



Sunnyside Primary classes are being taught at a nearby church due to storm damage to its building. PICTURE: TANYA PETERSEN

Gloomy state of Sunnyside Primary

TANYA PETERSEN

SUNNYSIDE Primary in Athlone suffered severe damage in the recent storms which lashed the Western Cape.

Its administration building had its roof blown off and sustained water damage. A few classrooms were also affected.

It is one of 171 schools in the province that reported damage.

Western Cape Education Department spokesperson Paddy Attwell said it was aware of the situation and has implemented measures to assist the school.

"The storm blew off the administration block and damaged the electricity supply to five classrooms. Contractors

have removed rubble and dangerous materials from the site and electricians have restored the electricity supply," he said.

"Parents have expressed concern about the safety of the electricity supply, but electricians have confirmed that electricity at the school is now safe."

Mobile classrooms and a toilet have been installed in the interim, Attwell said.

He added that the school is safe for occupancy until a new structure is built in 2019.

"The department has undertaken to replace Sunnyside Primary. The school is one of 113 schools that the department plans to replace. These are typically *plankie skole* built of

inappropriate materials," he said. "The department has not undertaken to move Sunnyside up the list (though)."

Sunnyside acting principal Nathaniel Brache said the mobile classrooms had not been assembled and more mobile toilets hadn't arrived.

Brache feared that everything might not be compliant.

"Because the responsibility lies on me, we will only put the power on once we see the certificate of compliance from the Department of Public Works," he said.

The community had united to help the school and teachers were focused despite the circumstances, Brache added.

He was concerned the

school may sustain further damage by 2019, or pupils be injured due to the state of the building.

Governing body chairperson Nakier Karriem said parents were unhappy about the situation.

"Parents are not happy sending their children to school as it might not be safe. There have been complaints that there are more classrooms leaking," he said.

"It seems as though the department is not concerned about the school. We are being treated like we are in apartheid again."

Karriem questioned why Sunnyside Primary would be rebuilt only in 2019.