

MEC Martha Bartlett  
Launch of the Deworming Programme  
Warrenton Public School  
22 August 2017

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Executive Mayor of the Frances Baard District, Ms Ximba;  
Mayor of the Magareng Municipality, Cllr Mahaleni  
Senior Officials of Government;  
Religious Leaders present;  
Members of the School Governing Body;  
School Principals and Educators;  
School Community of Warrenton;  
Most importantly our learners.

It gives me pleasure to speak at the auspicious occasion, the launch of the Provincial Second Deworming Programme. We certainly believe that the health of our children is intrinsically linked to the improved learner outcomes. In fact, as Mahatma Gandhi once put it succinctly:

“It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.”

The aim of the Programme is to improve children’s health, reduce health barriers to learning and assist learners to stay in school and perform to the best of their abilities. The Programme further intends to promote attitudes and behaviours that will positively impact the current and future health status of learners.

Overall the programme is designed to improve both the education performance and the health and well-being of our children. It seeks to address a range of health and social challenges that are faced by young people especially related to sexual and reproductive health.

This holistic response appraises, protects, and improves the health of learners, with the goal of reducing absenteeism and increasing academic achievement and ultimately the quality of basic education.

As part of the implementation of the Integrated School Health Programme, we have adopted a three-pronged approach (in accordance with the recommendations of the World Health Organisation, (WHO). These include:

- Health education including the type of worms, how transmission is taking place, prevention of worms and hand washing integrated into the workbooks;
- Regular deworming of children in schools; and
- Provision of adequate sanitation, safe water and the maintenance thereof to be provided to schools.

The National School Deworming Programme is a flagship part of the Integrated School Health Programme.

The target is to reach all Grade R-7 learners in quintile 1-3 primary schools. As we know, all these schools are part and benefits from the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The provincial plan of the Deworming Programme indicates that we will reach 144 883 learners in 415 schools and run from 22 August to 27 September in the Northern Cape.

We have chosen Warrenton Public School for the Provincial launch of the Second Deworming programme as it will benefit the health of our learners and contribute to the quality of education we provide in all our schools.

Finally, we call on our parents/legal guardians to please allow their children to participate in this national programme.

The National School Deworming Programme is a voluntary exercise aimed at improving the well-being of our learners. We urge all parents and guardians to please sign the consent form and return it to the school. I must say the programme proves beyond any reasonable doubt that indeed education is a societal issue.

Let us all adopt healthy behavioural attitude in our homes and classrooms across the country. It starts with a habit of handwashing with clean water and soap after every activity especially before handling food or after visiting the bathroom.

I thank you!