



Vukukhanye

October 2025

Newsletter



The 46 children enrolled at the Vukukhanye Educare Centre enjoy a full-day of play-centred learning. In addition to meals, toilet routine and rest; the daily programme includes morning ring, arts and crafts, language activities, stories, free play (such as construction, art, fantasy play, puzzles & outdoor play such as in the sand pit or on the jungle gym) as well as drama and music. The syllabus followed is in line with the Department of Basic Education's *National Curriculum Framework* (NCF), including the six key *Early Learning and Development Areas* (ELDAS), which are 'well-being', 'identity & belonging', 'communication', 'exploring mathematics', 'creativity' and 'knowledge and understanding of the world'.



The three teachers and two teacher's assistants continue to do an excellent job, responding to each child's individual needs and personalities, and adopting strategies to maximise the child's development. The children's height and weight are monitored, and reports are produced for each child and shared with the parents. Where challenges are identified, the teachers work closely with the child's parents/caregivers. The **stories below** from the teachers, give some understanding of this...

Story 1

I have a new 4-year-old boy in my class, Simtholile. He has not attended any school before, and his mother said that she had not brought him earlier as she was embarrassed – she was afraid to let him out of the house as he was not like other children and was unable to talk. Since he has been in my class I have noticed the challenge. He is unable to sit still and is often standing on the desk or doing something that is not related to what we are doing at the time. It was challenging to have him in my class this late in the year, but I started from scratch with him, trying to build fine and gross motor ability and helping him with the daily routine. I also had to have my eye on him every second. The second day in class I gave him a wax crayon and paper. He tried to scribble for a bit and then got frustrated and tore the paper and ate the crayon. As he is spending more time at school, he seems to be settling in. He is more able to settle in the morning and follow the daily routine. We must keep the activities short as he soon starts to climb on the table, grabbing and throwing things on the floor. All-in-all I am happy to have Simtholile in my class. I am learning a lot about children who are different, and I hope to make a difference in his life over time.

Story 2

Destiny is a 3-year-old girl who struggled with inconsistent toilet habits. As her educator, I noticed this unhealthy pattern and spoke with her parents. Together we discovered underlying issues and sought medical attention at the clinic. With professional guidance Destiny's parents implemented changes at home, emphasizing hygiene and regular toilet breaks. We reinforced these habits at school. Destiny's confidence has soared as she has now mastered regular, independent use of the toilet.

Story 3

Samuel is a 4-year-old boy who enrolled at the Vukukhanye Educare Centre for the first time this year. As he didn't understand or speak English or isiZulu, it was initially very difficult to communicate with him. He was always sad and couldn't follow any instructions because of the language barrier between the teachers or his peers. Samuel is a fast learner as he surprised us all. By the 3rd week of school Samuel had shown a lot of improvement he is now able to talk to his teacher. He is also able to follow instructions very well and his sadness in school has vanished. He can play and communicate with his peers very well and can also sing along with us in the morning ring and in music ring.

Nutrition

A healthy cooked breakfast (oats, sorghum or 'Do-More' fortified porridge), a healthy mid-morning snack and cooked lunch is provided daily. The teachers and children have worked to consistently add to the vegetable garden. These harvests supplement daily meals, but importantly, working with the soil and plants also teaches the children valuable lessons. As the children are mostly from homes affected by poverty and unemployment, as needs are identified, Vukukhanye aims to support vulnerable families with material support such as food and clothing. Some parents have also offered to volunteer at the school.



Training



Staff training is ongoing, with one of the teachers recently completing six two-hour online training sessions i.e. 'Every Word Counts' Facilitator training provided by Word Works, which covered topics such as the daily programme, storytelling and play. The preschool received a donation of new story books from the Starfish Greathearts Foundation in September. While some of these books will be kept at the school, the majority will be given to the children to take home, and the parents and caregivers will be encouraged to read to their children.



Bursary

Siphesihle was selected as a bursary recipient 12 years ago, when he was in Grade 1 at Christopher Nxumalo Primary School, and has been assisted since with school fees, uniforms and stationery. Siphesihle passed Grade 12 in 2024 and recently started studying Intermediate Phase teaching (grade 4-7) through SANTS.



A FEW PHOTOS ON THE NEXT PAGE...

THANK YOU!

World Play Day

