



November 2023

Newsletter 3 – To all our Verlorenkloof Owners, Friends and Guests

**‘The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child’s own natural desire to learn.’**

We had a wonderful and BUSY 3rd term at Hlokomela Crèche. All our little babies are walking, and you can just imagine how busy it gets during the day keeping an eye on five walking and ‘talking’ babies with their own ideas of where they want to go.

As we wished in our previous letter, we started creating an outside play area which could stimulate the children’s gross motor development. We planted and painted some tyres to climb over and crawl under. We are now busy completing a sensory path while the sandpit is already in place and just waiting to be filled with sand.

During the last week of August, Georgia Goeller came to visit us for a few days as part of her schools’ requirements to do voluntary service at an organisation of her choice. It was lovely to have her at Hlokomela and to see how well she interacted with everyone at the crèche.



Thanks, Georgie, for your input and for loving and playing with the children.

This term we are working on our concert combined with our ‘celebration ceremony’ for the children who will be leaving us to go to Kwena where they will start their schooling as Gr RR’s.

I also take this opportunity to thank everyone who takes interest in, who visits and/or contributes in whichever way, be it their time, finances or via donating items to Hlokomela. You are REALLY helping us makes a difference in these little children’s lives.

**My story letter continues with sharing with you about our extra English reading classes in the afternoons for the school-going learners of Grades 1 - 4.**



I initially started out with homework and project time in a stable environment for grade 1 to 12 learners. After a term it became clear that most of them didn't understand English. This lack of basic English language skills contributed to their poor comprehension and literacy in the homework sessions. They attend Kwena Combined School, which ranges from Gr RR up to GR 12 and they are instructed in their home language, Sepedi or Zulu, till grade 3. From Gr 4 onward all subjects are instructed in English. This makes it very difficult for the learners to perform according to their full potential and most of them become discouraged.

We decided to begin an English extra class for grade 1-3 and grade 4 learners. I felt that if English is instructed in the foundation phase, it would prepare them for grade 4 reading, writing, and comprehension. It would make a huge difference in how they approach doing schoolwork and learning and it would also positively influence their attitude toward school. Each group, Gr 1-3 and Gr 4s attend classes two afternoons per week. With the smaller learners I'm building up their English vocabulary and teaching them sounds and blends. With the Gr 4s and some Gr 3s we do reading, writing, and sounding. All these activities occur in a structured but fun way with lots of repetition, talking and singing.

This is also a learning curve for me as a teacher - like inventing a whole new system to help these learners. I am learning to speak Sepedi to better my communication skills and, as I am a much slower learner than the kids, it helps me understand how important repetition is!



These learners are so motivated. When it is time for English extra classes, they come running from their homes. For me, it is a big motivation to invest as much time as possible in their learning experience, education wise but also by building their confidence. This term one of the learners brought his report card and the improvement was evident. The other learners were all very excited because they had passed the term, some for the first time.

**'To learn a language is to have one more window from which to look at the world.'**

Magriet and the Hlokomela Staff