4 Formal organisation of accountability

High performing schools tend to have relatively well functioning internal systems for decision-making and discussing problems, where staff are involved in or consulted about decisions, and are encouraged to follow the line of command to report problems. These systems include relatively well-organized systems for planning and monitoring, informed by the IQMS, and reporting to the district with grade/subject meetings to moderate assessments (sometimes including an item analysis), discuss assessment outcomes and learner progress, classroom observations, checking of book and teacher files and logging teacher/learner attendance in a school management system (SA SAMS/principal primary).

Internal decision-making and monitoring in low performing schools is overall much less developed with various examples of nepotism, conflict, unsafe culture to discuss complaints in which problems are immediately escalated to (in case of parents) the principal or the district (by teachers). Monitoring and evaluation in these schools is implemented to comply with district requirements but doesn't seem to inform improvement on the school level or further support by the district but only done for reporting purposes.

The latter finding is also common for the majority of high performing schools (particularly school 2 and 6) who complain that the IQMS is overly bureaucratic and requires too much paperwork. In all, but one school (school 4), external accountability and monitoring by the district is described as either dysfunctional (with forms getting lost, meetings getting cancelled last minute), as overly bureaucratic

(a form-filling exercise with no feedback, 'a black hole'), or infrequent and largely absent. Teachers associate the IQMS system most strongly with a compliance discourse, to a lesser extent with accountability and hardly linked their IQMS related activities with the discourse of development. Teachers' appreciation of the developmental potential of quality management in the form of the IQMS hardly featured in interview discussion.

These findings reflect work of others on the functioning of the IQMS in holding schools and teachers accountability in South Africa. First we refer to common experiences of the IQMS teachers and managers of in terms of its requirements and usability. The IQMS it is widely perceived as being complex, unwieldy, repetitive, demands high administration and paperwork inputs, and consumes much teacher time. It generates frustration and needs to be streamlined. Administration is dependent on the environment in each school and the skills and commitment of the responsible team. It is an internal process, and may be applied and interpreted differently across schools (Whitley,2016,74-75). Within schools, teacher's ways of responding to the appraisal process can be influenced by the general staffroom climate as well as their peers and their Head of Department.

On the ground there are strong signs that the annual appraisal system is dysfunctional. Monyatsi describes how teachers perceive the appraisal process as something that has potential for conflict, punishment, ridicule and victimisation, instead of professional development and growth. (Whitley,2016,48) These conditions are likely to constrain the inclination of teachers to freely and openly communicate about their experience.

Teachers have doubts as to whether they can trust the system. They ask questions about the validity and reliability of the process to provide a faithful reflection of their performance and commitment as practitioners. Teachers carefully avoid discussion about any weaknesses in their performance, fearing that to disclose provides evidence might be used in disciplinary procedures against them in the future. (Steyn and Van Niekerk,2007,252; Whitley,2016,74). Fear of exposure practically rules out transparency of the process as commonly experienced by teachers. As a consequence, teachers feel compelled to gloss over their own shortcomings and skill and knowledge gaps. For example, Whitley observes:

> Often, a teacher may feel compelled to give a false reading for fear of being called in by the principal and reprimanded …for not providing quality education…All relevant evidence that is important for the appraisal process must be safeguarded by the teacher. (Whitley,2016,38)

Teacher's anxiety extends further to the 1% of salary incentive that teachers can benefit from if they are rated sufficiently highly by their HoD and the peer that they have chosen to join them on the DSG. Teachers are therefore highly reluctant to reveal any weaknesses, as they potentially could miss out on the 1% salary increase. (Whitley,2016,38). However, this reward system is open to manipulation where teachers agree to award each other high scores that qualify them to receive the 1% increment.

The large-scale implications of teachers gaming the system are outlined by a principal:

> It is open to abuse and this has been seen by the fact that all teachers in South Africa receive a 1% increase at the end of the IQMS cycle each year. Every year we all see in the media how poor the matric results are – how is this possible that every teacher receives a 1% increase then? This implies that every teacher in the country is good enough to teach. 1% is not really a substantial increase, but year after year it makes a difference to a teacher's salary. It is not a true reflection of any teacher's ability. (Whitley,2016,72)

The structure of the appraisal system has conspicuous flaws which enable or coerce or reward teachers, firstly, for not engaging in self-evaluation for professional growth purposes and for not sharing any thoughts she may have about how to improve her performance as a teacher. Second, the system undermines accountability practice within the DSG by disempowering the role of the supervisor. Third, provision for a financial reward in the context of professional practice is in itself a

debatable tactic. Fourth, these finances can easily be accessed through collusion between peers at the same school.

Fifth, we have noted that under the conditions outlined above, teachers will be reluctant to complete their self-appraisal document using the IQMS instrument in a transparent manner. This is in itself is a bottleneck for creation of valid evidence about teacher performance. As much as removing the disincentives to open self-appraisal need to be removed, it is necessary to consider whether initial teacher education institutions and in-service programs are adequately encouraging and embedding the skills of transparent self-assessment in teachers. This is after all the platform from which lifelong professional development must be supported.

There are concerns that in low-functioning schools in South Africa, teachers may not be adequately equipped to make use of the IQMS appraisal process. De Clerq (2008:13) argues that using IQMS as an instrument for peer appraisal assumes that there is a certain level of professional competence, openness and respect towards colleagues among school staff. Ideally schools should have a professional collaborative culture according to which staff can reflect candidly together on teaching practices. However, this anticipated scenario does not play out. In poorly functioning schools, teachers' values and attitudes may be affected by the school's poor results, making them defensive towards any form of performance monitoring.(2008:13)

In rural and marginalised schools, limited support to teachers aggravates their uncertainty in deciding how to participate in the appraisal system. Teachers in schools need specific support from circuit and district level subject advisors and managers and including information about compiling their personal growth plan (PGP). Lack of support from these levels leaves teachers more vulnerable to pressures that distort the appraisal processes. Further, the IQMS suffered resource shortages. The cascade model of training, facilitators poor insight into IQMS, the Department's top-down approach, the leadership limitations of principals and school management teams, and lack of resources in quintile 1 to 3 schools are also said to have contributed to low uptake of the IQMS.(Whitley,2016p.8)

Finally, in the debate on teacher appraisal by means of the IQMS, particularly after the millennium, arguments were put forward that the Department of Education or its representatives in schools were using the tool to 'bully teachers' and that "the IQMS is there to oppress, reprimand and belittle them, rather than to encourage development."

7.6 Interactions between trust and accountability

Our findings indicate clear interactions between trust and accountability where strong internal accountability is underpinned by competence, expertise and strong sense of professional agency and responsibility of school staff. This positively reinforces the building of trust within the school and with parents. Exactly who is considered to have competence and expertise, is informed on the one hand by length of tenure, on the other, by external accountability standards: teachers who know how to 'handle the curriculum and assessment' (as prescribed by CAPS and monitored by the district), are seen to be the most competent and highly trusted colleagues. Similarly, those district officials who provide valuable advice and support, rather than those that take a purely instrumental approach, for example, reading out centrally developed powerpoint slides when organizing workshops for schools, are also the most trusted external colleagues.

Internal accountability and trust

Strong internal accountability promotes trust by instilling clear lines of decision-making, ongoing formal and informal communication where staff have a say in, and are informed about decisions, and clear roles and responsibilities (as part of internal accountability). These structures prevent or minimise non productive conflict and ensure all staff are treated fairly, while supporting collaborative working relationships around a set of shared norms and practices. Having a set of shared practices also instils trust with parents as teachers present a well-organized and united approach to practice.

Where trust is broken or absent there are clear examples of: lack of internal accountability with examples of nepotism and favouritism in promotion and selection of staff into HOD roles, parents gossiping on the school yard or in Whatsapp groups and where the community (including the SGB in collusion with the principal) is dominated by power play.

Our findings also indicate that organisational trust is created where there is a well-functioning accountability system in schools and district, including organisational capacity to deliver on formal roles and responsibilities. Where such structures are absent or are overly bureaucratic (e.g. file checking only) or punitive and demanding, trust becomes individualized and is only extended to those officials who have shown to have expertise, offer good advice and keep wrongdoings or personal matters confidential.

Trust also underpins internal accountability as it allows those in senior roles to delegate tasks and responsibilities to teachers who would in turn feel a sense of responsibility to teach well and be motivated to do so. Trust enables staff to address colleagues about potential wrongdoings as the feedback would be interpreted as a sign of care rather than criticism (school 6), this then creates a sense of mutual responsibility and reciprocity between colleagues (school 8). Teachers feel a lack of trust when they are being micromanaged and our findings from school 6 suggests that this tends to lead to a lack of agency, leading them to disengage from improving their work, a point we will further elaborate below.

7.6.1 School governance bodies

Also relevant to understand the functioning of school accountability and the level of trust between the school and its community is through the work of school governing bodies (SGB). These bodies represent parents and are formally in charge of a number of school policies (e.g. admission).

In the high performing schools, relationships with the SGB are (when reported) overall constructive where the SGB in most cases is only involved in resourcing the school. In low performing schools SGBs are often in conflict with parents, who see them as nepotistic, and are highly suspicious of their motives for being on the SGB- for example, to promote their own business interests.

In terms of governance and the proper function of governing bodies to monitor and to be a critical friend to the executive (the principal and senior leadership team), there are problems at both low and high performing schools: in low performing schools SGB members are often not aware of their function and role, and as a result, many see the role as to rubberstamp decisions made by the executive. In high performing schools, they form part of a tight knit community, along with the principal and SLT, it is not in their interests to hold the SLT to account, seeing their role instead, to support in a philanthropic way, using business and community contacts to supply the school with its needs. In high performing schools, governance rarely comes into question; the school is performing well, so no questions are asked.

In low performing schools, the governing body is often disempowered by a lack of knowledge of role, as mentioned earlier, or a lack of proper information with which to hold the school to account (as this is normally provided by the SLT). Weak or non performing SLTs lack the will and capacity to provide this information, choosing instead to paint a rosy picture of performance in order to avoid confrontation. This impacts on trust, capacity and accountability in both low and high performing schools. It also supports other research in this area that has questioned the nature and scale of power of SGBs. As they are a key mechanism for the democratic accountability of schools, this research has illustrated that there are fundamental issues with their role in education and educational accountability.

7.6.2 Teacher agency

In low performing schools, the professional agency of teachers is reduced. There are several reasons for this: the first is the lack of trust between teachers, this then leads to a climate of mutual suspicion

which mandates against collaboration. Lack of collaboration and open treatment of challenges as learning events, then creates a climate in which teachers are fearful of admitting to these challenges; this means that very often, they are not resolved. When teachers become stuck and unable to change negative practices or face problems head on, they then find the external accountability demands overwhelming. This leads to a situation in which they adopt a tick box approach to their teaching, complying with accountability demands, such as delivering chunks of curriculum regardless of whether learners are keeping up, in order to retain their positions. This, over time creates a sense that they have little agency in their practices and in helping students self-actualise, leading, over time to feelings of both lack of agency and concomitantly, professionalism.

This lack of agency creates a strong sense of disempowerment amongst teachers, and leads to a climate of distrust between staff and senior leadership team, as well as among teachers themselves. This lack of agency and feelings of being mere workers, as compared to professionals, is compounded by certain unions who are keen to adopt an anachronistic position on teacher professionalism, preferring to frame them as workers rather than professionals. This position hearkens back to the apartheid period when teachers were indeed workers, and their only bargaining power, the unions. This anachronistic view of teachers, by the very unions that purport to support them, further undermines any attempt to responsiblize them as agentive professionals.

Appendix 1. Template interview

Interview questions (general template):
This template was used to interview school staff (principal, head of department, two teachers, chair of the School Governing Body, teacher union representative and circuit manager/district subject advisor) in 4 schools in Gauteng (low and high performing) and 4 schools in KwaZulu-Natal end of 2018/beginning of 2019.

A. General:
1. How long have you worked in/with this school?
2. Is the school population (staff and students) stable or is there a high turn-over?
3. Can you tell me what a typical week looks like?
4. What does performance of children look like in this school? How would you explain high/low performance?
5. Who do you think has the power to improve education, in your school and in general (if anyone, any organisation)? How would they need to do that? What stops them?

B. Trust
1. Do staff feel they are treated fairly by colleagues, principal, management team, SGB, district, provincial, national policy-makers?
2. Who do you trust in your school? Why?
3. Who do you consider to be a role model in your school, as well as outside of the school? Why?
4. Who would you call on when you need a favour (e.g....)? Would they expect the favour to be returned?
5. How would you describe the culture in this school? Do people care about one another (including students, school community)? Is there a sense of shared values? What are they?
6. Do people generally keep their word in this school?
7. Do you feel that your colleagues care for you?
8. Do students/parents feel cared for/respected?
9. How long do you expect to continue working in this school? In the same role or not? Why?
10. How satisfied are people to work in this school? Why/why not?
11. Who would you go to in the school if you had a question/problem with one of your students and needed some advice?
12. How would you describe the school community: are people generally from the same background (culture, religion, race, class, gender)?
13. Do children trust their teachers?

Capacity
1. What are structures and policies to support collaboration between staff and community (open door policy of principal?)?
2. Who are boundary spanners in bringing in new knowledge, connecting the school to other schools/organisations?
3. Who do you collaborate with and about what?
4. Can you explain how school fees were set in this school? Who decided and what were reasons?
5. When/how was the principal appointed to the school? How was he/she selected/ appointed?
6. Competence of teachers: do teachers/you feel competent to teach basic subjects? What initial teacher training and CPD have you received, and still have access to?
7. When was the last time there was a strike/conflict in this school? What was it about? Did the entire staff support the strike/what were differing viewpoints? Were viewpoints reconciled?
8. Do children master the instructional language? Is there support for those who don't?
9. Who was last promoted within the school? What informed the promotion and what did the process of promotion look like (e.g. who was involved, criteria for promotion)?
10. Availability of resources and infrastructure: sufficient?
11. Financial planning in the school: how are budgets decided on and allocated and monitored?

12. Number of days staff were out of school over the last 6 months and why?
13. Do you think students get a high quality education in this school? Why? If not, what could be better? What is needed for this?
14. Would you have liked to go to this school as a child? Why/why not?
15. How would you describe the role of the principal: what is on his/her agenda in a regular week (administrative duties versus instructional leadership)?
16. How would you describe behaviour/motivation to learn of children in the school?
17. After school (private) tuition? Provided by whom, and who goes, how is it paid for, what is the benefit of going (access to exam training)?
18. Does school staff have (paid) jobs outside of school? Why/who/how much time?
19. Is it safe to come to school (both for staff and children)?
20. How would children/parents define the purpose of education/why would parents send their children to school? Are children supported at home to do well in school?

Accountability
1. Who sits on the SGB?
2. How are principals, teachers, SMT members and SGB members recruited/selected and appointed into their role?
3. How is the SGB performing; are they critical of the SMT, supporting school policy, what were the recent topics of discussion?
4. Is your work evaluated or monitored in some way (formally and informally)? Is so, how and by whom? What would be considered a high standard of work?
5. Have parents actively chosen this school (or is there no alternative)? If yes, what are their reasons for choosing this school?
6. Has the school received visits from the district? When/how often/purpose/outcome of the visit and did it lead to changes in the school?
7. Is there any control over how resources are spent? What happens if resources are not spent according to budget/legislation?
8. Does the school use an EMIS? Who is involved in planning and decision-making and monitoring of implementation of school policy? What does this process look like?
9. Availability and use of student performance data (e.g. AnA)?
10. Is your work reviewed? If yes, by whom, on the basis of what indicators and how often?
11. Are your chances of moving up improved if you perform well?
12. Is the quality and amount of your work important for whether you get a raise or a promotion?
13. Is it important that your supervisor likes you? In what ways, how?
14. Are staff in this school member of a union? Which union has the highest representation in this school? Have they been involved in the school in any way and how?

Appendix 2. Codebook

Codes	Explanation/ description
Trust amongst and between school staff and learners	-Between parents and SGB -Between SGB and principal -Between parents and teachers -Between parents and (acting) principal/HOD -Between learners and teachers -Between teachers: -Between teachers and HOD -Between teachers and (acting) principal -Between school and district -Between learners -Between school staff and union
Trust between school staff and external stakeholders	-Between school staff and: local community district –province - national
Trust as a cultural feature of the school	norms and values in the school about how to interact and communicate and treat each other
Understanding of trust	how participants describe trust and why they trust someone
Trust and capacity	How does trust, or lack of trust affect capacity to ensure high learning outcomes
Trust and internal accountability	how does trust, or lack of trust affect internal accountability in the school
Trust and external accountability	How does trust, or lack of trust affect school staff engagement with external accountability
Learning outcomes	Included a description of learning outcomes and where children struggle (what are current learning outcomes in various subjects and across grades)
Curriculum and quality of teaching and assessment	I included here also teachers' analysis of assessment data and how that informs their teaching
School structure	what type of committees and how often do they meet
School community	Including learner motivation, parental school choice and background of learners and parents Also how teachers describe themselves as part of the community (e.g. whether they live close to the school or were taught in the school) Also included level of deprivation in the community, how this affects teaching Also included how the community supports the school (e.g. in providing food) Also included how long teachers have been teaching in the school/level of attrition
Support from parents for improvement	Do parents support the education of their children and improvement of the school more generally?
Vision of the school on teaching and learning	what is the vision of the school for teaching and learning, and school improvement and is the vision shared by school staff and community

Codes	Explanation/ description
School leadership and management	leadership of the school: how is the school managed and led by the SMT/principal, including a description of principal's work week and tasks and how the SMT ensures high quality teaching
Language policy	what is the language policy, when was it implemented/changed and how well do teachers/learners/parents master both instructional languages, how contested is the language policy Also included how many learners/teachers don't master the instructional language and how the school aims to support them.
Infrastructure and resources	how well resourced is the school, particularly in number of qualified teachers, adequacy of school building and infrastructure
School fee policy and implementation	Also included how the fees are spent which quintile and is the designation correct given the actual student population. What is the school's policy on fees and are provisions in place for parents who are unable to pay fees. Are learner groups explicitly excluded from attending the school by the school's fee policy
Support for improvement and professional development	:What kind of support for improvement is provided, including professional development and how effective is to improve teaching and learning Meetings at the circuit/district when these are not about accountability, but to manage the school
Behavioural policy	Description of behavioural problems and issues of safety
Reputation of the school	What is the reputation of the school?
Teacher motivation	Included answers of teachers to questions about what they like about their job and what they enjoy about and find challenging. Only included this in school vision when they refer to it as something school-wide. Included where staff talk about motivation of other staff for the job Not included motivation of SGB members (coded under functioning)
SMT motivation	What is the motivation of SMT members to fulfil their role/improve the school?
External accountability: interventions	which types of reports, monitoring visits in the school Also included where school staff have to go to meetings of the district (but is this accountability?)
Feedback from external accountability	Which areas for improvement and identified strengths, recommendations etc
Understanding of accountability	Perceptions and meaning of external monitoring (legitimacy, supportive, abuse etc)
Internal evaluations/control: interventions	What internal evaluation and monitoring is in place: description of interventions Including moderation of assessments and use of assessment data to understand *school* improvement (learner improvement is coded under curriculum and assessment)
Internal accountability: quality culture	Is there a quality culture where staff discuss areas for improvement openly? Including examples of nepotism, corruption, favouritism, extortion of students/colleagues
Internal accountability: feedback	Which feedback is provided to staff from internal quality control/evaluation, how often, by whom to whom?

Codes	Explanation/ description
Promotion and selection	Are staff promoted and selected on the basis of quality and through an open procedure
External accountability and improvement	how has external accountability led/failed to lead to improvement of the school Included also where monitoring is not helpful, or lacks quality.
Internal accountability and improvement	How has internal accountability/evaluation led/failed to lead to improvement of the school
Corruption	Use and misuse of power for personal gain
Teacher unions	Membership and influence over school practice and policy
SGB Monitoring	How is the SGB monitoring the SMT/school staff
SGB Understanding of role	Who is on the SGB, how do they understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities?
SGB Perceptions of good education	How do SGB members understand/describe school quality
Preparation, training and development	How have SGB members been prepared for their role? Are they undertaking/have they undertaken any training and/or development?