

St Martin's and Jellicoe Annual Report 2017

“ ‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’ ”.

Jeremiah 29:11

When I was given the opportunity to join the Vuleka family a few short years ago, I did not imagine that I would eventually become the headmistress of this jewel, St Martin's Jellicoe in Rosebank.



One of the primary objectives in 2017 was to combine the two phases (Grades 0 to 7) to function as one school. This came with a few challenges, but with perseverance and the co-operation of the community, we made it work! We now meet weekly as a single staff contingent, who have combined our creative objectives and joined forces at the Inter-Vuleka events. Tucked safely behind the beautiful St Martin's-in-the-veld

Anglican Church, our Foundation Phase campus is a happy and peaceful place.

The Intersen Phase (Grade 4 – 7) operates from the functional building on the corner of Bath and Jellicoe Avenues, but participates in the church services and school assemblies which are held at the church.

Our strategic goals for Vuleka and specifically for our venue, emphasize the following: Pupil development, staff development, parent and community partnership, and financial sustainability.

Pupil development

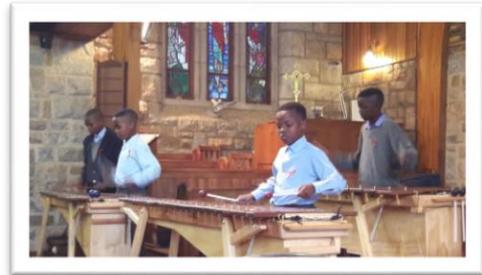
Ethos and values

We are passionate about our Christian ethos and work wholeheartedly to build on our value system to make it more relevant to our school community. Throughout the year, the values of respect, taking responsibility, being safe and being healthy have been constantly discussed, developed and enforced. The classes were all given an opportunity to present an assembly, and in the process, we learnt more about loving our friends, kindness and thankfulness as expressed through song and dance. In this regard, the acronym, EGG, has come to embody our striving through the practice of Empathy, Gratitude and Grit. We are thankful to the Rector of St Martin's in-the-Veld Church, Mark Spyker, and his team for the spiritual input provided to all and for sharing their beautiful facilities with us.

As part of our commitment to holistic education, our children continue to participate in various sporting activities that are facilitated at the Pirates Club. In addition to swimming, hockey, athletics, squash and soccer, the tennis club earmarked the Grade 3s to start a development tennis outreach. The tennis coaching has proven to be very successful and we are negotiating to continue this initiative in 2018 with the current Grade 3s.



In addition, the cultural activities, which include marimba lessons for all Intersen Phase pupils, two choirs, a developing chess team, class music, art, ballet and dance, also continue to broaden the educational horizons of our children. They were enthralled by the “Hooked on Books” performance and could not wait to immerse themselves in the books that were introduced.



The Glee Club, an acapella group from Yale University, visited our school in May and entertained and inspired the children with a morning of singing, harmony and playful interaction.

The school also sent teams of children to the Phendulani Book Quiz and the Science Scuffle.

We are fortunate that both phases have enough tablets to be used towards multi-media educational enhancements and to teach Knowledge Network.

Tablet-time at our foundation phase remains a firm favourite and we thank the **Breteau Foundation** for the generous donation of the tablets.

Our Grade 4 and 6 children had the opportunity to attend a camp with the other Vuleka schools at Kloofwaters where they forged cross-campus friendships in a safe outdoor environment while learning various life skills and having fun together.



Academics

On the academic front, we continue to collect data from various assessments including Conquesta and the IEB (Independent Examinations Board) core skills examinations to inform and improve teaching methods as well as to focus on problems that pupils may experience. Six of our Grade 2 to Grade 4 children were afforded the opportunity by Bellavista School to attend a RAVEO winter school and this greatly boosted their reading skills and confidence.

Staff development

Thank you to all of our dedicated staff who often gave more than was expected to make a difference in developing the multi-faceted lives of our children. The challenge of uniting two

smaller campuses offered the opportunity for two people to be developed as deputies, namely Ms Gladys Munyorovi at Jellicoe, and Ms Sherissa Pillay at St Martin's. This enabled me to move more easily between the two campuses and I thank them for their support and assistance during the year.

One of the biggest challenges of the year has been our staff turnover. With this came the opportunity to follow a more focused employment process to improve the person-fit within our school culture and context.

The staff summit at the beginning of the year provided the contextual foundation for the year, touching on fostering hope, our school values and the Vuleka way.

In our weekly staff meetings, a sizable portion of time was spent discussing functional ways to address discipline issues in the school.

Staff attended the ISASA (Independent Schools' Association of Southern Africa) cluster-meetings and found these to be informative and beneficial. I attended an International Convocation of Principals' Conference in Cape Town and left challenged and inspired to better manage the changing landscape of education in our country.

We congratulate two of our interns, namely Thato Majola and Zanele Zwane, who completed their studies during 2017 we were very pleased to offer them permanent positions.

Parent and Community Partnership

We thank our parent representatives Mr Motudi Setshedi and Mrs Nelisiwe Luvono and our parents for their continued support and the trust they put in us to contribute meaningfully to the lives of our children throughout the year. Our parents enthusiastically attended parents' meetings, workshops and sports events such as the Derby and athletics days. Unfortunately, the first term Gala needed to be cancelled due to inclement weather, but we were thankful to have some die-hard parents support us at the follow-up gala on a workday during the last week of school.

We thank all our volunteers, who remain valuable partners in our quest to provide an affordable, excellent education. Once again, **TransUnion** sent a team under the leadership of Alwyn Russel, to assist with our extra-curricular activities every Wednesday at Jellicoe. They helped prepare the Phendulani teams, coaching of chess and other sports as well as assisting with extra reading and comprehension skills.

The St Martin's Men's Fellowship offered to assist with maintenance and a very successful work-morning was held where they, together with some of our willing parents, painted classrooms, fixed doors and taps and upgraded the library.

Richard Bouma regularly assisted with mentoring some of the livelier young men and spent some mornings reading with various children.

Our St Martin's Reading Angels, Peggy Kernick, Melanie Kempe, Janet Humphries and Annemarie Westwood continued to bless us with their time and patience as they facilitated one-on-one reading times.

Thank you also to our other volunteers, Emma Jesse, Thapelo Mahlatji and Difiedile Rasenyalo, for giving of their time and expertise to make a difference in so many lives.

Our children greatly enjoyed having the boys from **St Stithian's** visit every Thursday morning during which time they assisted in classrooms and read with the children as part of their community outreach.

The Christmas party was a highlight for many of our children and we thank **St Stithian's** for their ongoing commitment to our school. I would also like to thank Cathrine du Toit and her team of mentors from **Bokamoso** for their dedication and support.

We thank all our donors for their generosity towards us. **The Hutchinson Living Trust** bequest of funds to upgrade the playground at St Martin's was a wonderful gift and made a significant contribution to the physical development of our younger children.

We benefitted from another successful outreach by **TOMS shoes** who donated a pair of new shoes to each child in our school and we thank them for their support.



Financial sustainability

We are very happy to report that St Martin's Jellicoe has been awarded full accreditation with Umalusi (Council for quality assurance in general and further education and training) from 2017. We endeavor to raise funds for the school by means of tuck-shop sales, fun and civvies days and other initiatives like the Slipper Day, Big Walk and Valentine's Day. We are proud to announce that our school raised the most funds from the Vuleka annual raffle.

Great emphasis was placed on maintenance and development of our facilities. The Maintenance Manager has initiated many maintenance activities such as the replacement of door handles, painting of classrooms, replacement of cracked glass panes and other necessary tasks. A major project was to replace the Science Room door at Jellicoe and this greatly increased the functionality and safety of the facility

Lizette Baker

Headmistress

