



MATJANA PRESCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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MATJANA PRESCHOOL'S AWESOME 17TH GRADUATION

Graduation always marks the end of the academic year for Matjana Preschool. For those who might not be aware, this year was our 17th year of teaching four and five year olds from our community. What an amazing journey it had been, and what a great opportunity the graduation ceremony was for us to celebrate our efforts!

A great send off

Thursday 28 November, we witnessed a truly awesome sendoff for our 17th class of 24 five-year olds students (17 boys and 7 girls). The kids were uncontrollably excited and visibly happy about graduating, as were their parents and teachers.

We got a chance this year to informally ask our kids how they were feeling on their graduation day. They could not say it in words, but it was just all smiles and laughter. They kept asking to have their pictures taken. Their most popular saying for the day was, "We are going to primary school." Nothing excites the Matjana Preschool kids more these days than talking about going to primary school!

Meeting 'new teachers'

This year we invited the primary school teachers, including the grade 1 teacher and the Headteacher of the primary school, so our kids had a chance to see who will teach

them in 2025. For those who do not know, most public schools in Eswatini do not have 'meet the teacher' session, so we were trying to do that.

Teacher Khetsiwe said, "We were incredibly happy that the primary teachers managed to come to our graduation. We were not expecting them because we understand that this was also their busiest time of the year. But I'm sure they are glad they found the time as well!"

Our kids were equally happy to see their new teachers. Their new Headteacher Ms Nkam-bule, who came to the graduation wearing her own gradua-

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tion gown, gave a speech. She welcomed the kids and new parents to primary school. She said she had purposely worn her graduation gown.

She also said, "I am wearing this gown for two reasons: I want to look like you (preschoolers) and I want to show that the gowns you are wearing are not the last ones you will wear. You study hard and you will wear the one like mine when you are older." She was wearing the gown she had worn to receive her Master of Education degree.

Activities for the day

The day was filled with fun activities. The kids showed off what



MATJANA ENDED IT'S 17TH YEAR

they have been learning in a play in which one student was the teacher and taught the others letters, numbers, colours, and shapes. The purpose of this is to show parents what the kids have been doing and learning all year.

It's not a graduation at Matjana without several traditional dance performances. And we are still trying to figure out if the kids or the parents enjoy this section of the graduation program more. Because we had a large group this year, we made three groups for boys and one for girls. We also made the groups so that they can share the traditional skirts, as we didn't have enough for everyone.

The dancing was a marvel to watch, and our kids performed their dances perfectly, all thanks to Sincomo, a young man from our community who has been helping our

boys to practice their dance. He has been coming throughout the year, and in the lead up to the graduation came every school day for several weeks, to help the boys perfect their dance routines. We feel lucky to be based in a community with members like Sincomo, and the women who come to cook and work at the preschool!

It was great to see parents cheering for the kids in this activity. They also made a perfect audience.

The kids also sang a song along with the poem titled, "God is so good." As a Christian community, we thought a song thanking God for all the good things for 2024 was appropriate.

The last and most important activity was the receiving of the certificates for graduating kids- the four year olds who will return for a second year of preschool did not get

certificates this year. While the kids were outside wearing their graduation gowns, two older siblings of our graduates kept the parents busy with their dance moves for a good 10 mins.

Our graduates entered the well decorated classroom with a grand march. Each of them introduced themselves in English by saying their full name, age and where they live before their new Head teacher gave them their certificate. It was a sight to behold, watching our little graduates all grown up and ready to take on the next chapter of their lives.

Preparing for graduation is a lot of work and as a teacher you keep on worrying about how it will go until the actual day. Teacher Khetsiwe said, "Getting the kids to do all these activities is not easy but it is exciting to see them perform."



We appreciate the hard work of our teachers and parents who made 2024 a wonderful year for our preschool. We are excited to see what the 18th year holds for Matjana Preschool. And we look forward to seeing teacher Khetsiwe wearing her own "grown-up" graduation gown to mark the completion of her Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education, in early 2025.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

We would like to thank all those who contributed to the smooth running of the school this year by financially supporting the school. We had a good year financially as we have managed to pay for our staff living allowances on time and had a big project of buying new outdoor equipment which is fully paid (ZAR17,000) and due to be delivered in early January. We are looking forward to get more donations for other projects for 2025 and the smooth running of the school. Thank you for your generous support. If you haven't yet been able to support our school, please consider making a donation in the details below:



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Bank	Standard Bank	The Community Mutual Group
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