

CREATING
A CARING
SCHOOL
Setting Up
Aftercare
and Some
Ideas for
Aftercare
Activities

Tool
4

Writers

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Setting up aftercare

What aftercare strategy is suitable for your school?

The case studies in Guide 4 have shown that aftercare is separate from the programme of learning and teaching that takes place at schools during the day.

In addition to the academic support provided by teachers or homework assistants in the afternoon, your school can get involved in collaborating with an existing aftercare programme, working with other schools in the area to set up a common aftercare facility, or set up and manage its own aftercare support programme for vulnerable learners. These ideas can stimulate you to reflect on what you can do at your school. Think about the resources and capacity you have and the opportunities that exist in your community and see which options best suit your context.

Activity: Identify an aftercare strategy for your school

The challenge for you and your management team is to come up with ideas for a workable aftercare strategy. This is essentially an initial planning activity that consists of two main tasks:

Task 1

This is a simple research task that a couple of members of the SMT can carry out. An important first step in finding the most suitable strategy is to investigate what kind of aftercare support exists in your community, and how individuals, businesses and organisations in the community can support the school in an aftercare initiative. These questions can be used to guide the investigation. The findings are recorded in a short written report.

1. What kind of aftercare support exists in the community? Ask teachers, parents, caregivers, leaders of Faith-Based Organisations (CBO's) and NGOs operating in your area, clinics and community development facilitators. Record your findings. And give a clear description of the support that is being provided, who is involved, and what their contact details are.



2. What kind of support can you expect from individuals, businesses and organisations in the area? Use similar contacts to get this information and give details about the nature of the support that is potentially available, names and contact number of relevant people.

Task 2

The management team meets for a planning activity, which entails brainstorming, critically reflecting on the written report and compiling an initial set of ideas for aftercare. The resources you need for the planning activity include:

- **Tool 4.1 (below) What kind of aftercare service can your school offer?** to record your ideas
- The written report prepared in Task 2
- Ideas from the case studies in Guide 4.

Comment

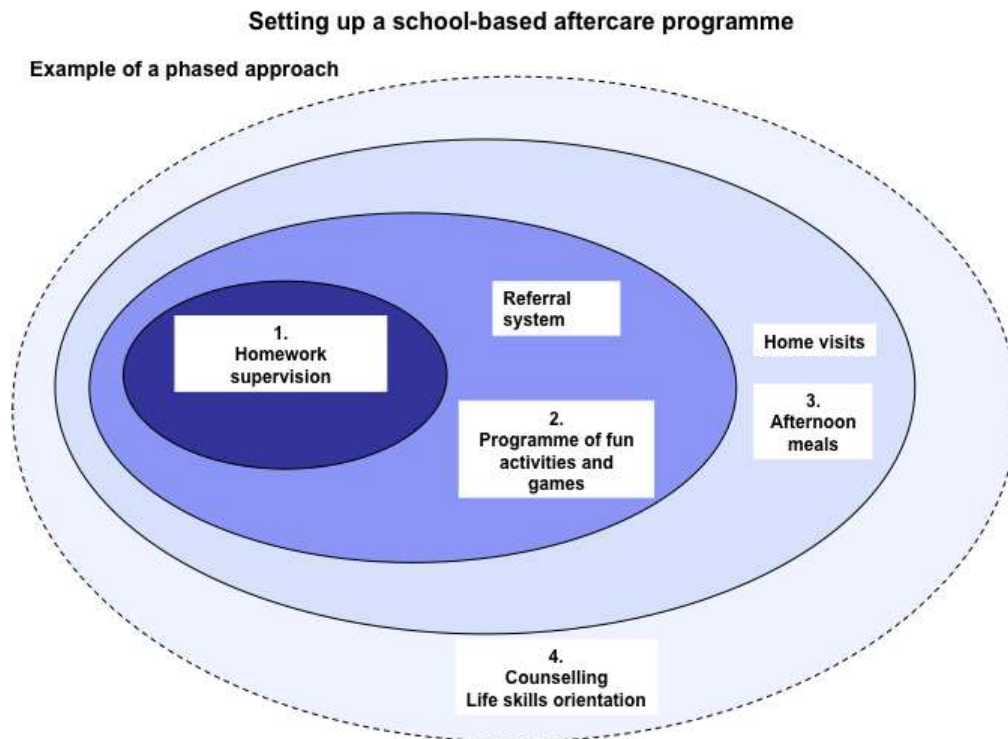
Before you even consider aftercare support it is necessary to examine the nature and the scope of the challenge of providing such support at your school. How many vulnerable learners do you have at your school? How do you establish whether they are eligible for participating in the aftercare programme? What are their most urgent needs? What are the implications of setting up, managing and maintaining such a programme? The examples you looked at in this unit will have given you a good idea of what is involved.

Your choice of aftercare option is dependent, to a large extent, on the environment in which your school is located. If there is already an existing aftercare programme run by an external agency, the community or even another school, you could decide that it would be beneficial to look for ways of collaborating with this programme. If on the other hand no aftercare support exists, then a strong option would be to set up an aftercare programme. You could work with another school in the immediate area, or with the community and involve various people such as parents, out-of-school and unemployed young people and retired people. Whichever option you think is most



appropriate given the opportunities and constraints of your context, you have to consider carefully how to use the ideas you have generated to create a workable plan that will result in positive actions.

You do not necessarily have to implement an aftercare programme that offers the full range of services at once. You can **use a phased approach** whereby you build up the programme gradually as depicted graphically in the diagram below.



You can start with a few activities that you can manage easily with resources that you are assured of. For example, you could begin with afternoon homework supervision, as this might be quite easy to organise. You may be able to get willing parents involved at the start of the programme and one of the teachers could liaise with the parents regularly. It might also be possible to get sponsorship from a local business to offer children fruit, a cool drink and sandwiches at the beginning of the programme and then later in the programme, as you are able to raise regular funding, you can



offer light meals. In a phased approach you build the programme up step by step. A challenge in a phased approach is to keep your eye on the big picture and keep expanding the range of support and services and not become complacent by sticking with a programme that offers minimum support.

You can of course plan the full range of activities right from the start. This approach requires that you have the necessary funding and capacity to do so. It demands a careful planning and a huge input of time and effort on the part of management, as there is so much to organize at once. A challenge in this approach is to 'fly' too quickly without having the necessary resources or the required infrastructure, and in the process you might set yourself up for failure.

Tool 4.1

What kind of aftercare service can your school offer?

To find the answer to this question you can organise a brainstorming activity with your School Management Team. Brainstorming is a well-known and useful tool that we can use to come up with creative solutions to problems. It is particularly useful if you want to break out of the usual patterns of thinking in order to take a fresh look at a problem or challenge. Brainstorming with a group can be particularly effective as it stimulates the members to share their experience and creativity. If well-organised, group brainstorming can enable the team to develop ideas in more depth than if individuals are left to come up with ideas on their own.

Ideas for organising a productive brainstorming activity

1. Clearly describe the challenge or problem for which you want to find an answer.
2. Make sure everyone understands the 'rules of the brainstorming game'
 - Everyone's contribution is accepted and respected
 - No attempt must be made to evaluate the ideas
 - No sequential train of thought is followed
 - The focus must be on the problem or challenge
 - All ideas are recorded.



3. Encourage people to be creative and to come up with as many ideas as possible, practical as well as impractical ones. All ideas are welcome.
4. Encourage everyone to contribute. One way of doing this is to get people to write their ideas on cards. The participants write one idea per card. The cards can be placed on the wall or on a stand with prestik. The cards also serve as a record of the ideas and there is no need for someone to record them on flipchart paper.
5. Put a time frame on the brainstorming activity. This helps to keep the momentum alive and prevents people becoming introspective and falling into the trap of evaluating the ideas.
6. Let people have fun with the brainstorming activity. The more they enjoy the activity and the more relaxed they are, the more their creativity is stimulated.
7. Encourage people to use other people's ideas to create new ones.
8. Once you have completed the actual brainstorming activity, you can shift the cards around and order them under specific headings. You may then want to take a critical look at the ideas and start thinking about how to use them to come up with a workable solution to the problem or challenge that you had identified.

Purpose

- To use a brainstorming technique to come up with creative ideas in response to the challenge of providing aftercare support for vulnerable learners.
- To use the ideas from the brainstorming session to inform the development of a draft set of ideas for an aftercare strategy.

What to do

- Introduce the planning activity and make sure that each member of the team understands the purpose described above.
- Explain that the planning activity consists of four parts:

1.	2.	3.	4.
Describe the challenge of providing aftercare for vulnerable learners at your school	Brainstorm to come up with creative ideas	Discuss the context report compiled by a SMT member	Compile list of workable ideas for an aftercare strategy



1. Describe the challenge of providing aftercare for vulnerable learners at your school inside the block on the next page. Give a detailed description of the reality as you see it. The description of the challenge will help you to remain focused when you brainstorm ideas.
2. Brainstorm ideas. You can use the brainstorming guidelines to assist you to organise the activity and to create an atmosphere where everyone can contribute ideas. Record the ideas from members inside the block on the next page.
3. Discuss the context report. The SMT member can give a brief presentation to kick-start the discussion. The purpose of the discussion is, among others, to find out whether it is possible to link up with existing initiatives and what the implications might be. It is also to probe what types of support the school can harness in its efforts to offer aftercare support.
4. Examine the ideas from the brainstorming session critically. Select those you think are feasible, and use the table provided to record your ideas.



1. Description of the challenge of providing aftercare for vulnerable children at your school (include numbers of vulnerable learners, their needs, resources needed etc.)	2. Record of ideas



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Questions	Draft ideas for an aftercare strategy
1. How many vulnerable learners would need aftercare support?	
2. What are their most urgent needs?	
3. What aftercare option is most suitable [Check the options diagram in Guide 4]	
4. What internal resources can you use?	
5. What resources can you get from the community and external organisations?	
6. What activities could you offer?	
7. Who will get involved in the aftercare programme?	
8. Who will manage the aftercare programme?	
9. What are the biggest obstacles to get started?	
10. What would you concentrate on at the start?	



Tool 4.2 Some ideas for aftercare activities

It is ideal for any aftercare facility to have a thought-out programme of activities for each day. These should include a balance of structured and free activities (activities where children play freely).

Structured activities

Sitting down together to eat, supervised homework and general academic support, a slot for supervised school reading practice (in primary schools) organising various creative activities like singing, music, drama and visual art as well as organised sports and games.

Sports: If you have the space and a couple of balls, it is simple to set up a game of soccer or netball. Even playing cricket or rounders (baseball) does not require much equipment.

Games: Younger children enjoy simple games like three-legged races, potato and spoon races, wheel barrow races, hopscotch and playing marbles. Ask the children to suggest games and help them to organise themselves to play these games.

Reading and storytelling: Try and collect or ask for donations of children's books. If you have access to a computer and the internet, use Google and search for "children's stories" – there are some that you can download freely and print out to read to the children or you can read one or two yourself and then retell the stories to the children.

Drama: Tell the children a story and then get them act it out; or make simple puppets made out of socks to dramatise the story. You can also make puppets by cutting the characters and other props out of stiff cardboard (cut up old cardboard boxes). Use wax crayons or paint to colour the character. Attach each cardboard cutout character or prop (house/ car/ tree etc.) to a thin stick with a drawing pin. Get the children to dramatise a story you have told them or to tell their own stories using the cardboard puppets.

Music: Make some simple homemade instruments – any small tin with a few stones/seeds in it to make a rattle/shaker, use an empty tin to beat as a drum, make



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a simple string instrument like a guitar made out of an old car oil can – one can use nylon fishing line/very thin wire to make the strings. Collect a set of bottles & fill them with differing amounts of water and then tap the bottles with a wooden stick - to make a simple xylophone. Use any found plastic hose tubing to make a set of pan pipes.

Free activities

Allocate specific times for children to play freely. If you have a nice big tree at your school/aftercare site, you can easily make a swing with a strong rope and an old rubber car tyre or enlist the help of some parents to build a simple metal or wood structure for little ones to climb on (a jungle gym).

Some tips for getting started on some structured creative activities

Here are a few ideas for some creative activities. Many of these activities are based on art or the observation of nature. They encourage children to express freely (and value) who they are and what they feel and see. Most will require:

Time: Enough time to choose, imagine, remember, talk, make and remake. It is especially important to talk with children as they work.

Focus: You may need to tell a story or some other kind of starter activity like singing a song together to calm down and focus children that may be noisy, confused or aggressive.

Some ideas for free or low-cost resources

Facilitators and children can collect:

- recycled material such as: cardboard sheets (cut-up old cardboard boxes) cylinders (toilet rolls) and boxes, bright foil and patterned paper, old glossy magazines and newspapers, bottle-tops, buttons, small bottles, bead wire, scraps of fabric, empty cans and plastic bottles;
- simple art materials such as: coloured chalk, wax crayons, paper (even paper used on one side), pencils, poster paints;
- natural materials such as: seeds and pods, grasses and reeds, clay, leaves, dry flowers, feathers, shells; and
- glue: make your own by mixing two tablespoons of flour with four tablespoons of water in a bowl until smooth. Then add two cups of boiling water and stir well again. Keep in a cup or jar. (It's not very thick.)



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Some ideas for creative activities

1. **Special Names:** Give each child a sheet of paper and put out coloured wax crayons. Let each child/young person decide on a special name, it could be their own name, or the name of a friend, sibling, parent/caregiver or even of a loved one that has passed on (particularly in the case of an orphaned child/youth).

The children/young people must:

- Fold the sheet of paper in half — length-wise.
- Smooth the fold quite flat.
- Open the paper, use a coloured wax crayon and write their special name in big letters on one half, using the fold line as the line to write on. (Children choose the name of any person that is special to them). Do clear, strong letters in thick crayon.
- Fold the paper over again with the name inside. Place on a book or desk and rub the thumbnail firmly all over the outside.
- Open the paper and see how the crayoned name has rubbed onto the other side of the paper too so that there is a lovely symmetrical pattern (mirror image).
- Decorate the name with other colours etc. – but keep the shape clear.
- Make a beautiful display with all the names stuck on the wall (use prestik).

Children love this activity. They can also do it using the names of loved ones to make birthday cards or memory cards. If the children are very young, they may need to learn how to write their name. While they decorate their names, ask who gave them the name and why, what it means, what different forms it has, and so on.

2. **Memory Box:** Explain what a memory box is: a small box containing things that remind us of someone we love very much. Like the “Special Name” activity above, this can be done to remember either a living person or someone special who may have passed on.

- Ensure that you have a small, strong box for each child in the group (a shoe box or any other small box). Ask everyone in the group to each try and find their own box, but you as the facilitator, need to bring some additional boxes to ensure that no one is left out.
- Let the children/youth identify a special person, then invite each one to bring a small item (often very simple), or a piece of something that s/he wore or used, something s/he wrote, a photo, a scrap of fabric from a dress, a card, something s/he made. It could also be something that the child/youth makes themselves to remember the person.
- Decorate the boxes in different ways: e.g. with coloured paper, pieces of fabric, shapes or pictures cut from magazines, seeds and dried leaves, drawings, pretty buttons, shells, paints. The loved one’s name could be part of the design.
- The boxes could also be varnished to preserve the decorations.
- Over time, each child/youth can collect items that remind them of the loved one to add to the box.



Think of a place either at the aftercare centre or where the child lives to store the memory box safely.

3. **Portraits:** Children can form pairs and do drawings or paintings of one another.

For drawing they can use:

- Wax crayons, pencil crayons, pencils and paint.
- You can also use pieces of charcoal from bits of burnt wood/sticks from a fire.
- Or use coloured chalk. Dissolve two or three tea spoons of sugar in half a glass of warm water, then dip the chalk into the sugar water & use for drawing. As the chalk gets dry, dip it into the water again. This helps to make the colours brighter!
- They should look carefully at each other and do an outline of the other person that nearly fills the page. Then they can take time to fill in details. Encourage them to talk about the shapes on someone's face and how to draw parts like noses, shadows under the chin or lips etc.

Display all the portraits on the wall (be sure to put all up, so that *everyone* is affirmed).

4. **Nature Picture:** Let children make pictures using only natural materials like:

- Clay, seeds, grasses, leaves, bark, flower heads – use flower heads to draw with (as you press them the colour comes out), or charcoal from burnt twigs, or clay mixed with water to produce earthy colours etc.
 - Collecting the materials could make an interesting outdoor activity by itself.
 - You may need glue to stick some items on e.g. grasses – make some homemade glue with flour and water.
 - The pictures could be of landscapes – mountains, trees, fields etc. – or the natural art materials could be used to depict a house and garden, or a person.
-

5. **Observing Plants/Animals/Birds/Insects:** Identify a place such as a clump of bushes, the edge of a forest or a swampy area (vlei) that is used a lot by birds, animals or insects (for food, for making nests or homes, or for resting in).

Ensure that there is appropriate adult supervision when you visit such places with children and youth. Watch what is happening there over time. Children can do so every day, every week or just two or three times.

- They can observe one plant or animal especially closely, or they can observe everything.
- They can report back on what the plant(s) or animal(s) look like and what they do, and find out their local names and uses from adults who know.
- They can describe what changes take place overtime. They can watch to see what animals eat, how they make nests or homes, which plants are used or eaten etc.
- If they can write, some may enjoy making short written reports (just a sentence, perhaps with a drawing), or they can just tell. Help them make a list of the animals and birds they see.
- Make the children aware that all creatures need one another, and the more that are destroyed, the more danger the world is in. Also, the knowledge they



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may have of their local natural life has economic value in the wider world (e.g. in eco-tourism).

6. **Card-making:** To make cards, regularly collect thin cardboard from packaging (soap powder, cereal and tea boxes etc.) and get others to help collect or donate sheets of white or coloured card. Children/youth can use it to make birthday, Christmas or other cards like cards celebrating other religious occasions and cards specially made for loved ones or friends who are sick. They can use the name patterns, portraits, nature drawings etc. or new drawings as cards. They could draw their home and/or family, the person the card is for, something that person likes to eat or do or a picture of themselves with the person. They can stick things on the card e.g. seed, leaves, dried flowers, buttons, paper cut-outs etc. to decorate it. Talk to them about the pictures and the messages they want to write. (Help very young children and those who can't write to write messages.)

7. **Spaza Store:** Collect lots of strong cardboard boxes and old containers and ask families in the community to keep theirs and bring them to you. Get the children to make their own Spaza stores in groups. Each group will need some boxes and containers to set up their store. They can decorate the store with drawings and signs, and act out sales transactions together. They can make money from bottle-tops and scrap paper and be encouraged to add up purchases and work out change.

8. **'I can' and 'I like' streamer:** (For young children) You need:
- 6-10 metres of coloured plastic cord or any type of string
 - Sheets of A4 paper
 - Question and talk to the children about things they can do e.g. stand on their head, climb a tree, tie a bow, run fast, write their name, braid hair, make a wire car, sew etc.
 - Or help them to think about things that they really enjoy like soccer, cake, skipping, etc.
 - Give each child a piece of paper. Help each child fold the paper in half with the short ends together and make a sharp fold.
 - Each child can then draw something s/he can do on one half and something s/he likes a lot next to it on the other half.

As each child finishes, hang their picture over the string at the fold and stick or staple the two halves together so that the pictures are on the outside. Hang the pictures all along the string/cord in this way so that it looks like a gaily coloured streamer. Hang it up for all to see (also at a community functions).

(Source: Activities 1 -8 adapted with permission from MiET Africa (2006) *HANDBOOK A resource for turning your school into a centre of care and support*. Africa Ignite: Kwa Zulu Natal).

More ideas... getting ideas for children's activities on the internet

If you or your school have access to a computer with internet connectivity, just Google "*simple activities for children*" and you will find lots of sites with good ideas including, games, simple things that children can do and craft activities etc.



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