



VOLUME, EDITION, DATE

MATJANA PRESCHOOL NEWLETTER

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THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL FIRST DAYS OF 2018 PRESCHOOL YEAR

Twenty-six children had enrolled in Matjana Preschool in year 2018 when the school reopened on the 24th of January 2018. We welcome back only one student from the class of 2017. We are a little bit sad that another six students we were expecting back this year have started primary school early. Although they are officially not old enough to start primary school, these children's parents convinced the head teacher that their year at preschool had left them intelligent and ready

for primary school education. We will miss these children in 2018, we're happy that they've learnt so much in their year of preschool. And that we have 25 kids attending our preschool for the first time this year.

The teachers report that most of the student seem to be naughty, but perhaps they've just forgotten since last year, that sitting still and listening are skills young kids develop- they don't always start school with these abilities. And it's easy to forget over the school

holidays just how diverse young children's styles and backgrounds are, and how preschool kids can conceptualise doing the most unusual things, as perfectly normal. Just imagine the first day when one of the kids stripped off so that they could play without getting their new school uniform dirty. The teachers thought it was a little strange, but the other preschoolers thought it was a pretty good idea and would have happily joined in if teacher Swane hadn't intervened!

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And then there was the child who pulled out a toy gun, pointed it at teacher Ncobile, and threatened to go home if she didn't stand up and play with him!

Anyone who has ever taught or sent a child to preschool will know that it takes some little kids a bit longer to get used to the idea of being separated from their home and family. And this year was no exception. One of the kids

MEET THE



MATJANA KIDS



| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| NAME: | Sibahle Gamedze | Xoliswa Mavimbela | Sambulo Dlamini |
| MEANING: | Beautiful | Soften | Revelation |
| FAVOURITES AT SCHOOL: | Playing with swings | Playing with a ball | Playing with swings |
| FAVOURITE FOOD: | Rice and Meat | Beans and rice | Cake |
| WANTS TO BE A: | Teacher | Teacher | Soldier |
| TEACHERS SAY: | She's the shortest in the class, but one of the oldest kids | She's a very active player and loves to run around | A really shy little boy, who doesn't talk much |

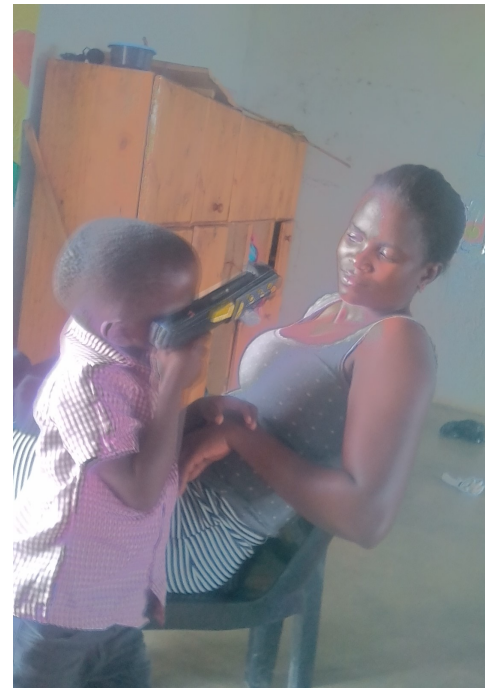
A WEIRD AND WONDERFUL START TO 2018

spent their first few days of preschool demanding the teachers call their mother to come fetch them and asking teachers 'when are we going home?' But every good teacher knows that with a bit of extra encouragement and support, these kids come to love preschool.

"We now have experience with children who find their first days at preschool a bit scary, and are getting to know this particular child," teacher Ncobile said. "We tried to calm him, showed him some love and gave him some toys to play. We had to be quite gentle, because even some of the toys scared him because he didn't know them. Like when I asked

him to fix puzzle he cried and said, 'I don't know how I can fix it'. But we know as time goes on he will get used to school- even by the end of the first day he had improved."

The beginning of the new school year is always one of the hardest times for preschool teachers. But it's the challenges in the beginning that lead to all the rewards that helping children develop their skills and negotiate new experiences. Preschool teaching is a fulfilling career because children are so diverse and unique, and you always encounter new behaviours both those that we want to encourage, and those that we want to help the children change.



GOODBYE AND THANK YOU, TEACHER NCOBILE

We are both very proud and sad to announce that teacher Ncobile left Matjana Preschool at the end of January 2018. Her move comes after 11 years of extremely dedicated service to Matjana in which she worked for a stipend instead of a proper wage.

Proud because she was offered a job at a government primary school, after Ministry of Education officials chose her as one of the best performers in a practical assessment she completed for her Diploma of

Early Childhood Education last year. We knew she was a fantastic teacher and we are very happy that this has been recognised by our government, and that she will be receiving a full teachers salary from now on.

But we can't help but feel sad that we won't have Ncobile's jokes, love and ideas at Matjana Preschool anymore. We know Teachers Swane and Londi are also fantastic, and will fill the gap Ncobile has left. But Ncobile has played a very special role, as the school's

first, and so far longest serving teacher. She has not only taught hundreds of Matjana kids, she's also been integral to developing the skills of her fellow teachers, keeping our financial records in order, and making sure our newsletter was full of funny stories about the antics of preschool. Ncobile we are extremely grateful for everything you have done at Matjana Preschool, and wish you all the best in the next stage of your teaching career. As the Matjana kids love to say, "Thank you, very much, keep it, up!"

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Thanks to a group of long term supporters for providing the funding we needed to keep the Matjana doors open in 2018. We very much appreciate the regular support we receive from the Hedger and Fleming families, Andy, Karin, Sepp, Barbara, Ana Maria and Bernice. Without you we wouldn't have one kid crying because they wanted to go home- we'd have 25 crying because they had no preschool to go to. If you can make a donation to help us, please contribute to one of our bank accounts:



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|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
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