

Repairs at Pinedene get underway

TARRYN-LEIGH SOLOMONS

 @tarryns07

The Western Cape education department has confirmed to *TygerBurger* that repairs at Pinedene Primary in Ravensmead are set to get underway on Friday 15 March.

For the past few weeks, learners have been taught outside the school due to infrastructure concerns.

The SGB chairperson Rosita Barends told *TygerBurger* parents and teachers at the school fear a repeat of the Hoërskool Driehoek tragedy.

“We, all the SGB and staff, assessed the building and felt it best to keep our children

and staff out of the building because we did not deem it safe and we told the WCED as such. This is especially in light of what happened at Hoërskool Driehoek in Johannesburg, which resulted in the death of three learners.”

Barends explained that classes take place outside on the grass. “These classes are combined and we also have a church who made their premises available to us when it rains.

“The SGB, school staff, parents and learners are concerned about this and we are working with the WCED to find alternative accommodation for our children. We are not sitting back like we don’t care as we have been busy trying to find alternatives. We are rather opting to be safe than sorry,” said Ba-

rends. A parent, Yolande Haywood, contacted the newspaper to express her concerns: “On hot days, my daughter complains of having a headache because of the heat, or some of them are sweating and that distracts them from concentrating on their work.

“It seems my child is trying to adjust, but the change of location in terms of moving around all the time is a concern for me.”

Haywood said she understands why the teachers have opted for a different route. “We can see that the school infrastructure is not right. The balcony, which is connected by two concrete blocks, has a hole in it. To me this is worrisome. As parents we are just not comfortable. We are between a rock and a hard place. This is just not conducive for our

children as they don’t have desks to write on. The books are being damaged because they were sitting outside.” Another parent, who asked to remain anonymous, has revealed to *TygerBurger* that he is grateful to the teachers and SGB who are considering the safety of the children: “The WCED needs to step in because our children can’t continue to learn like this.” Department spokesperson Millicent Merton said a meeting was held at the school last month. “The meeting was attended by MEC Debbie Schäfer, senior WCED officials, officials from the Department of Public Works and the SGB of the school. It was agreed that a number of alternative accommodation options would be explored. This process is underway.”